

## **SOHAM**



### **1. Description of Soham**

Soham is a market town of about 10,000 people<sup>1</sup>, located on the A142 between Ely and Newmarket. It has an attractive historic town centre, with a range of local and independent shops, and a vibrant and active local community. Other facilities include a successful secondary school, two primary schools, a library, sports complex and a drama centre. Soham has a unique landscape setting, being surrounded by Commons to the south, east and west. The town also has an excellent network of public footpaths and attractive green lanes, which provide good links into the surrounding countryside.

The town has grown considerably over the last 10 years, with new housing developments to the north of the town, and on a range of other 'infill' sites. This has placed pressure on local infrastructure and facilities. There are a number of employment opportunities in the town, including several industrial and trading estates. However, there are not sufficient jobs for all residents, and most people commute out of the town to work in Cambridge and elsewhere. The town centre is not performing as well as it could, given the growing population of the town. Turnover of units is high, and the range of shops is limited. One of the key challenges facing Soham will be to expand the range of shops and facilities in the town centre, and increase its vitality and health. A second challenge will be to promote future commercial and employment growth in the town, to reduce the number of residents who out-commute. A third will be to ensure that necessary infrastructure and facilities are in place to support the continued growth of the town. This includes the construction of a new primary school on the north side of Soham by 2013, and future expansion of the Village College and Medical Centre. Details of infrastructure requirements are set out in section 7 below.

Soham is easily accessed from the A14 via the A142, and road links are reasonable. However, whilst the town has a railway line there is no train station. The District Council and local community

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group - 10,050 population in mid-2010

have aspirations for a railway station to be provided on the line (which runs between Peterborough and Ipswich/Harwich), and opportunities are currently being explored.

**Key statistics**

<i>Soham</i>	
<i>Population<sup>2</sup></i>	10,050
<i>Dwellings<sup>3</sup></i>	4181
<i>New dwellings built 2001-2012 (net)</i>	
<i>Estimated new dwellings 2012-2031</i>	
<i>Estimated number of jobs<sup>4</sup></i>	3,500
<i>Existing public transport services</i>	Bus service 6 days a week (Monday to Saturday) to Ely and Newmarket/Cambridge. Also served by Dial-a-ride.

**2. A vision for Soham**

A vision for Soham in the year 2031 is set out below – followed by a set of strategic objectives to deliver and facilitate the vision. The vision provides clear direction for development in Soham up to 2031. It has been developed from the key characteristics and issues described above, and through consultation on the Local Plan. It has also been informed by the Council’s ‘Soham Masterplan Vision’ document (adopted 2010), which looked at the long-term growth of Soham over the next 40 or so years. Its purpose was to inform debate on the future capacity of Soham to grow, and feed into development of the Local Plan. The Masterplan Vision can be viewed on the District Council’s website at [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk). The vision and strategic objectives have been used to develop specific policies to guide the future growth of Soham. The policies are set out in the following sections, and the spatial plan for Soham is shown in Map xx at the end of this Vision document.

**Soham Vision Statement**

Soham will be a vibrant 21<sup>st</sup> century market town, with a thriving town centre and good employment opportunities. Attractive new housing developments in the central belt of the town will help to increase footfall in the High Street, and support a revitalised town centre with a wide range of new and extended shops, cafes and other community facilities. The town’s strategic location will be attractive to employers wishing to establish or expand on newly serviced employment sites, bringing forward new job opportunities. The town will be a highly desirable place to live and work, with its unique Commons setting, and good quality infrastructure and facilities - including a new primary school, a new train station, a recently modernised town hall and enhanced green network.

**Soham strategic objectives**

1. Improve the town centre, to provide a revitalised and vibrant hub with good shopping, leisure and community activities
2. Avoid further elongation of the town, and focus housing growth in the central belt in order to support the town centre
3. Provide high quality housing development which is easily accessible on foot or cycle to the town centre and key facilities
4. Support job retention and creation, by retaining existing employment sites and facilitating new developments on the edge of the town.
5. Provide enhanced infrastructure and facilities to support growth, including local facilities of an appropriate scale to serve neighbourhoods
6. Protect and enhance the unique green setting of Soham, including the Commons, and green network/links
7. Protect and enhance the historic environment, particularly within the town centre.

### **3. Housing**

Soham is the second largest market town in the district, and is likely to continue to grow over the next 20 years.

A 'development envelope' has been drawn around Soham to define the built-up part of the town where housing development may be permitted. The purpose is to prevent sprawl into the open countryside. Outside the development envelope, housing will not normally be permitted – unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as essential dwellings for rural workers, or affordable housing. Housing schemes outside the development envelope will be assessed against Policies xx, xx and xxx, and other Local Plan policies as appropriate.

