



mereside medical
Your local practice

Planning application for a new Staploe Medical Centre to be submitted in the new year.

20 December 2023

As many of our patients are already aware, there have been long-standing discussions to build a new modern healthcare facility within the proposed Soham Eastern Gateway housing development.

Meanwhile, our patient population has continued to grow, and it is currently around 24,000. We have continued to serve you all as best we can, but our building is now far too small, as it was designed to serve only 13,000 patients. We are now intolerably limited in the services that we can offer, including the number of face to face consultations we can offer each day.

We believe it is now critical that new medical centre premises are built and operational as soon as possible, to keep up with further housing development in Soham, Fordham, Isleham, Chippenham, Wicken, and the other surrounding villages that we serve.

We also know that our patients want a new building. In a survey earlier this year, 93% of 270 patients who responded were supportive of a new, larger, fit for purpose building.

The *only* location in Soham that is central enough *and* provides a large enough plot of land to deliver a building fit for the future is the location indicated in the Soham Eastern Gateway outline plan. Over recent months we have been working closely with This Land to jointly prepare and submit a full, detailed planning application for the medical centre that we have envisioned for many years.

The new building is future-proofed to serve around 32,000 patients: almost double the size of the current building, c.100 parking spaces, and an integrated retail pharmacy. The extra space will enable us to offer a wider range of services and an increase in the number of face to face appointments. There is room to extend the building in future, subject to demand and affordability.

All being well, this planning application will be submitted in January 2024. It will be located on the same plot of land identified in the Soham Eastern Gateway outline plan, but it has been designed to accelerate the planning process and delivery of this desperately needed new facility. Work can start once Soham Eastern Gateway application is approved and the land transferred to our developer.

This is the first of many steps to securing the new Staploe Medical Centre. In addition to planning permission, we will still need to secure some capital funding as well as final NHS approval of the long-term financing. We are working closely with our Patient Participation Group and key local stakeholders to ensure that this essential community asset becomes a reality.



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We are really excited about this major step forward, which wouldn't have been possible without significant support from This Land. We will update further in the new year when the planning application is submitted.

If you have any questions about this, please email them to cpicb.mereside.estates@nhs.net and we will compile a 'Frequently Asked Questions' that we will publish in the new year.

We wish you all a joyful and healthy festive season.