

AGENDA

CABINET

MONDAY, 23 MARCH 2026

4.00 PM

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, FENLAND HALL,
COUNTY ROAD, MARCH**

Committee Officer: Linda Albon
Tel: 01354 622424
e-mail: memberservices@fenland.gov.uk

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 10)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held 23 February 2026.
- 3 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified
- 4 To receive members' declaration of any interests under the Local Code of Conduct or any interest under the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting
- 5 Investment Board Update and Review of the Commercial and Investment Strategy (Pages 11 - 20)

To provide an update of the work of the Investment Board from August 2025 to February 2026.
- 6 Air Quality Review and Assessment Statutory Reporting (Pages 21 - 32)

To present the findings of the annual statutory 2025 review and assessment of air quality. To update members on the development work undertaken in 2025 to increase monitoring sites and air quality data across Fenland and to inform them of the key action plan priorities for 2026.
- 7 Fenland Inspire! Play Areas (Pages 33 - 50)

Fenland District Council has been allocated the £1.5 million grant from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund. Cabinet has previously decided to focus this grant funding on enhancement of open spaces facilities and play areas across the district in line with the Fenland Inspire! project aims, which also matches one of the objectives of the Pride in Place Impact Fund.

8 Draft 6 Month Cabinet Forward Plan (Pages 51 - 52)

For information purposes.

9 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent

10 Sale of 2 Broad Street, March (Pages 53 - 64)

To consider approval to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in the site at 2 Broad Street, March. Appendix 2 to follow.

Appendix 2 to this report comprises exempt information – to exclude the public (including the press) from a meeting of a committee it is necessary for the following proposition to be moved and adopted: “that the public be excluded from the meeting for items which would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as indicated”.

Friday, 13 March 2026

Members: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Christy, Councillor S Count, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork

CABINET



MONDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2026 - 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Christy, Councillor S Count, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork

CAB51/25 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 26 January 2026 were approved and signed.

CAB52/25 BUSINESS PLAN 2026/27

Members considered the Business Plan 2026/27 presented by Councillor Tierney,

Proposed by Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to recommend to Council the approval of the Business Plan 2026/27.

CAB53/25 BUDGET & MTFS 2026/27

Members considered the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden said this had been a very difficult budget to work on and he praised the Chief Accountant for working wonders under difficult circumstances, as well as the S151 Officer and Finance team. He added that this authority has the best record of any principal council in the country for reducing council tax, with an attitude opposite to those who always raise it by the maximum allowed.

Councillor Mrs Laws agreed and said FDC should do more to promote the good work that it does as most people just look at the end total on their bill without looking at the items between.

Councillor Tierney commented that every year FDC starts with a deficit, taking a pessimistic view to be sure that mistakes are not made, but then always ends in surplus. The history of this council's finances shows that they are very good, and he agrees with Councillor Mrs Laws that FDC should undertake more self-promotion. However, many people do not fully understand which council does what, who pays what and neither do they understand why it is said that Fenland has frozen council tax again when they only see it rising. It is hard to get the message across, but FDC always puts the public first and tries to absorb any additional costs through better work, careful administration and finding ways to do things well more cheaply.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED that:

- (i) The revised estimates for 2025/26 as set out in Section 6 and Appendix A showing an estimated surplus of £107k which will be transferred to the Budget Equalisation Reserve be approved,**

and to recommend to Council that:

- (ii) the General Fund revenue budget for 2026/27 as set out in Section 7 and Appendix A be approved,
- (iii) the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as outlined in the report and Appendix B be adopted,
- (iv) the Capital Programme and funding statement as set out in Appendix D be approved,
- (v) the adoption of the additional Business Rates Relief measures as detailed in Section 5 using Discretionary Relief Powers be approved
- (vi) the expenses detailed in Section 10 be approved to be treated as general expenses for 2026/27,
- (vii) the Port Health levy for 2026/27 be set as shown in Section 11
- (viii) the current working age Council Tax Support Scheme be adopted with effect from 1 April 2026 as set out in Section 13, with appropriate changes to the prescribed pensioner scheme as determined by regulations,
- (ix) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement (including amending the MRP calculation to be based on the 'Annuity method' from 2025/26 onwards), Treasury Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2026/27 and Capital Strategy 2026/27 as set out in Section 14 and Appendix E be approved,
- (x) the Band D Council Tax level for Fenland District Council services for 2026/27 be set at £253.35, a reduction on the current year.

CAB54/25 RECAP WASTE STRATEGY

Members considered the RECAP Waste Strategy report presented by Councillor Tierney.

Councillor Hoy asked if she had correctly read in the report that energy from waste has been excluded from the RECAP waste strategy. Councillor Tierney replied that it is not exactly excluded but at this point the decisions are at too high a level to have decided which process will be used. He would like to stress that he will be opposing any use of energy from waste, particularly Wisbech energy from waste as agreed by this council in a previous motion. He has made a strong case to avoid using it wherever possible and has indicated at RECAP that FDC will not support it but for now the decision is not at that stage and FDC is not using energy from waste for waste disposal.

Councillor Mrs French asked whether the new food waste collections would be introduced in June as hoped. Councillor Tierney replied that the aim is to start sometime in summer but currently a national problem involving the supply of vehicles is affecting the start date. Councillor Boden said that FDC has been badly let down in this regard, having been advised the vehicles would not be delivered barely three weeks before the date expected, which is unacceptable. However, once delivered it may be more appropriate for the service to start in September after the summer holidays.

Councillor Hoy asked if the new food waste collection service could potentially impact council finances received from the brown bin service, if people use the new service, they may not want to purchase a brown bin. Councillor Tierney responded that it is unlikely to have a massive effect, the brown bin is primarily for garden waste. He would not encourage the use of the brown bin for food waste and the new system is a free service.

Proposed by Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Hoy and AGREED to recommend to Council:

- that the revised Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Waste Strategy be approved, subject to any final drafting amendments to be made by the Director responsible for Environmental Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Recycling & Refuse

Collection.

- **that the updated Fenland Recycling Plan be approved,**

and to note that that the development and approval of a shared waste strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough fulfils a Business Plan objective for 2025/26.

CAB55/25 NEW AND UPDATED INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE

Members considered the New and Updated Interim Planning Guidance report presented by Councillor Mrs Laws.

Councillor Hoy commented that the HMO guidance is a good addition and notes that the cumulative impact of other HMOs in the vicinity can be considered. However, she wondered how cumulative impact can be determined if an HMO's existence is unknown, as a property containing less than five people would not need a licence and if they are not in an Article 4 area, planning permission will not be required. Councillor Mrs Laws said in these instances there will be a reliance on neighbours to report that information directly or through their ward councillors.

Councillor Hoy said she also liked the addition of the information about parking provision because it comes up time and again and the guidance is very useful. However, her slight concern is that when parking has been questioned before, members have been told it cannot be queried because it goes against the national planning policy framework for town centre parking. The parking survey method statement gives instructions on what to do but she would like some further clarification on what happens if an HMO does not meet the parking survey and how this works with town centre parking. Councillor Mrs Laws said she would come back to Councillor Hoy on this.

Councillor Mrs French said the report should be very helpful for the Planning Committee as there are many grey areas currently, especially regarding flats in town centres. The Committee cannot insist on them having parking spaces and residents take up spaces in FDC car parks. It may be that parking permits may need to be considered if Civil Parking Enforcement comes in.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Laws, seconded by Councillor Hoy and AGREED to:

- **Revoke the 2015 Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document, the 2014 Resource Use and Renewable Energy SPD, the 2004 Nene Waterfront Development Brief and the 2015 Interim Guidance on Policy LP4 Part B**
- **Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Planning Obligations**
- **Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.**
- **Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Houses in Multiple Occupation, and to**
- **Delegate authority to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, to make minor updates to the Interim Planning Guidance Notes as required, ensuring they remain up to date and fit for purpose.**

CAB56/25 FENLAND TRANSPORT ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT INCLUDING MARCH TO WISBECH RAIL FUNDING FROM CPCA

Members considered the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment report presented by Councillor Christy.

Councillor Count said the money will be very welcome as the area is desperate for transport improvements. It is unfortunate that whilst the public would say the biggest improvement would be for the County Council to get potholes fixed, the money cannot be used for that. He would,

however, like to seek assurance that this is not going to delay the works relating to the March Area Transport Strategy (MATS). Councillor Chisty said hopefully this assessment will help the MATS progress, it is a vital part of the overall scheme and will be used to inform that assessment rather than hold it up.

Councillor Tierney said he hopes that Councillor Christy can push this forward but as a long-standing councillor himself, he has seen this many times before. The authority can consult, plan, study and talk about getting funding but projects like the railway or dualling of the A47 will cost multi-millions of pounds for each project and the problem has always been that nobody wants to put their hands in their pockets for money of that level. However, he does support this and just hopes that a change can be made this time.

Councillor Mrs French referred to Councillor Count's comments about the MATS and said work commenced on the scheme back in 2018. Whilst some of the work has progressed, the work to install traffic lights at Hobbs Lot Bridge has only just started. Unfortunately, county council officers decided to delay the Peas Hill roundabout, but it is in a dreadful state, and with the volume of traffic it needs to be pushed forward again so she would appreciate any help that Councillor Christy can give to progress the MATS.

Councillor Hoy agreed all Fenland needs transport improvements, but she would like to focus on the Wisbech Access Strategy. She finds it frustrating that £10.5m has been spent and yet not a single piece of road has been laid. All that was achieved was an old shop being knocked down that nobody wanted to be knocked down. Without wanting to be too negative, the local plan says none of the broad concept plans for Wisbech will be delivered without the additional road improvements and what infuriates her is that because County will not object to any of the Highways works, FDC cannot turn them down at Planning. She was told that their view is that because the bulk of dwellings will be in Norfolk rather than Fenland, they do not think it will impact on the local roads which she finds incredulous as residents of Elm or Emneth will certainly be using Wisbech services. She is very worried that, whilst appreciating it is not this authority's money, spending £500,000 on yet another study and more fees for consultants will be wasted at a time when the country has little money.

Councillor Mrs Laws said it is important for Whittlesey to get a southern relief road, not just to assist economic growth in Fenland but because she gets so many calls from frustrated drivers who sit for hours just trying to get to Peterborough. She agreed with Councillor Hoy's comment about consultant fees, they gain so much money from councils, and she is sure they inflate their prices when they see that is where the money is coming from. However, she applauds Councillor Christy and supports this work and, like many other long-standing councillors who have seen money wasted through nothing coming from it, hopes it works this time.

Councillor Boden thanked everyone for their comments and said this is somewhat unusual compared to what has been seen before. Fenland is getting a transport economic assessment project, and similar things are also happening in other parts of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, but this project is being devolved and will be controlled by some members of this council and Cabinet. They will be voting members of the project board, so this will be in their hands. It will provide the opportunity to make clear the requirements of Fenland residents, and that the obsession with active travel in some parts of the county is not appropriate here and that the idea that transport policy should be determined by net zero targets is also not appropriate for Fenland. The transport policy will need to be set on transport targets and the narrative from some parts of the county that are anti-car is also inappropriate here, for example any proposals for road charging would be rejected. It gives the opportunity for members of this council and cabinet with voting rights to make abundantly clear what is appropriate for Fenland.

Councillor Christy said he fully appreciates the comments made but would like to reiterate what Councillor Boden has just said; this is now an opportunity for FDC to progress matters in its own

way with terms that are suitable for Fenland.