There are some opportunities for housing development on land within the built-up part of Soham, on 'infill' sites. It is estimated there could be capacity for perhaps 564 dwellings between 2012 and 2031. Development on infill sites in the town will need to be in line with Policy xx.

However, the supply of infill land is limited, and a number of new housing development sites are therefore proposed on the edge of the town. Development on these allocation sites will need to be in line with Policies SOHAM 1, SOHAM 2 and SOHAM 3 – see details below. The new housing sites are located in the central belt of Soham, and should help to support the vitality of the town centre, and avoid further elongation of the town. The three sites have an estimated capacity for 920 - 1090 dwellings (1005 mid-point estimate). A summary of the potential housing sources in Soham is set out in the table below.

*Table x.x – Estimated housing supply in Soham 2012-31*

<b>Housing sources</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>
Outstanding planning permissions	372
Potential large future sites	26
Estimated windfall on small sites	166
Housing allocations (mid-point estimate)	1005
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED SUPPLY</b>	<b>1569</b>

The town has further capacity to expand to the north and south – but it is considered vital that the identified Local Plan housing allocations come forward first, to support the vision for the town. Potential 'phase 2' housing areas to the north and south are shown indicatively in the Soham Masterplan Vision. It should be noted that these are not precise or accurate allocations, and further investigative work on site deliverability and suitability will be required in the future, prior to allocation in a development plan. Given the significant amount of housing supply in Soham (from windfall sites and Local Plan allocations) the phase 2 areas are not anticipated to be required until the period beyond 2031. However, this situation will be monitored as part of the annual review process – and a partial review of the Local Plan instigated if necessary.

### **Housing allocation – land off Brook Street**

This site is located to the east of the town, and is currently open farmland. The area is bounded by Soham Common land to the north and east. The site is considered to be a sustainable location for the expansion of Soham, with the western part of the site lying only 180 metres or so from the town centre. It is anticipated that housing development on the site will help to increase footfall in the town centre and support its vitality – facilitated via a new pedestrian and cycle bridge link from Brook Dam Lane. The area was identified as a preferred broad area of growth in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (2009).

Part of the site is identified as an area of high flood risk. A Flood Risk Assessment of the site has been carried out (to inform the Core Strategy in 2009), demonstrating that this risk can potentially be mitigated, partly via the provision of open space in the vicinity of the adjoining Lode. This will need to be reviewed, and careful regard had to the mitigation of flood risk in the detailed design and layout of a final scheme.

The site is in a sensitive area, adjacent to the Soham Commons area, part of which is a County Wildlife site. It will be important for any development to respect this setting, and ensure no adverse impact on the protected area. Significant areas of open space and landscaping will therefore be required, particularly on the north and western edges of the site close to Lode and the Commons. This will also provide an opportunity to provide an attractive riverside frontage, which could enhance the setting of Soham. There is also an opportunity to provide better connections to the Commons, via a new pedestrian and cycle bridge link between the north side of the site and the adjacent Commons.

It is estimated there is potential for approximately 350 – 400 dwellings on the site. There is a community aspiration for land to be available for self-build properties within Soham. It is considered that the Brook Street site is large enough to enable this opportunity to be provided, and that part of the area should be identified for such purposes. In line with Policy x a minimum of 5% of the properties should be made available for self-build.

Vehicular access to the site will need to be provided via at least one point off Brook Street (with an additional emergency vehicle access point being provided if there is only one access). A Transport Assessment will need to be carried out, which demonstrates that the site can be safely accessed and that any impacts on nearby highways can be adequately mitigated, e.g. through traffic calming or other highways improvements.

The majority of the site is in single family ownership, with three smaller parcels owned by other individuals. The District Council will require the site to be developed in a comprehensive way, and will expect the landowners to work together to facilitate comprehensive delivery.

The District Council will require the preparation of a Masterplan for the whole site, prior to approval of a scheme. The Masterplan should establish the broad location of land uses, roads, services, open space and landscaping, and look at principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. It will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of Policy SOHAM 1, and ensure a high standard of comprehensive planning. The Masterplan will need to be submitted alongside the outline planning application for the site.

### **Policy SOHAM 1: Housing allocation, land off Brook Street**

Approximately 22 hectares of land is allocated for residential development for approximately 350 - 400 dwellings.