Proposed by Councillor Christy, seconded by Councillor Seaton and AGREED to:

- **Subject to the final confirmation from CPCA, confirm the acceptance of £500,000 between 2026 and 2028 from CPCA for FDC to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Project.**
- **Confirm the establishment of the Project Board to oversee the business case project, confirm the board's remit, including its terms of reference and membership.**
- **Note the procurement exercise to select a contractor to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project and give approval for delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and the S151 Officer to award the contract.**
- **Subject to the final confirmation from CPCA, third party funding has been approved for this work. A Grant Funding Agreement between CPCA and FDC is required. Delegate approval to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and S151 Officer to sign the agreement on behalf of FDC and complete all other documentation necessary to bring this arrangement into effect.**

(Councillors Boden, Christy and Seaton declared that they are Trustees of FACT Community Transport)

CAB57/25 FENLAND INSPIRE! - PLAY EQUIPMENT

Members considered the Fenland Inspire! Play Equipment report presented by Councillor Imafidon.

Councillor Hoy said she is pleased to see Westmead Avenue included separately and wants it on record that Fenland should not be waiting for pots of money in order to undertake basic maintenance work. The council is obligated to maintain services in order not to allow things to go to rack and ruin and there must be a budget for maintenance. Councillor Mrs French advised that this was looked at last June and has nothing to do with Inspire or Pride in Place; a swing has now gone but hopefully more equipment should be included soon under budget maintenance.

Councillor Tierney said given the short timeframe, it is important that this project is member-led. Councillor Boden pointed out that not all Fenland play areas are owned, maintained or controlled by FDC; some are funded by local developers, residents' organisations or local charities. It is a complicated picture which makes it difficult for the authority to take an overview of the whole district, and he agreed with Councillor Tierney of the importance of this being member-led. Members know their local wards and communities and where there is a need that should be targeted.

Councillor Seaton said that he had emailed all district councillors asking them for their proposals but has only received two responses so far. The information is required as soon as possible for this to be progressed.

Proposed by Councillor Imafidon, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED:

- **To note that the deadline for committing the Pride in Place Impact Fund that is funding open space and play area improvements should be committed by no later than 31 March 2027**
- **To note that work to replace Westmead play area is underway and is outside of the Pride in Place Impact Fund play area budget**
- **That the Portfolio Holder for Finance Inspire! – Play Equipment immediately contacts all FDC members to request ideas of specific locations where the funding should be spent. There are significant constraints set by Government on how this grant money may be spent, FDC members suggesting that money in their area should be spent on schemes other than play areas should carefully check that any such alternative spending falls**

within the Government's criteria. Schemes generally must also be deliverable relatively quickly to satisfy the Government's timing criteria for spend to be completed.

- That, in the interest of fairness across the district, an indicative split of spend shall be that £250,000 shall be spent in each of the four towns, whilst £500,000 shall be spent in the parished areas outside the boundaries of the four Fenland towns. It is appreciated that this precise split will not be able to be achieved because of the discreet individual cost of each selected scheme, but this split is an initial guide to assist in creating a fair allocation across the district.
- That proposals will be submitted to Cabinet in March 2026 for approval to progress.

CAB58/25 MANOR LEISURE CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT - UPDATE AT THE COMPLETION OF RIBA STAGE 3

Members considered the Manor Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project update report presented by Councillor Count.

Councillor Count advised the timetable for completion of the new building is on schedule for December 2027. In the meantime, Freedom Leisure will work with FDC to protect all jobs where possible during the build as staff will still be required to operate the dry side activities and prepare the new facility to open upon completion. Redeployment to other local facilities would also be an option and staff may have opportunities to take up vacancies at FDC where appropriate. Long term, the new upgraded facility will create more employment opportunities in Whittlesey and the surrounding area. He added that this project represents a once in a generation opportunity to deliver something transformative, a modern and vibrant leisure centre that the whole community can be proud of, and he thanked officers, partners and his predecessor for the significant work that has led to this point.

Councillor Mrs Laws said she is very supportive of this; Whittlesey residents are very much looking forward to the improved facility. The new commercial kitchen is much needed; it will be well supported and will bring in revenue.

Proposed by Councillor Count, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED:

- to note the report and progress of the project
- to note the redevelopment project scheme details and the expectation of a firm cost for the redevelopment project to be presented to Cabinet for a construct or do not construct decision in June 2026, for a start on site in late July/early August.
- to note the significant financial pressures that the Council faces and pays close attention to Section 3 and the financial assessment section of this report in Section 12.
- to note The Council is working with Sport England to secure supportive funding that will offset design improvements required by Sports England that have enhanced initial designs.
- that Cabinet authorises, in advance of Cabinet's June 2026 decision regarding the construction project, the Monitoring Officer to prepare all requisite legal documentation required to ensure that the Council will have received the necessary legal advice, completed all necessary procurement documentation and prepared all necessary legal documentation and will be in a position to move forwards into contract for the main Development Management Agreement of the leisure centre project in a prompt and efficient manner, following Cabinet's decision in June, if that decision is to proceed with the redevelopment.

CAB59/25 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

.Noted for information.

CAB60/25 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the meeting held 26 January 2026 were approved and signed.

3.12 pm

Chairman

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Agenda Item No:	5
Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	23 March 2026
Report Title:	INVESTMENT BOARD UPDATE AND REVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY



1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To provide an update to Cabinet of the work of the Investment Board from August 2025 to February 2026.

2 Key issues

- 2.1 The last report on Investment Board activity was presented to and noted by Cabinet on 15th September 2025.
- 2.2 Work has carried on during the 2025-26 financial year to progress the two identified sites, the Nene Waterfront in Wisbech and the Elms in Chatteris and outline planning permission has now been granted for both sites.
- 2.3 At the Cabinet meeting held on 12th December 2022, it was agreed that the land at Chatteris and Wisbech be transferred to FFL at market value in accordance with a Red Book valuation
- 2.4 FFL own the Nene Waterfront, Wisbech site and are in conditional contract to complete the transfer of the land off The Elms, Chatteris subject to a Reserved Matters Planning approval which is currently under review by FDC.
- 2.5 Work on the revised draft Business Plan for FFL was completed and circulated to the Investment Board by 31st January 2026.
- 2.6 No new opportunities have arisen since the last report on Investment Board activity was presented to Cabinet on 15th September 2025.
- 2.7 The Constitution states as follows at paragraph 3.1.1 of Table 3 which sets out the responsibility for executive functions:
 - Cabinet will be responsible for the following specific functions in relation to the Commercial Investment Strategy and the Council's companies and partnerships:
 - Conducting a formal review of the Commercial Investment Strategy every 2 years and recommending any necessary amendments for approval by Full Council;
- 2.8 The formal review of the Commercial and Investment Strategy is currently on hold as the focus has changed to delivering the Fenland Inspire programme. Additionally the present economic conditions are challenging and interest rates in particular make it extremely difficult to identify new opportunities.

2.9 It should also be noted that in December 2024 Local Government Reorganisation was announced and this will undoubtedly lead to a strategic assessment of priorities.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

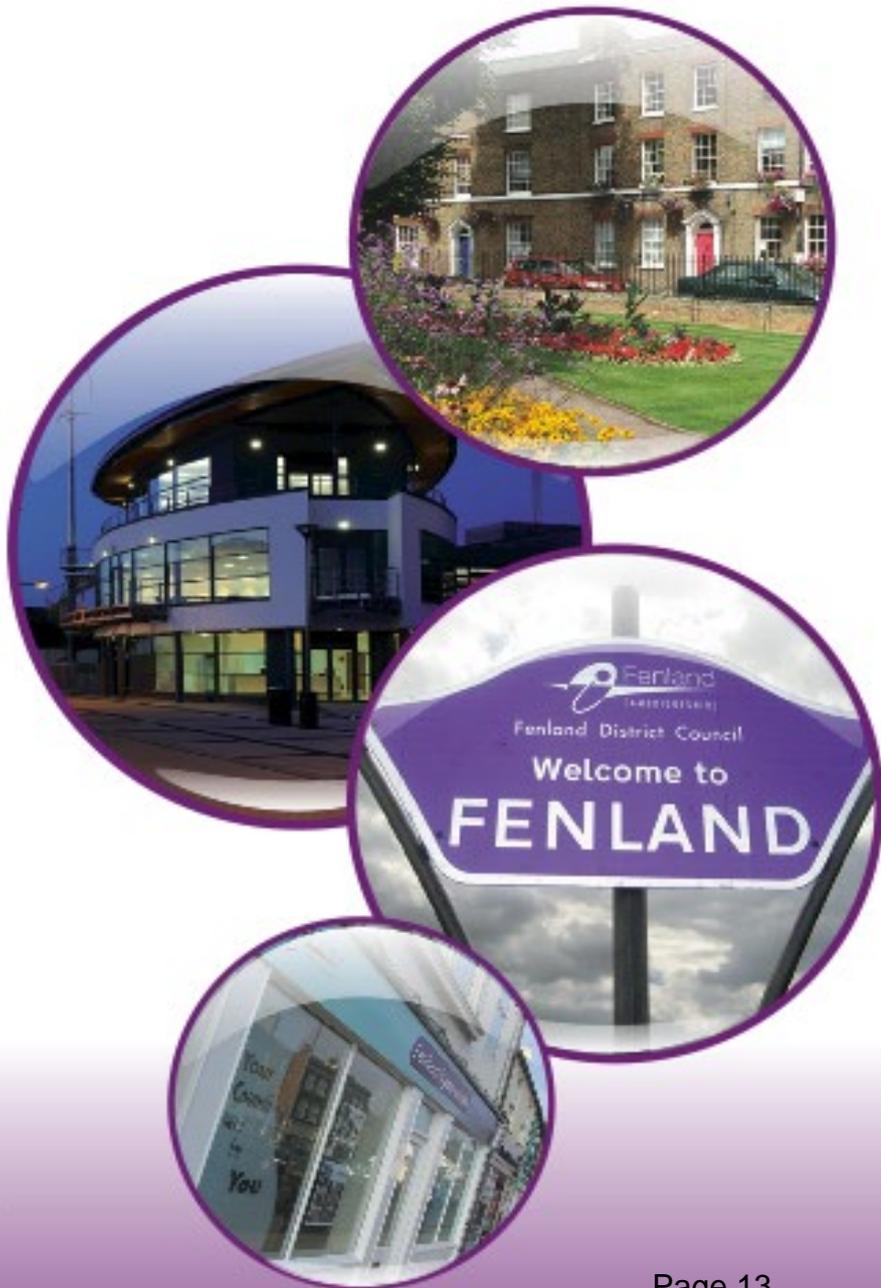
- Cabinet note this report from the Investment Board.
- Cabinet agree that the ongoing review of the current Commercial and Investment Strategy as determined by the constitution and delegated to the S151 officer is still currently deferred.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Ref	Not applicable
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden – Leader, Finance Portfolio Holder and Chairman of the Investment Board Cllr Steve Tierney – Transformation, Communications and Environment Portfolio Holder and Investment Board Member Cllr Sidney Imafidon – Assets Portfolio Holder and Investment Board Member
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Paul Medd – Chief Executive Carol Pilson – Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer Amy Brown - Assistant Director & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Paul Medd – Chief Executive Carol Pilson – Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer Amy Brown - Assistant Director & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Background Paper(s)	Investment Board minutes Commercial and Investment Strategy Cabinet update report 22 nd March 2022 Cabinet update report 30 th January 2023 Cabinet update report 16 th March 2023 Cabinet update report 11 th September 2023 Cabinet update report 15 th July 2024 Cabinet update report 24 th March 2025 Cabinet update report 15 th September 2025

Appendix: Update report

Report of the Investment Board

August 2025 – February 2026



1 What is the Investment Board?

- 1.1 The Investment Board was created on 16th January 2020 to help drive forward the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy which was approved by Full Council on 9th January 2020. The Investment Board is a sub-committee of Cabinet designed to be more "fleet of foot" in order to be able to respond to opportunities in an agile and commercial manner.