A Masterplan for the whole area will need to be prepared and submitted as part of an outline planning application, and approved by the District Council.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy xx, with priority being given to people in local housing need.
- Provide approximately 8 hectares of public open space on-site, including land for provision of at least 2 play areas
- Maximise opportunities to provide an attractive riverside frontage alongside the Lode and brook, which incorporates public open space, landscaping and appropriate orientation of buildings.
- Have particular regard to the layout and the scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise visual harm to the adjacent Commons area and County Wildlife Site
- Provide a new and enhanced pedestrian and cycle link to the town centre, via a new bridge link over the drain close to Brook Dam Lane
- Provide a new pedestrian and cycle link to the adjacent Commons to the north, via a new bridge link over the Lode at a suitable point to the rear of 10-22 East Fen Common. Will also require upgrades to the existing footpath between this point and Paddock Street.
- Provide a pedestrian and cycle link across the site along the length of the Lode frontage, which links at the southern end across County Wildlife Site 55 to the existing footbridge to the Commons.
- Provide a pedestrian and cycle link across the site to Greenhills
- Protect and enhance County Wildlife Site 55 – particularly the section west of the Lode.
- Demonstrate that the flood risk on the site can be adequately mitigated
- Demonstrate, through a Transport Assessment, that the site can be safely accessed by vehicles and that impacts on nearby roads can be adequately mitigated through traffic calming or other highways improvements.
- Provide safe vehicular access from at least one point off Brook Street, with an additional access point provided for emergency vehicles if only one main access point is provided
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Soham, including provision for a minimum of 5% of self-build properties.
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

### **Housing-led / mixed use allocation – land off Station Road**

The site is located at the western edge of Station Road, and mainly comprises the old station area and vacant railway sidings. There are also several areas of garden land, and a vacant industrial unit. The majority of the site has been vacant for a number of years, following the closure of the railway station in 1965.

The re-development of this area could help to regenerate this part of Soham, and improve the interface between Soham and the surrounding countryside. Re-development could also fit well with the proposal to re-open Soham Station (currently being investigated by the District Council, County Council and Network Rail), and provide an attractive approach and setting to the new station building, as well as facilitating access.

The area surrounding the old station has been safeguarded in the development plan for the last 20 years or so, for the provision of a new station, and is owned by Network Rail. The remainder of the area has previously been identified as a preferred area for housing development, in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (2009).

The site is proposed for housing-led/mixed use development – comprising approximately 70 - 90 dwellings, and land for a station building, car and cycle parking, and drop-off/pick-up facilities. In addition, a small element of business use is proposed, recognising that a mix of business and residential uses in the station quarter could provide an attractive commercial hub. It may also be appropriate to provide a limited number of small retail units as part of the station/employment quarter (e.g. serving the needs of station users and office workers) – providing it can be demonstrated there is no significant adverse impact on the town centre.

The site is bounded to the west by the railway line, which is still operational. The potential for noise and vibration will need to be investigated prior to approval of a planning application. The layout of the scheme and mix of uses will need to have regard to this.

Part of the site is an area of high flood risk. A Flood Risk Assessment of the site has been carried out (to inform the Core Strategy in 2009), demonstrating that this risk can potentially be mitigated. This will need to be reviewed, and careful regard had to the mitigation of flood risk in the detailed design and layout of the final scheme.

A Transport Assessment will be required to demonstrate that safe access can be achieved to the site, and that any impact on surrounding roads can be mitigated. There are currently two known potential access points into the site – along the old station approach road, and at land between xx and xx Mereside (Prescient Engineering site). These (and potentially other) routes should be explored, having regard to the need to provide adequate width and visibility splays to facilitate car, bus, pedestrian and cycle access into and within the site. The potential safety and residential amenity benefits of providing two access points and separating the traffic accessing the station from the residential area should also be taken into account. If vehicular access cannot be achieved via the old station approach road, a pedestrian and cycle path should be provided along this route, to enable direct access to the town centre.

The development should provide good pedestrian and cycle links across the site, between the station area, commercial area and the housing development. A new pedestrian and cycle link should also be provided onto Spencer Drove, and a new footpath access provided to farmland to the west, via a new bridge over the railway line. This latter access point will only be possible once the new station building with its two platforms has been constructed. It will also allow the closure of the current pedestrian crossing point over the railway line, at the south corner of the site.

The site is in multiple ownership, with Network Rail owning the south part of the site in the vicinity of the old station, and a number of private landowners owning other parcels. It is possible that the scheme may come forward in phases, particularly given that the timescales for the delivery of a new railway station are not yet clear. However, the whole area will need to be comprehensively planned, and the District Council will require a Masterplan for the whole area to be submitted alongside any initial planning application (either outline application for the whole site, or for phase 1 development). This will require all landowners to work together. The District Council will also use planning conditions and Section 106 agreements to ensure that comprehensive planning and delivery is achieved.

The railway station and pick-up/drop-off facilities will need to be provided on Network Rail land, but other uses may occur on Network Rail land or on the other land parcels. The Masterplan should be used to explore the site layout, mix of uses, roads, open spaces and landscaping, and will look at principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. It will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of Policy SOHAM 2, and ensure a high standard of comprehensive planning.