2 Purpose of the Investment Board

- 2.1 The Investment Board is responsible for implementing the Commercial and Investment Strategy including oversight of the Council's companies and partnerships.
- 2.2 The Investment Board will act as a decision-making body in relation to the functions delegated to it and will report to Cabinet in relation to the exercise of those functions.
- 2.3 Support and advice will be provided to the Investment Board by key members of the Corporate Management team.

3 Membership and Operation of the Investment Board

- 3.1 The Investment Board will comprise a maximum of two Cabinet Members (one of whom should be the portfolio holder for finance if that position is not held by the Leader) in addition to the Leader who will determine their appointment annually.
- 3.2 The Investment Board shall meet on a basis agreed by itself with a minimum of 3 meetings per year.
- 3.2 The quorum shall be the Leader in the presence of a minimum of;
 - a. one other Cabinet Member;
 - b. one senior advisory officer (or their appointed deputy)

An invitation to attend must have been provided to the Chair of O&S at least 5 clear days in advance of the meeting taking place. This notice period may be waived if the Chair of O&S or their nominated deputy so agrees.

An invitation to attend must also have been provided to the Section 151 officer and the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated deputies) which will normally be at least 5 clear days in advance of the meeting taking place.

- 3.3 The provisions relating to substitution set out at paragraph 28 of the Standing Orders shall apply to meetings of the Investment Board save that the Leader and Cabinet Members may only be substituted by Cabinet Members [and the Chair of O&S may only be substituted by the Vice Chairman]. Such substitutions to be notified to Council as part of the annual nomination process.

3.4 The Cabinet Procedure Rules shall apply to meetings of the Investment Board save in respect of paragraphs 1.6, 1.8, 2.2 (second paragraph), 2.3(g) and (h) and paragraph 2.5(d) which shall be disapplied.

4 Functions of the Investment Board

- 4.1 To determine investment appraisals submitted under Part 2 of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy together with the most appropriate means of delivery;
- 4.2 To determine business cases submitted under Part 3 of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy by the Council's companies and partnerships;
- 4.3 To determine the amount and terms of any investments, loans and assets required for the delivery of proposals approved in accordance with paragraphs (a) and (b) above from the agreed budget allocation;
- 4.4 To produce a report to Cabinet twice a year summarising its activities in accordance with paragraphs (a) to (c) above.
- 4.5 Approve the business plans of the Council's companies and partnerships;
- 4.6 To monitor performance and financial delivery in line with the approved business plans;
- 4.7 To ensure that those companies and partnerships comply with relevant Council policies, strategies and objectives;
- 4.8 To exercise decisions, where delegated by Cabinet, in relation to a company or partnerships' reserved matters;
- 4.9 To oversee the relationships between the Council and the Council's companies and partnerships in accordance with the Council's objectives.
- 4.10 To prepare and present an annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 4.11 To determine for each individual company or partnership whether the Investment Board recommends to Cabinet the delegation of any functions to the officers of the Council.
- 4.12 All other matters not falling within the remit of the Investment Board functions set out at 4.1 to 4.11 above will be referred to Cabinet for decision.

5 Background

- 5.1 The Commercial and Investment Strategy was approved by Full Council on 9th January 2020.
- 5.2 At the same meeting Full Council also agreed to establish a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) for the purpose of facilitating the delivery of the agreed strategy and noted the proposed intention that the Investment Board will be able to utilise reserves and/or borrow sums up to a combined maximum of £25 million in order to deliver the objectives of the Strategy.

- 5.3 Following on from this approval the creation of the Investment Board and the delegation of functions was approved by Cabinet on 16th January 2020.
- 5.4 The business case for the creation of the LATCo was approved by Cabinet on 9th June 2020 and Fenland Future Ltd (FFL) was incorporated on 10th June 2020.
- 5.5 FFL held its inaugural board meeting on 8th December 2020 and a first draft business plan was circulated to the Investment Board for discussion and approval. The final business plan was formally presented to the Investment Board in March 2022.
- 5.6 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 18th September 2020 approval was given to take forward to a detailed business case the development of FDC owned land at the Nene waterfront in Wisbech.
- 5.7 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 12th January 2021 approval was given to take forward to a detailed business case the development of FDC owned land in Chatteris.
- 5.8 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 16th March 2021 approval was given to acquire a commercial property in Wisbech and this was subsequently completed on 26th March 2021.
- 5.9 The last report on Investment Board activity was presented to and noted by Cabinet on 15th September 2025.

6 Work programme and outcomes

- 6.1 There have been no formal Investment Board meetings in 2025/26 so far as there have been no substantive items to discuss. A monthly report on progress is prepared and sent to the Investment Board to keep them abreast of developments.

7 Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS) Update

FDC

- 7.1 As part of the Commercial and Investment Strategy a facility of £25m was granted to the Investment Board to finance capital expenditure to be undertaken in accordance with the aims and objectives of the agreed strategy. At the end of March 2022 £4m of this facility has been utilised to fund the acquisition detailed in 7.2 below and a strategic purchase which offers an opportunity to open up access to a Council owned potential development site. These acquisitions were approved at Investment Board meetings held on 16th March 2021 and 3rd December 2021 respectively.
- 7.2 The Commercial Investment in Wisbech has delivered a rental income of £230k p.a since acquisition in March 2021 and is up to date for 2025-26. As we used our own funds to acquire this asset there was no external cost of capital. This acquisition has enhanced the Councils revenue position and has had a positive impact on the MTFs as presented to Full Council in February 2026.

- 7.3 A further £3m of the £25m facility has been approved by the Investment Board to support the Local Authority Housing Fund initiative where the government provides up to 40% of the capital cost of certain properties to support various housing initiatives.
- 7.4 No further opportunities have been formally presented to the Investment Board since 1st March 2025 as the initial due diligence as prescribed in the Commercial and Investment Strategy was not passed. It is worth noting that since the inception of the Commercial and Investment Strategy nearly 40 opportunities have been looked into and these are broken down as follows:-

<u>Category</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>In progress</u>	<u>Parked</u>	<u>Offered</u>	<u>Rejected</u>	<u>Total</u>
FDC owned land		2	2			4
Other land					4	4
Commercial Retail					8	8
Commercial Investment	1			1	6	8
Residential- Commercial	1	1			3	5
Residential- Affordable					1	1
Other	1	2			3	6
	3	5	2	1	25	36

The current Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS) strategy review as required by the constitution is on hold as focus has changed to delivering the Fenland Inspire programme and understanding the implications of the Local Government Reorganisation process. Additionally, the present economic conditions are challenging, and interest rates in particular make it extremely difficult to identify new opportunities.

FFL update including finance

- 7.5 Further utilisation of the above mentioned “facility” has been used to help develop the projects being delivered through Fenland Future Ltd and is in line with the cash flow and financial projections as agreed as part of the Business Plan circulated to the Investment Board by 31st January 2026. Further refinement will be required as updated site appraisals are prepared. Funding drawdown has been completed following the process as detailed in the financing agreement agreed by the Investment Board in July 2022.
- 7.5 The land transfers of the two sites, The Elms, Chatteris and the Nene Waterfront, Wisbech were approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2022 and the work to conclude the legal transfer has now been completed.
- 7.6 Both sites now have Outline Planning Permission and work has progressed on the delivery models needed to develop them.

- 7.7 A development manager has been appointed for The Elms site and work to prepare and submit a Reserved Matters Application is now complete. The RM application is currently under review by FDC. This includes detailed design work and technical reports as well as revised financial appraisals for the scheme.
- 7.8 Work on the Nene Waterfront includes the delivery of a new electricity substation funded through the Brownfields Land Release Fund and the delivery of an all affordable for rent Extra Care facility for which design and pre-application work has commenced. The electricity substation work is now complete.
- 7.9 FFL have exchanged contracts with Fenland Extra Care Consortium who will acquire plot 5 of the Nene Waterfront. FECC have submitted a Reserved Matters planning application in June 2025, and this has now been determined. This will be an all-affordable for rent housing scheme for older people with care needs (circa 70 homes).
- 7.10 Plot 1 is currently awaiting a formal offer and plots 2-4 are actively being marketed.
- 7.11 To date Fenland Future Ltd expenditure and commitments are as shown in the table below.
- 7.12 Based on the revised cash flows further funding has been drawn down from Fenland District Council to both cover the costs detailed below and to enable FFL to meet its future financial commitments to develop the sites. In light of LGR a further update will be taken to the Investment Board later in the year to consider options.
- 7.13 For information the Board of Directors for Fenland Future Ltd comprises: -
- Dan Horn – Managing Director and Chairman
 - Sian Warren – Director
 - Anna Goodall – Director
 - Jane Bailey – Company Secretary

Fenland Future Ltd		Total	Nene		Ex Barclays	FFL	Consultancy	Legal Costs	FDC	Loan
Financial Update	06/03/2026	FFL Costs	Waterfront	Chatteris	March	Set up Costs	Costs	General	Recharges	Interest
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total Paid to 31.03.2025	Actual 31.03.25	1,889,736.78	221,503.62	653,419.63	1,000.00	18,276.15	330,136.58	40,607.65	475,000.00	149,793.15
Confirmation Statement	Companies House	0.00								
Data Protection Fee	Information Commissioner	0.00								
Bank Charges	Barclays Bank	0.00								
Consultancy	Instinctively Green	85,800.00					85,800.00			
Consultancy	Create Consulting Engineers Ltd	13,698.34	13,698.34							
Consultancy	Caneparo Associates Ltd	6,370.61	6,370.61							
Consultancy	Dyer	135,000.00	135,000.00							
Legal services	Bevan Brittan	3,871.00	922.00	2,949.00						
Survey Services	The Survey House	2,295.00	2,295.00							
Planning consultancy	Planning Potential Ltd	38,068.45	38,068.45							
Valuation Report - The Elms	Carter Jonas	0.00								
Ecology Services	Red Ecology Limited	5,809.43	5,809.43							
Archeology Services	Headland Archeology	0.00								
Planning Fee	Fenland District Council	0.00								
Planning Consultancy Support	Barmach	0.00								
DM Fee + DP Fees	Lovell	91,745.40		91,745.40						
Directors Insurance	AON UK Ltd	3,920.00				3,920.00				
FFL Website	Chameleon Studios	0.00								
Interest Received on Late Repayment	HMRC - VAT Claim	0.00								
Support Recharges	FDC SLA 2025/26 - 12 months	127,437.00				2,437.00			125,000.00	
Interest Costs	FDC Loans 2025/26 - 12 months	0.00								
Total Paid	2025/26 - Actual to 28.02.26	514,015.23	202,163.83	94,694.40	0.00	6,357.00	85,800.00	0.00	125,000.00	0.00
Grand Total Paid to Date	Actual to 28.02.26	2,403,752.01	423,667.45	748,114.03	1,000.00	24,633.15	415,936.58	40,607.65	600,000.00	149,793.15
Total Benefit to FDC Revenue Account - Forecast to 28.02.26		754,593.15								
Total Benefit to FDC - Capital Receipt - to 31.12.25		200,000.00								

8 Legal Implications

8.1 Reviewing the CIS ensures compliance with our best value duty and is also compliant with the delegations to Cabinet in which it is provided that it will be reviewed every 2 years. At their meeting in March 2025 Cabinet agreed to defer this review.

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Agenda Item No:	6	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 March 2026	
Report Title:	Air Quality Review and Assessment Statutory Reporting	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To present the findings of the annual statutory 2025 review and assessment of air quality.
- 1.2 To update members on the development work undertaken in 2025 to increase monitoring sites and air quality data across Fenland.
- 1.3 To inform members of the key action plan priorities for 2026.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Section 82 of the Environment Act 1995 places a duty on every local authority to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether nationally set air quality objectives are likely to be achieved.
- 2.2 Nationally set objectives apply to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) and Particulates of certain sizes (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} - particles of less than 10 micrometres or 2.5 micrometres in diameter).
- 2.3 Poor air quality has a direct impact on health, and particularly those residents with asthma and other lung conditions.
- 2.4 The Council routinely monitors air quality across the district in accordance with the national air quality strategy for England. Monitoring results are compared against the national objectives and reported annually to Defra.
- 2.5 Air quality reviews undertaken recently (the latest being 2025) have not identified any concerns when considering available air quality data for Fenland.
- 2.6 In areas where pollution exceeds air quality objective levels an air quality management area must be declared. For districts without an air quality management area the authority must write an air quality strategy detailing monitoring and actions to maintain good air quality.
- 2.7 Defra have requested Fenland Council continue to develop a wider air quality strategy and ensure any previous decisions to declare air quality management areas are reviewed and appropriate action is taken. The work referenced within this report fulfils that requirement.
- 2.8 The Fenland district area has been subject to a number of development consents and infrastructure improvements in recent years and these have all had an impact on the action plan for air quality.

- 2.9 In 2025 a joint public health risk assessment was undertaken by UK Health Security Agency and Public Health which specifically looked at health risks from the Saxon Pit site in Whittlesey. This assessment concludes with recommendations of relevance to local air quality management processes.
- 2.10 In March 2025 the Council agreed to revoke 2 air quality management areas (AQMA) declared in Wisbech because of the risk of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter levels from a coal fired boiler, which was removed in 2009. These were 2 of 4 air quality management areas historically declared in Fenland.
- 2.11 The Council must continue to review and potentially revoke the remaining 2 historic air quality management areas. This is a requirement within Defra's feedback to the latest air quality review and assessment report. If these areas are considered appropriate for revocation, a district wide air quality strategy should be developed.
- 2.12 Air quality is an ever-changing situation and as road networks change and new industries emerge the monitoring of air quality continues to be incredibly important.
- 2.13 The development of a new air quality strategy is beneficial because it will reflect current conditions, and upcoming changes, and provide a clearer, more accurate basis for managing air quality.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 For Cabinet to note the report, monitoring locations, plans and proposed actions to ensure the Council's statutory obligations under the Environment Act 1995 continue to be met and actions are implemented to further improve air quality.

Wards Affected	<i>All</i>
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Sidney Imafidon – Portfolio Holder for Assets, Business Premises - Health & Safety & Food Safety & Heritage
Report Originator(s)	Annabel Tighe- Head of Environmental Health and Compliance Laura Harwood – Senior Environmental Health Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Annabel Tighe -Head of Environmental Health and Compliance Carol Pilson – Corporate Director

Background Papers	<p>Annual Screening Reviews of the District's Air Quality are available on our website at Air quality - Fenland District Council</p> <p>Saxon Pit Public Health Report Saxon Pit risk assessment Cambridgeshire County Council</p> <p>Air quality management area revocation report 2025 Report and appendix.pdf</p>
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1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 In 2025 Cabinet approved the revocation of 2 air quality management areas (AQMA) for Wisbech. Cabinet then requested an update regarding on going monitoring and project work relating to air quality.
- 1.2 Local authorities have a duty under the Environment Act 1995 to monitor, review and assess air quality against national Air Quality Standards (AQS) and to report on this work annually to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Defra provide feedback and direction in terms of the work councils undertake in this field.
- 1.3 During 2025 officers have worked to develop the Fenland air quality monitoring network through increased grant income, the utilisation of planning consent orders, planning conditions and business / partner links. This has resulted in a network of monitoring which is focussed on areas of higher risk and concern.
- 1.4 National Air Quality Standards to which the council must have regard are set for an array of pollutants generally from traffic and industrial sources. The pollutants are Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Particulate Matter (PM₁₀ / PM_{2.5}) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂).
- 1.5 The predominant pollution sources in Fenland are from traffic emissions. Petrol and diesel-engined motor vehicles emit 3 of the monitored pollutants; NO₂ and Particulates PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Historically SO₂ has been a problem as there were a number of industrial combustion processes in Fenland. Most have now been removed or downsized. The remaining potential for SO₂ emissions of concern would be from the Forterra brick works however current production rates and the monitoring undertaken by Forterra as a requirement of their environmental permit shows no likely exceedances.
- 1.6 Fenland has therefore reported good air quality when monitoring against these pollutants over the past 15 years. Improvements in technology and vehicle emission standards have contributed to this picture nationally. FDC officers work closely with county council colleagues when road infrastructure changes are planned.

- 1.7 When monitoring and reviewing for pollutants the council uses data from a blend of different sources including a network of roadside diffusion tubes, a real time sensor and taking account of other industry and authority monitoring results. This network of available data has developed through 2024-2025 and is increasing in 2026. The tables below show the locations of these and the responsible organisation for their maintenance and management.
- 1.8 Throughout 2025 network of roadside diffusion tubes increased with additional scrutiny given to areas of concern (informed through resident consultation). The recent review and assessment has highlighted Weasenham Lane as an area of concern with a slight decline in air quality.
- 1.9 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority manage five low-cost sensors within Fenland, specifically in the towns of March (three sensors) and Wisbech (two sensors). Data was collected at two sensors across the entire duration of 2024, the results and locations of which are presented in the Review and Assessment report show no air quality exceedances for NO₂ and SO₂.
- 1.10 An air quality monitoring strategy required by consent order for MVV Medworth is now active and data is made available quarterly to the public and the council. This strategy takes account of traffic pollutants in areas of concern which may be impacted by the development. This strategy includes a series of roadside diffusion tubes and a sensor installed at Thomas Clarkson Academy which has been operational since September 2025. Note the potential pollution from the incinerator is controlled by an environmental permit which is the remit of the environment agency.
- 1.11 Additional funding has been secured from the county council to install one further monitor to assess air quality in Whittlesey, particularly in the Peterborough Road / Saxon Pit location. This installation will take place in 2026.
- 1.12 In addition to increased monitoring actions there has been;
- Improvements to traffic flows for Broad Street, March
 - The revocation of 2 air quality management areas for Wisbech (pollution source had been removed).
- 1.13 The current assessment of air quality shows Fenland continues to meet air quality objectives with notable improvements in March.
- 1.14 Defra has directed the council to undertake a review of the remaining 2 AQMA's as the national air quality objectives are being met within these locations. This work will be taken forwards as appropriate for each location. In Whittlesey the pollution source has now been removed / reduced as was the situation in Wisbech. In Wisbech the additional monitoring locations and data will help to better understand the current position and next steps for that location.
- 1.15 Remaining AQMA's:
AQMA 3 Wisbech - declared due to elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from transport emissions.

AQMA 4 Whittlesey - declared due to concerns over sulphur dioxide levels (SO₂) which were likely being emitted from brick works.

Maps of these locations can be found in schedule 1 and 2.

- 1.16 The recent public health risk assessment undertaken by UK Health and Security Agency and County Council Public Health Consultants, with support from FDC officers has identified further air quality monitoring around the Saxon Pit site in Whittlesey would be of benefit. Proposed actions include:
- An air quality monitoring plan will be developed in partnership with the environment agency to include locations for particulate and sulphur dioxide monitoring.
 - One site will be used for a mobile monitoring station (provided by the environment agency) in summer 2026.
 - At a resident feedback event on 5th February discussions were held about the relocation of the Hallcroft Road monitor. This data shows good air quality however residents who live on the north and east side of Saxon Pit report this not to be the case. Relocation of this monitor seems sensible bearing in mind the reported issues further to the north east of Saxon Pit.
- 1.17 It is worth noting the industries operating within the Saxon Pit site are subject to environmental permits which require air quality monitoring of their operations. A summary of this information can be found on the final table below.
- 1.18 For any location across Fenland, where data identifies national air quality objectives are not being met, an AQMA must be declared for the pollutant of concern.
- 1.19 The tables below set out the location, pollutant being measured and the agency or business responsible for the monitor and data.

Fenland District Council – current	
Location	Pollutant monitored for
2022-2025 Hallcroft Road, Whittlesey	NO ₂ , PM ₁₀ , PM _{2.5} , SO ₂
Station Road, March (B1101)	NO ₂
Broad Street, March (Tesco)	NO ₂
Broad Street, March (Natwest)	NO ₂
Dartford Road, March (B1099)	NO ₂
Gaul Road, March	NO ₂
The Causeway, March (B1101)	NO ₂
Wisbech Road, (Cobblestones), March	NO ₂
178a Wisbech Road, March	NO ₂
Peas Hill Roundabout, March (A141)	NO ₂
Isle Of Ely Way, Wimington (A141)	NO ₂
Fenland Way, Chatteris (A141)	NO ₂
High Street, Chatteris (B1050)	NO ₂

Wenny Road, Chatteris	NO2
London Road, Chatteris	NO2
Tayberry Way, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
Peterborough Road, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
Inhams Road, Whittlesey	NO2
Cemetery Road Roundabout, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
Syers Lane, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
13-15 Whitmore Street, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
Eastgate Mews, Whittlesey	NO2
Hallcroft Road, Whittlesey	NO2
1B West Delph, Whittlesey(B1040)	NO2
Kings Dyke, Whittlesey (A605)	NO2
Thorney Toll (A47)	NO2
A47, Guyhirn	NO2
March Road, Rings End	NO2
Weasenham Lane / Cromwell Road, Wisbech (B198)	NO2
Newbridge Lane, Wisbech	NO2
32 Cromwell Road, Wisbech	NO2
South Brink, Wisbech	NO2
13 - 15 Nene Quay, Wisbech	NO2
22 South Brink, Wisbech	NO2
15 Old Market, Wisbech	NO2
North End, Wisbech	NO2
2 Leverington Road, Wisbech (A1101)	NO2
Lynn Road Roundabout, Wisbech (B198)	NO2
Lynn Road / Mnt Pleasant, Wisbech (B198)	NO2
Churchill Road, Wisbech (Bowthorpe)	NO2
Napier Court, Churchill Road, Wisbech (A1101)	NO2
Churchill / Weasenham, Wisbech	NO2
Weasenham Lane AQY, Wisbech	NO2
64 Weasenham Lane, Wisbech	NO2
Weasenham Lane/New Drove, Wisbech (B198)	NO2
Ramnoth Road, Wisbech (A1101)	NO2
Elm High Road, Wisbech	NO2

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority	
Location	Pollutant
Broad Street, March (Station Road/Darford Road roundabout)	NO2, O3, PM1, PM2.5 and PM10
Broad Street, March	NO2, O3, PM1, PM2.5 and PM10
Broad Street, March	NO2, O3, PM1, PM2.5 and PM10
South Brink, Wisbech	NO2, O3, PM1, PM2.5 and PM10
Weasenham Lane, Wisbech (Churchill Road/Elm High Street junction)	NO2, O3, PM1, PM2.5 and PM10

- Note O3 is ozone which is monitored as part of the CPCA project.

1.20 This data is not currently published publicly, but further details and previous results can be found in appendix E on the 2025 Annual Screening Review.

MVV Medworth Air Quality Monitoring Strategy	
Location	Pollutant
Thomas Clarkson Academy	Nitrogen Dioxide
Thomas Clarkson Academy	Sulphur Dioxide
Thomas Clarkson Academy	Particulates of less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10)
Thomas Clarkson Academy	Particulates of less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5)
Walsoken	Nitrogen Dioxide
Walsoken	Particulates less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10)
Walsoken	Particulates less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5)
Thomas Clarkson Academy	NO2
New Bridge Lane Roadside	NO2
New Drove	NO2
Cromwell Road	NO2
Cromwell Road Roadside	NO2
Wisbech Bypass (A47)	NO2
Weasenham Lane	NO2
Weasenham Lane	NO2
Railway Road Roadside	NO2
Algores Way Roadside	NO2
Elm High Road	NO2
Elm High Road Roadside	NO2
Churchill Road	NO2

1.21 As part of the MVV Development Consent Orders Community Air Quality Monitoring Strategy, quarterly monitoring data will published on their website at <https://www.mvv-medworthchp.co.uk/>

Saxon Pit – Forterra , Johnsons and East Midland Waste Monitoring	
Location	Pollutant
Park Lane, Whittlesey (Forterra)	SO2
Bradley Fen, Whittlesey (Forterra)	SO2
Saxon Pit (Johnsons)	NO2, PM10, PM2.5, SO2
Saxon Pit (Johnsons)	NO2, PM10, PM2.5, SO2
Saxon Pit (EMW)	NO2, PM10, PM2.5, SO2

- 1.22 Note the East Midland Waste Saxon Pit monitor is linked to the national air quality network and data can be viewed [Fenland District Council - Air Quality monitoring service](#)
- 1.23 Forterra and Johnsons data is made available to the environment agency as part of their permit requirements. It is not published data. Previous years' data for the Forterra monitors can be found in the [2025 Air Quality Annual Status Report](#)
- 1.24 Maps of the monitoring locations can be accessed in Appendix D of the 2025 Annual Screening Review [2025 Air Quality Annual Status Report](#)
- 1.25 In summary since 2024 Fenland has seen an increase in district wide air quality data. This has included the installation of eight new sensors or monitors and an expansion of the diffusion tube network through working with partner agencies and industries making use of external funding wherever possible. The aim of this network is to ensure robust available of data and ensure a focus on areas of concern.
- 1.26 The council will continue to use the environmental permit and planning consultation process to encourage the sharing of data and industry responsibility to demonstrate environmental compliance.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The council has a duty to complete the annual review and assessment therefore this report is for information and for members to note the work undertaken or facilitated by the council for improved air quality, which directly impacts the residents' health.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Consultation regarding the annual review and assessment each year is not required however customer feedback is welcomed and can be submitted through usual council communication channels.
- 3.2 A one off public consultation event took place in relation to the Saxon Pit public health report for Whittlesey on Wednesday 5th February where monitoring options were discussed with residents. All those spoken to wished to see more monitoring on the boundary of the Saxon Pit site.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Air quality review and assessment is a statutory obligation of the council.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.2 The Council has a duty to screen, review and, where appropriate, monitor air quality within the district as set out within the Environment Act 1995.
- 5.3 It is important to note the responsibility for monitoring compliance with formal permits is the responsibility of the holder of the permit and not the local authority.
- 5.4 Many of the industrial operations referred to in this report are subject to County Council planning permissions, Environment Agency permits and associated conditions.

5.5 Financial Implications

- 5.6 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, agreed by Cabinet and Council in February, projects a financial shortfall for 2026/27 of £2.856m rising to £2.903 in 2027/28.
- 5.7 Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit which the Council will need to address.
- 5.8 All monitoring, including staffing costs, is budgeted for or subject to external grants.

5.9 Equality Implications

- 5.10 Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts and particularly affects the most vulnerable in society; children and older people and those with heart and lung conditions. Improving air quality reduces the impact on these vulnerable groups in particular.
- 5.11 The programme of monitoring will continue across all areas of the district, particularly focussed in areas of increased pollution risk.

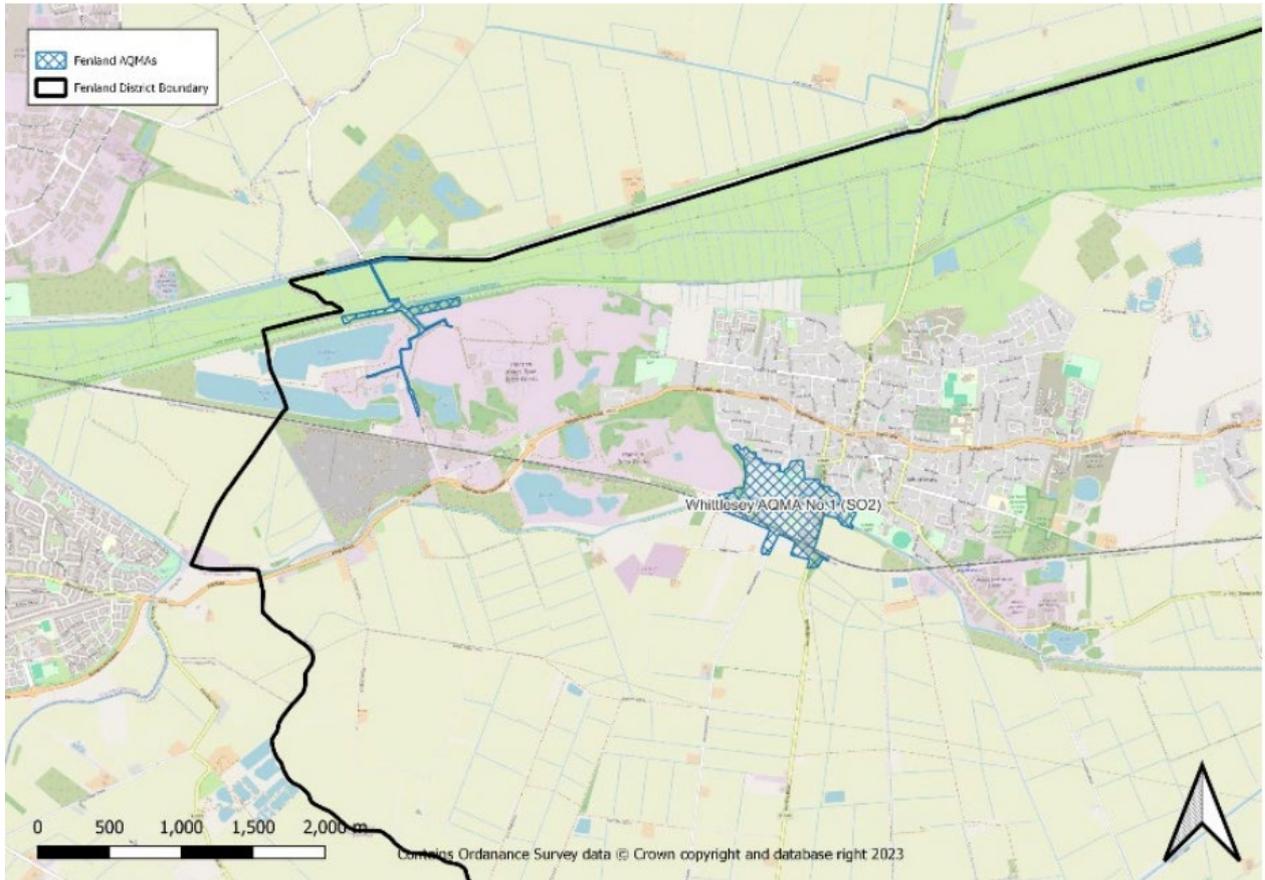
5.12 Other Relevant Implications

- 5.13 It is possible that screening, reviewing and monitoring of particulates of 2.5 micrometres will be required by future legislation.

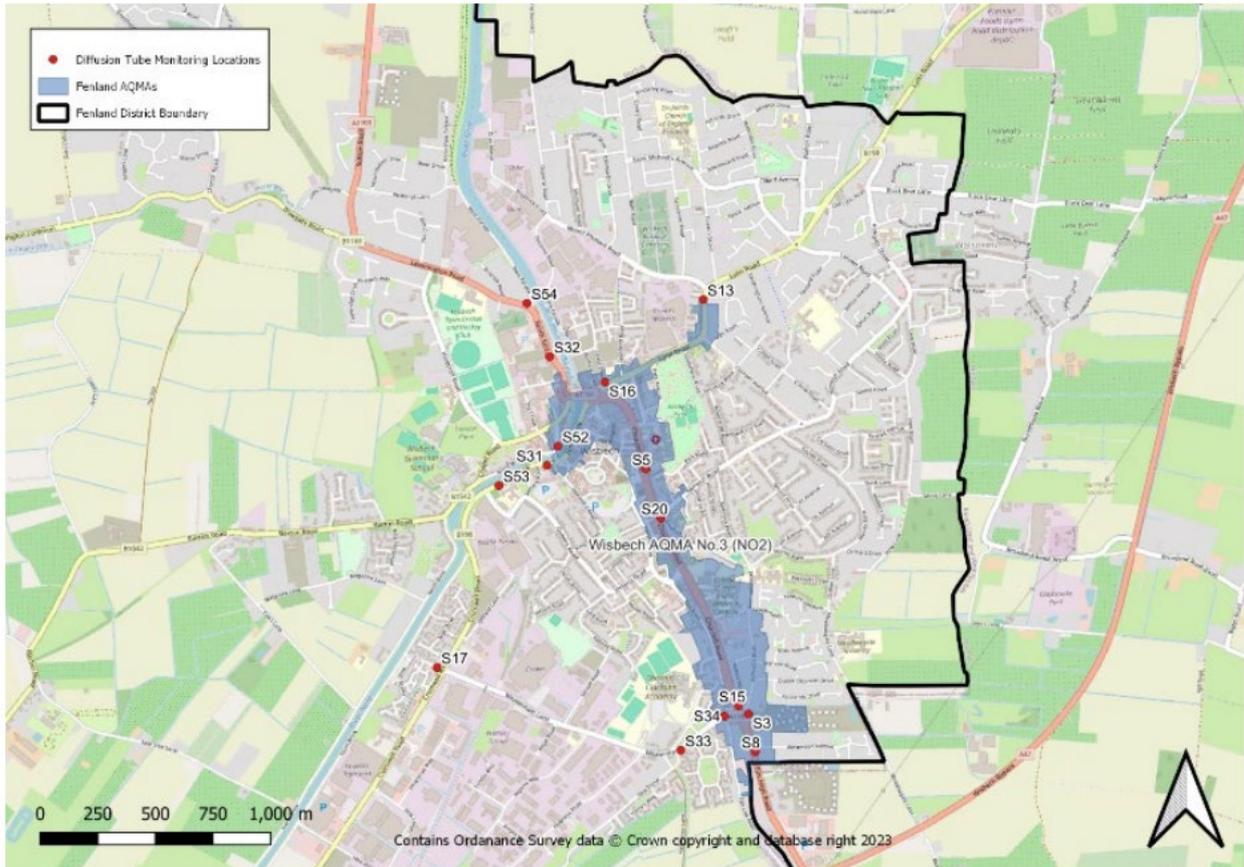
6 SCHEDULES

- 6.1 Schedule 1 - Map showing Whittlesey AQMA (SO₂)
- 6.2 Schedule 2 - Map showing Wisbech AQMA (NO₂)

SCHEDULE 1
Map showing Whittlesey AQMA (SO2)



SCHEDULE 2 Map showing Wisbech AQMA (NO2)



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Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 March 2026	
Report Title:	Play Area Project – elected Member Feedback regarding play area improvement requirements	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 Fenland District Council has been allocated the £1.5 million grant from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund. Cabinet has previously decided to focus this grant funding on enhancement of open spaces facilities and play areas across the district in line with the Fenland Inspire! project aims, which also matches one of the objectives of the Pride in Place Impact Fund.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Following an assessment of existing FDC play areas, a report to Cabinet in February 2026 split the budget as follows;
- Towns; £250,000 budget per town
 - Rural areas and villages; £500,000
- 2.2 Additionally, Cabinet instructed the Portfolio Holder for the project to consult with Elected Members in each town and across the rural areas to ascertain what improvements Members would like to see in their areas.
- 2.3 This report summarises Member feedback with estimated costs of Members' suggestions and requirements.
- 2.4 All costs remain an estimate until a formal procurement process is completed and tendered costs are available.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 3.1 Cabinet considers the feedback within the report from Elected Members regarding improvements desired in their areas and decides which particular projects or improvements to move forwards with taking into account the budgets previously allocated by Cabinet in 2.1 above. Cabinet should note that each town was allocated a notional budget of £250,000 and the rural areas £500,000. Cabinet is asked to ensure that Elected Member requests for the entire project falls very close to the total budget of £1.5m.

Additionally;

That Cabinet delegates authority to the Portfolio Holder responsible for the Fenland Inspire! Open Spaces and Play Areas Project to consult with local Elected Members with regard to any necessary adjustments to current expected spend against the budget and adjusts the notional budget allocations as necessary and matches these revised budgets with Elected Members priorities.

- 3.2 That Cabinet instructs officers to inform the local MP of what plans have been approved, pending the necessary community engagement to further shape

proposals, as is required by the Government Prospectus for the Pride in Place Impact Fund;

- 3.3 Notes that community feedback regarding any proposals is a requirement of the Government Grant and that feedback may alter proposals accordingly. Community engagement will take place throughout April based on decisions made by Members in paragraph 3.1;
- 3.4 Notes that the deadline for committing the Pride in Place Impact Fund which is funding open space and play area improvements is no later than 31 March 2027;
- 3.5 That Cabinet authorises officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for the Fenland Inspire! Open Spaces and Play Area Project and the Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces to deliver the improvements approved by Cabinet in paragraph 3.1. Those improvements will be subject to the MP's feedback and feedback as part of a community engagement process, ensuring compliance with MHCLG's prospectus for this grant funding.
- 3.6 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Portfolio Holder for the Fenland Inspire! Open Spaces and Play Area Project to consult with local Elected Members regarding alternative projects where, from the options approved by Cabinet, permission to use a third party's land is denied, or including where MHCLG rejects a project as unsuitable for the funding.
- 3.7 That Cabinet authorises the Monitoring Officer to execute and complete all requisite legal documentation in relation to the matters above related to play area and open spaces improvements, procurement and their delivery.

Wards Affected	All	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/15JAN26/01	
Portfolio Holders	Cllr Sidney Imafidon	Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! Open Spaces and Play Area Project
	Cllr Chris Boden	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
	Cllr Jan French	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces
Report Originator	Phil Hughes Heidi Smith Gemma Newell	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Play Area Project Officer Open Spaces Officer
Contact Officers	Phil Hughes Carol Pilson	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer
Background Papers	February 2026 Cabinet Report January 2026 Cabinet Report November 2025 Cabinet Report December 2023 Cabinet Report	

1 Background and Intended Outcomes

1.1 This report summarises Elected Members' requirements for play area and open space improvements, split by individual towns and the rural areas.

2 Chatteris Member Feedback

2.1 Further to local elected Member discussions, Cllr Murphy met with FDC officers to discuss Member requirements for Play Area and open space improvement in Chatteris.

- FDC officers were instructed to estimate the cost of any improvements highlighted as required by the Play Area Project Officer's inspection of the Chatteris play areas.
- Additionally, officer were asked to cost lighting for Wenny Recreation Ground and Furrowfields open space.

2.2 Local Members Key Priority:

2.3 Proposed Lighting Works in 2 key open spaces to improve lighting to reduce crime and the fear of crime in popular open spaces, that are also key routes to schools.

2.4 Note all costs are estimates until a specification has been developed and confirmed quotations are received.

2.5 Lighting at **Furrowfields** recreation ground:

Requirement	Cost
5 lights needed @ £3,000 per column	£15,000
Final specification to be confirmed once final design works are in hand.	
UK Power Network works requirement TBC, following previous power works on site	£20,000
Ducting / cabling	£25,000
Feeder Pillar approximately £6,000	£6,000
Design costs £3,500	£3,500
Contingency @ 10%	£7,000
Total	£76,500

2.6 Lighting at Wenny Rd recreation ground

Requirement	Cost
15 lights needed @ £3,000 per column	£45,000
Final specification to be confirmed once final design works are in hand.	
UK Power Network works requirement	£30,000
Ducting / cabling	£25,000
Feeder Pillar approximately	£12,000

Design costs & site inspections	£3,500
Contingency @ 10%	£12,000
Total	£127,500

2.7 Local Members Priority 2

2.8 **Any work identified below to be undertaken from any remaining budget from the lighting priority.** Current estimates expect a £21,000 play equipment budget, but as noted above the lighting costs are currently estimated and will not be confirmed until a design has been developed and work procured.

2.9 When the final play area budget is confirmed, the local lead Member will be consulted on which of the mix of improvements across those detailed below should be taken forwards.

2.10 Chatteris – play area audit summary;

2.11 Following instruction from elected members, council officers have carried out audits on all play areas in Chatteris. The majority of play areas only require minor works, such as repainting, or adding an additional piece of equipment. Further to feedback, lighting is realised as a priority for two main areas; Furrowfields and Wenny Park recreation ground. Estimated costs for these can be found at the end of this page.

2.12 Where an existing FDC play area is not mentioned, this is because the assessment determined that no improvements to equipment were required.

2.13 The findings from the audits are detailed below:

- **Cricketers Way** - Equipment found to be in good condition, requiring a possible repair to the surfacing under the swing which has become uneven in places.
- **Furrowfields Recreation Ground (MUGA)** - Specifically the Multi Use Games Area (Muga) is in good condition, the lines in the space would benefit from repainting.
- **Furrowfields** - New equipment was added in 2024 –2025 and is in therefore good condition. The swings, spinner and multi play would benefit from a repaint to improve their appearance, additionally the basket swing could do with replacing.
- **Hunters Close** - Equipment is in reasonable condition, slide has a few small dents. Equipment would benefit from repainting and repair to the surface is required in places. As an alternative – replace the existing play area with new equipment and resurface the area.
- **Huntingdon Road, MUGA** - Potential to reline the sports area and install a high fence.

- **Larham Way, MUGA** - Side panels are waist height – potential to install a high fence
- **St Pauls Drive** - Equipment to be repainted.
- **Wenny Road Play Area** - Equipment in generally good condition, surface and equipment would benefit from a clean but no major work required.
- **Wenny Road – MUGA** - Potentially reline the sports area

Cricketers Way – Equipment in good condition. Possible safety surface repair required where uneven.	Estimated cost: £5,000
Furrowfields Recreation Ground MUGA – repaint lines in the MUGA area.	Estimated cost - £2,000
Furrowfields Recreation ground – Replace basket swing for new. Repaint swings/spinner/multi play to refresh.	Estimated repaint cost: £4,000 New Basket seat without install approximately: £675
Hunters Close – Equipment is reasonable condition. Repaint equipment/surface	Est. repair of surface cost: £2,784 Est.£15,000 for repainting/surface.
Huntingdon Road - Muga	Est cost £2,000 to reline sports area
St Pauls Drive – Improve by repainting swings/changing the surface. Remove and reinstate to grass.	Repainting estimated at £5,000
Wenny road MUGA – reline sports area	Est cost: £2,000
Larham Way - MUGA	Awaiting approximate cost of a higher fence installation/supply.

All costs set out in the table above, are estimated costs only.

2.14 Chatteris total expected cost: **£250,000**

3 March Member Feedback

3.1 Officers were asked to estimate costs for identified potential new play areas or improvements to existing spaces;

- Peas Hill Road open space

3.2 Wigston / North Drive, Robingoodfellows, Gaul Road, The Avenue, West End park, Southwell Close and Smiths Drive have all been identified as areas for improvement following work at the initial two open spaces.

3.3 Local members key priority:

3.4 As listed above; these areas have been identified as priority spaces that would benefit from a new playground or improvement to the existing play area.

3.5 **Note, all costs are estimates until a specification has been developed and confirmed quotations are received. Note that the equipment listed is subject to local community consultation.**

Peas Hill Road	
Surfacing under climbing frame	£3,000
Removal of old ramp and wooden posts	£10,000
Replacement climbing frame (estimated cost as prices vary according to size and design)	£13,000
Treat wooden Multi play	£3,000
New basket swing	£1,500
Zip Wire	£16,200
Cradle Swings (incl. inclusive option)	£5,000
Flat swings with new frame:	£4,700
Seesaw	£3,500
Contingency 10%	£5,990
Total:	£65,890

Robingoodfellows	
Zip wire	The space already has a zip wire.
Seesaw	£3,500
Roundabout (inclusive)	£16,000
Total:	£19,500

Wigstones / North Drive	
Footpath	£10,000
Springer	£1,700
Seesaw	£3,500
Total:	£15,200

Gaul Road	
Zip wire (note: insufficient space within fenced play area)	£16,200
Seesaw	£3,500
Springer	£1,700
Goal Posts	These are currently positioned away from the play area and the road. They are unable to face the road or be any closer to the play area. Improvement is possible by adding in a football wall if desired
Total:	£21,400

The Avenue	
Zip wire	£16,200
Goal posts	Not possible for this location due to domestic properties surrounding the grass area and the road in close proximity. A football wall is already in place.
Total:	£16,200

West End Park - the current play area can't be extended due to underground services: Gas and Water	
Zip wire	£16,200
Goal Posts	Prices vary according to size; allow £5,000
Climbing frame	£13,000 (cost varies depending on size and design)
SEND swings	£3,500 (costs vary according to design)
Wetpour under existing cradle swing	£6,000
TOTAL	£43,700

Southwell close	
Wetpour under items to improve use during wet weather/ winter months	£10,000
Total	£10,000

Smiths Drive	
Seesaw (requires a similar surface to grass)	£3,500
Trail equipment (varies in price according to size and design).	£17,500
Total:	£21,000

Location unknown	Prices vary according to size & design
Climbing Rock	£17,000

3.6 March total expected cost: £229,890.

3.7 The costs detailed above fall short of the budget of £250,000. Cabinet should determine how this shortfall may be resolved.

4 Whittlesey Member Feedback

4.1 Local Members key priorities are shown below:

- Play area for Church street play park (next to St Andrews Church)
£100,000 open space land owned by FDC currently not being used
- Play area for Birds estate play park £100,000 Open space land owned by FDC currently not being used
- Add in limited play equipment closer to housing at Station Road play park
£25,000
- Water tower play area £25,000 for additional play equipment
- Whittlesey country park £25,000 for phase 1 costing plan

4.2 Note, all costs are estimates until a specification has been developed and confirmed quotations have been received – please see table below. Please also note that the equipment listed is subject to local community consultation.

Church Street, Whittlesey (Next to St Andrews Church)

The site lies within a designated Conservation Area and is immediately adjacent to a listed church building and its associated boundary wall. The presence of several mature trees significantly restricts the available space for installing play equipment, as the existing tree canopies limit usable ground area. Any proposal to introduce new play equipment at this location is likely to require planning approval due to the site's heritage constraints.

In addition, the installation would likely necessitate the felling or substantial pruning of mature trees to create sufficient space, which may conflict with Conservation Area protections and heritage considerations.

Roundabout	£15,000
See-Saw	£6,000
Slide	£7,000
Multi play	£20,000
Swing	£15,000
Improve fence at North boundary	£21,000
Picnic Bench/s	£5,000 with concrete base
Litter Bin/s	£1,000
Sub Total	£90,000
Contingency 11%	£10,000
TOTAL	£100,000

Public Open Space Teal Road, Whittlesey (pedestrian footpath from Curlew Close, Kingfisher Road and Teal Road)

The installation of a new play area on this site may require planning permission. The open space is enclosed on three sides by residential properties, which creates the potential for impacts relating to noise, overlooking, and changes to the character of the area.

As a result, early engagement and consultation with adjacent residents should be considered a priority to identify concerns, manage expectations, and ensure that any proposed layout or equipment selection is appropriate.

Roundabout (accessible)	£15,000
See-Saw	£6,000
Medium Slide	£7,000
Multi play	£20,000
Complete Swing Unit (incl. accessible seat)	£15,000

Bow top fence, self-close gate and maintenance gate	£27,000
Sub Total	£90,000
Contingency 11%	£10,000
TOTAL	£100,000

Station road play park	
Complete swing unit (incl.1 accessible seat)	£15,000
Junior Slide	£10,000
Total	£25,000

Water Tower, Tower Road, play area	
Inclusive roundabout	£15,000
Junior Slide	£10,000
Total	£25,000

Whittlesey country park	
Phase 1 costing plan	£25,000

Manor Field	
5 x metal benches for along the river on in the Manor Park	£10,000

4.3 Whittlesey total expected cost: **£285,000**

4.4 The costs detailed above exceed the budget of £250,000. Cabinet should determine a priority for the projects above within the £250,000 budget scope.

5 Wisbech Member Feedback

5.1 Local Members key priority:

- 5.2 To provide improvements in Wisbech Park to attract more users into the historic park.
- 5.3 To improve the play area at Burcroft Road by adding a selection of equipment and to provide a new play area at Guild Road.
- 5.4 Please note: Guild Road is not FDC owned and requires permission from the landowner (Clarion Housing) to carry out any works.
- 5.5 Note, all costs are estimates until a specification has been developed and confirmed quotations have been received.

Wisbech Park	
Additional tables and seating;	
Estimated cost (depending on the number of units required)	£5,000
Storage to increase flexibility for community events and security of equipment;	
Estimated cost (subject to container size required)	£3,500
Additional Activity Equipment inside Wisbech Park Pavilion;	
Estimated cost	£4,000

Burcroft Road (keep existing seesaw and swings)	
Budget allocation	£75,000

Guild Road	
Budget allocation	£105,000

- 5.6 This leaves a budget of **£57,500** remaining following the key projects identified above. This will allow a selection of additional toddler equipment in **Jasmin Close play area** as requested by Members.
- 5.7 Wisbech total expected costs: **£250,000**

6 Rural Member Feedback

6.1 Local members key priorities

Tydd St Giles	
Roundabout	£10,000
See-Saw	£6,000
Slide	£7,000
Rocker	£2,000
Safety Fence with self-close gates and maintenance gate	£30,000
Bench (without concrete base slab)	£1,000
Bin	£500
Sub Total	£56,500
Contingency 10%	£5,650
Total (rounded)	£62,000

Newton-In-The-Isle	
Repairs to existing equipment	£24,200
Monkey Bars	£10,000
Spring Rocker	£2,000
Sub Total	£36,200
Contingency 10%	£3,620
Total (rounded up)	£40,000

Manea play area (costs shown provided by Parish Council)	
Double Cradle Swing	£1,800
Carousel	£3,700
Essential Tower	£4,048
Carousel Picnic Bench	£1,368
Mountain Net Climber	£7,900
Bali Climber	£5,400
Wheelchair Carousel	£7,580

MUGA Refurbishment	£2,950
Installation and Health and Safety	£10,000
Sub total	£44,700
Contingency 10%	£4,500
Total (rounded up)	£50,000

Christchurch	
Replacement skate park equipment - quotation already received	£60,000
Contingency 10%	£6,000
Total	£66,000

Elm	
Play area improvements	£30,000

Morrow	
Play area improvements	£30,000

Leverington (The Foal Ground)	
Note this open space is owned by the Parish Council	
Play area improvements	£52,000

Wimblington - War Memorial Park	
Replacement swings and roundabout (HAGS quotation in hand)	£13,000
Playcubes project (HAGS quotation in hand)	£9,000
Total	£22,000

Doddington	
MUGA	£100,000
Contingency 10%	£10,000
Benwick Road play area	£30,000
Total	£140,000

6.2 Rural areas total estimated costs: **£492,000**.

7 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Recommendations are determined by Elected Member feedback and as detailed will be subject to MP feedback and community consultation – as required by the prospectus to the Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF).

8 Consultation

- 8.1 Following Cabinet's discussion and decisions regarding this report, the local community will be consulted to ensure that improvements are what the community would like to see in the spaces selected.
- 8.2 Additionally, as detailed in the PiPIF Prospectus, the local MP will be consulted on the plans to take forwards.

9 Alternative Options Considered

- 9.1 None – feedback has been sought from Elected Members regarding their towns or villages to allow locally informed projects to be brought forwards.
- 9.2 MP feedback and community consultation will refine suggestions to determine final specification of play equipment to be delivered as required by the Pride in Place Impact Fund prospectus.

10 Implications

10.1 Legal Implications

- 10.2 Any procurement will be conducted with the Council's Procurement Team, likely using framework agreements that the Council already has access to ensure that all procurement regulations are complied with.
- 10.3 The majority of the work contained in this report will be grant funded by the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF). Officers will ensure that the Fund's protocols are adhered to. This includes community consultation regarding all projects, as well as ensuring that the local MP is informed as to how the PiPIF is being spent and how local communities have been involved in determining the type of play areas and equipment they would like to see in their play areas.
- 10.4 In the event that play areas or improvements have been selected to take place on land that is not in FDC ownership, discussions and a formal legal agreement will be required from the landowner. Should this not prove possible, officers will revisit Member's priorities for the areas where a landowner does not want equipment on their land. Any changes will be agreed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the designated play area project elected Member representative for the town or rural area in question.

10.5 Financial Implications

- 10.6 This project is funded by Central Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF).
- 10.7 As this is the case, there should be little to no financial impact on FDC for the PiPIF grant funded work that this project is delivering, depending on final costings and contingencies required.
- 10.8 It should be noted that until a procurement process has been followed, after initial MP consultation and community consultation, all costs are estimates.
- 10.9 The budgets apportioned for each area within Fenland were as follows:
- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| Each town | £250,000 |
| Rural areas | £500,000 |

- 10.10 The estimated costs per Elected Member feedback, detailed above by area as follows:

Chatteris	£250,000
March	£250,000
Wisbech	£250,000
Whittlesey	£285,000
Rural Areas	£492,000
Total estimated cost:	<u>£1,527,000</u>

10.11 Equality Implications

- 10.12 Facilities added into open spaces will have an accessible element, where possible, ensuring that all users are able to enjoy themselves in the Council's open spaces.

**DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN –
Updated 13 March 2026**

(For any queries, please refer to the published forward plan)

CABINET

CABINET DATE	ITEMS	LEAD PORTFOLIO HOLDER
27 April 2026	1. Fenland Inspire! Project – 3G Artificial Turf Pitches	Cllr Seaton
	2. Change in Freedom Leisure contractual arrangements to an agency approach	Cllr Wallwork
	3. Implementation of On and Off-street Parking Enforcement in Fenland (CPE)	Cllr French
	4. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
18 May 2026	1. Amendment to the Council's Housing Enforcement Policy	Cllr Christy
	2. Wisbech High Street Update	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
	3. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
15 June 2026	1. Appointment to Outside Bodes	Cllr Boden
	2. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
13 July 2026	1. Annual Report 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	2. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	3. Wisbech High Street Update	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
	4. Development Management Agreement for the Remodelling and Extension Works for the Manor Leisure Centre	Cllr Count Cllr Boden
	5. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden

TBC = To be confirmed

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Agenda Item No:	10	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 March 2026	
Report Title:	Former Barclays Bank, 2 Broad Street, March	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 This paper seeks Cabinet's approval to the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the site formerly occupied by the Barclays Bank building and located at 2 Broad Street, March (the site).

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Following Cabinet's approval to proceed with the purchase the site was acquired in March 2023 and has since been let to the main Broad St contractor (Octavius) for use as their site offices for the duration of the works.
- 2.2 Following the practical completion of the March regeneration project planning consent was obtained by FDC officers to secure the demolition of the existing structure in order to leave a secure level site ready for regeneration.
- 2.3 The demolition work is due to conclude shortly, and final rectification works to adjoining properties whose existing gable walls have been exposed will then be undertaken under the overarching implementation of a Party wall Agreement as required under the terms of Party Wall Act 1996
- 2.4 Members will recall that as the site sits in a prominent position it now offers an opportunity for FDC to secure the replacement of the previous brutalist design with a mixed commercial / retail unit more in keeping with the conservation area and its citing at the main entrance to Broad St from the south.
- 2.5 Contractual arrangements are to be included in the final legal documentation requiring the successful bidder to submit a full planning application to FDC Planners within 6 months of completion of the purchase and to have commenced work on site within 6 months of the grant of a full planning consent. This is seen as essential to avoid the site being land banked for future development. All interested parties were made aware of this requirement prior to submitting their bids.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are requested to confirm their preferred bidder based on the responses detailed in Appendix 2 of this report and approve the disposal of the freehold interest in the property upon the terms reported herein.

- 3.2 Members are further requested to give delegated authority to the Leader of the Council in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, and the S151 Officer to approve the contractual terms securing the disposal of the property and to enter into all legal documentation required.

Wards Affected	All wards
Forward Plan Reference	KEY19FEB26/01
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Boden, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder, Finance Cllr Imafidon, Portfolio Holder, Assets
Report Originator(s)	Mark Greenwood – Head of Property, Assets and Major Projects
Contact Officer(s)	Mark Greenwood – Head of Property, Assets and Major Projects Matt Wright - High Streets Programme Manager
Background Papers	Marketing brochures, Cabinet reports from September 2022 and September 2024

Report:

4 Reasons for Exemption

- 4.1 Appendix 2 to this Report is **NOT FOR PUBLICATION** in accordance with paragraph 3 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains commercially sensitive information relating to financial and business affairs of Fenland District Council and 3rd party organisations. The public interest test has been applied to the information contained within Appendix 2 and it is considered that the need to retain the information as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

5 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 5.1 FDC has undertaken a comprehensive programme to regenerate March High Street using public funds from the Future High Street Fund. This work completed in the second half of 2025 following additional projects being added to the original scope
- 5.2 The former Barclays bank building was acquired utilising grant funding made available by DLUHC Future High Street Fund.
- 5.3 Although the building was in a prominent location in the centre of March, it was felt that a demolition and new build would provide a high-quality product being more in keeping with the surrounding Broad St built environment.
- 5.4 Since the acquisition the site was occupied by way of a lease by Octavius the delivery company for the overall Broad St. Project.
- 5.5 Following the completion of works and site vacation the building has been demolished to leave a cleared development site ready for disposal on the open market as per Cabinet's approval at their meeting of 30th September 2024.

6 Disposal

- 6.1 The property was placed on the market for sale in December 2025 via a joint agency agreement between Maxey Grounds (March and Eddison's (Huntingdon). A copy of the sales details is attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.2 The joint agents were selected initially on a cost basis with input from the FDC Procurement team but then merged to a joint agency to provide a blend of local (Maxey Grounds) and national coverage (Eddison's) for the marketing process.
- 6.3 Having reviewed the site its condition, size location and general context the agents put forward a marketing exercise seeking offers over £295K for the site as cleared development opportunity subject to planning
- 6.4 At the end of January agents reported a number of informal enquiries and formal offers and expressions of interest from 4 parties.
- 6.5 The parties who made bids subsequently sought confirmation of the status of their bids and a timescale for acceptance. In order to achieve a maximum

return officers asked the agents to obtain full and final bids by the 13th February 2026.

- 6.6 The agents have confirmed 2 offers were received by the deadline.
- 6.7 Both have provided proof of funds, in excess of the amounts offered.
- 6.8 Neither party will 100% confirm use at this stage as it's highly subjective, however the general consensus is retail on the ground with residential upper floor, but this will ultimately be subject to acceptance via the planning process.
- 6.9 The bids are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report

7 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 At this stage, approval is being sought to proceed to legal contract stage with the highest bidder.
- 7.2 Both parties have provided our agents evidence of funds above the amounts offered and are considered able to complete the purchase at the values offered.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Public consultation was undertaken throughout the Broad Street project.

9 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 If members are minded not to accept either offer, then the property will need to be placed back on the open market either by way of a traditional sale by private treaty as at present or as a potential auction site.

10 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Legal Implications

- 10.2 Section 123 of The Local Government Act 1972 permits local authorities to dispose of land in any manner they wish, including the sale of their freehold interest.
- 10.3 The only constraint is that a disposal must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable. Anything less than best value will require Secretary of State consent unless the difference between the unrestricted value of the interest to be disposed of and the consideration accepted ("the undervalue") is £2,000,000 (two million pounds) or less.
- 10.4 The Council has obtained an independent valuation and has marketed the site in accordance with that assessment.
- 10.5 In reaching a decision on the recommendations in this report, members will have regard to the requirements of s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

10.6 Financial Implications

- 10.7 This receipt will be a capital receipt and will be used to fund the current FDC capital programme to reduce the need to do external borrowing and the associated borrowing costs for the Council.
- 10.8 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, agreed by Cabinet and Council in February, projects a financial shortfall for 2026/27 of £2.856m rising to £2.903m in 2027/28.
- 10.9 Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit which the Council will need to address.

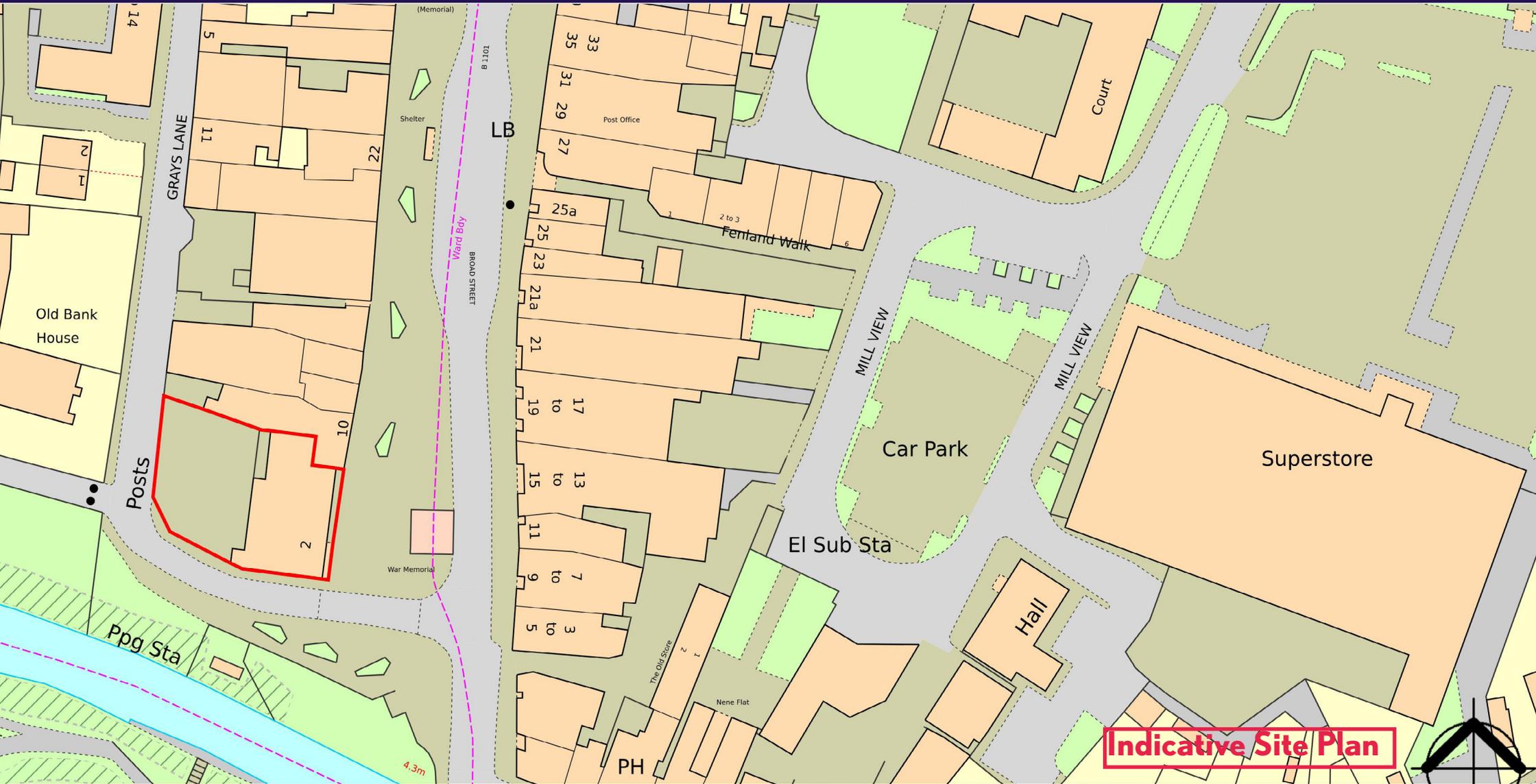
10.10 Equality Implications

- 10.11 N/A.

11 DOCUMENTS AND APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Marketing Brochure
- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of Offers – EXEMPT

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2 Broad Street, March, Cambridgeshire
PE15 8TQ
811.1232770

Eddisons

2 BROAD STREET

MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, PE15 8TQ



Agreement

For Sale



Detail

Development Site



Price

£295,000



Size

0.18 acres (0.074 ha)



Location

March, PE15 8TQ



Property ID

811.1232770

For Viewing & All Other Enquiries Please Contact:



MATTHEW HUNT
BSc (Hons) MRICS
Associate Director

matthew.hunt@eddisons.com
07866 165013
01480 451578

or

Maxey Grounds
01354 602030

Property

The subject property provides a cleared town centre site measuring approximately 0.18 acres which may be suitable for a variety of uses (STP).

The surface will be levelled compacted hardcore.

Services

We understand that mains water, electricity and drainage supplies are available to the property. These have not been tested and are not warranted to be in working order. Interested parties are advised to make their own investigations to the relevant utility service providers.

Town & Country Planning

We understand that the property has consent for uses falling within Class E (Commercial, Business & Services Use) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended 2020).

Interested parties are advised to make their own investigations with the Local Planning Authority.

Rates

Charging Authority: Fenland District Council
Description: Bank and Premises
Rateable Value: £30,750

NB - The site has since been demolished and therefore a Rateable Value is not relevant.

Plans

All plans are indicative only and not to be relied upon.

Price

Offers are sought in the region of £295,000 for the freehold interest.

VAT

VAT may be charged in addition to the price at the prevailing rate.

Legal Costs

Each party is to be responsible for their own legal costs incurred in documenting the transaction.

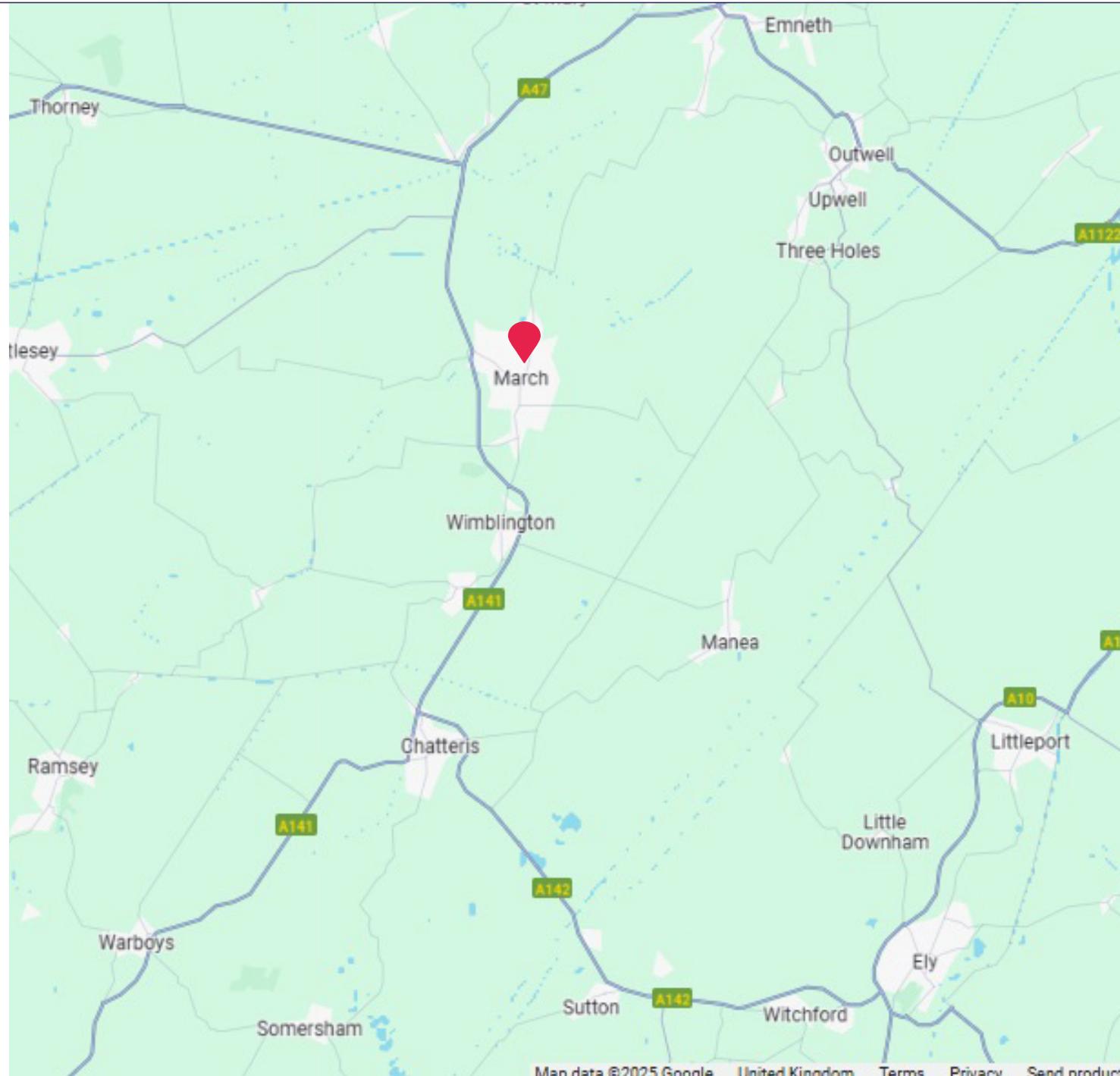
Anti-Money Laundering

Prospective purchasers will be required to provide confirmation of their source of funding and pass the necessary Anti-Money Laundering checks undertaken by the agents prior to instruction of solicitors. Further information regarding these requirements will be provided in due course.

Location

March is a market town located in the Fenland area of Cambridgeshire on the A141 Huntingdon to Kings Lynn road. The town lies approximately 20 miles east of Peterborough, 12 miles south of Wisbech, 20 miles northeast of Huntingdon and 25 miles north of Cambridge.

To find the property, proceed north along High Street until it meets Broad Street. The property is located on the left.





created on edozo

Plotted Scale - 1:7,500

This map is published for convenience of identification only and although believed to be correct, is not guaranteed and it does not form any part of any contract

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