**Policy SOHAM 2: Housing-led / mixed use allocation, land off Station Road**

Approximately 3.6 hectares of land is allocated for a housing-led/mixed use development off Station Road. Within the site, provision will be made for approximately 70-90 dwellings, a station building, parking and associated facilities (on about 0.6 ha), and a minimum of 0.5 hectares of office/industrial development. A limited number of small retail units may also be appropriate in the station quarter, to meet the needs of station users/employees – providing it can be demonstrated there is no significant adverse impact on the town centre.

A Masterplan for the whole area will need to be prepared and submitted as part of any initial planning application on the site, and approved by the District Council.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide an attractive station square or potential setting to the station, which incorporates public open space, landscaping and appropriate orientation of buildings – and includes a mix of office/industrial and residential uses.
- Provide or identify sufficient safeguarded land for a station building and associated facilities, including drop-off/pick-up facilities for cars and buses, and cycle and car parking.
- Have particular regard to the layout and the scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise amenity impact on adjoining properties, and to provide an attractive setting to Soham.
- Demonstrate through a Transport Assessment that safe vehicular (car and bus), pedestrian and cycle access can be provided into and within the site.
- Provide a pedestrian and cycle link to the town centre, via the current station approach road – and a pedestrian and cycle link onto Spencer Drive.
- Provide good pedestrian and cycle links across the site, between the housing, station and commercial uses.
- Provide a new pedestrian link to the farmland to the west, via a new bridge which serves the railway platforms (and at the same time, effect the closure of the existing crossing point at the southern end of the site).
- Provide necessary highway improvements and traffic calming measures on nearby roads, as demonstrated in a Transport Assessment
- Demonstrate that vibration and noise pollution from the adjacent railway line can be adequately mitigated
- Demonstrate that the flood risk on the site can be adequately mitigated.
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy xx, with priority being given to people in local housing need.
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Soham
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.



### **Housing-led / mixed use allocation – Eastern Gateway**

The Eastern Gateway area is located to the east of Weatheralls Primary School, between the built-up part of Soham and the A142 bypass. It is predominantly an area of agricultural land, but also contains an extensive area of land in current allotment use, and a redundant Garden Centre site. It is a large area, covering approximately 33 hectares.

The Eastern Gateway is identified in the Soham Vision Masterplan as an area which is crucial for the future development of Soham, and which could potentially provide a new connection from the A142 into the heart of the town, and help to support the regeneration of the town centre. A Conceptual Masterplan for the area (excluding the Garden Centre site) was produced and adopted by the District Council in early 2011<sup>5</sup>, in conjunction with the landowners. The Conceptual Masterplan provides a sound framework for the development of the area, and has informed Policy SOHAM 3 below. However, it will need to be re-visited and updated prior to the approval of any development, in order to reflect the outcome of further technical work on viability, deliverability, and design aspects. It should build on the Conceptual Masterplan and reflect its key principles and elements. The revised Masterplan may or may not include the Garden Centre site, but should have regard to it.

The Conceptual Masterplan (2011) proposes much of the area for housing development – with a small area of employment/retail uses, plus land for an extension to Weatheralls Primary School and to the Soham Medical Centre. In addition, a significant area of new Common land/open space is provided, plus land for the re-location of the existing allotments within the site. The allotments are located at the only feasible point of access from the town, and therefore their re-location is a critical part of the development scheme. It is estimated there is capacity in the Eastern Gateway area for about 500 to 600 dwellings.

The adjoining redundant Garden Centre site has been purchased by Scotsdales Garden Centres. A re-developed Garden Centre on this site could provide additional jobs for the town. If this scheme does not come forward, the site could potentially be appropriate for a range of employment uses (B1/B2/B8) – although this will need to be explored through the planning application process.

The main access into the site from Pratt Street crosses open land in the ownership of the County Council, which is currently being used as a temporary playing field for Weatheralls school (prior to new playing fields being delivered on the Eastern Gateway site). As the land is in County Council ownership, delivery should be secure. Any proposed development which prejudices this access point will be resisted by the District Council.

Although a housing-led scheme, the Eastern Gateway is notable for the significant amount of community uses and open space that will be provided. The allotments will need to be re-provided with enhanced facilities for allotment holders, whilst the development will provide vital land for the expansion of the primary school and the medical centre. In addition, the Conceptual Masterplan proposes the provision of a very significant amount of open space, including a new Commons area which will provide a useful link between Qua Fen Common to the north and East Fen Common to the south, and facilitate a continuous network of accessible greenspace on the east side of the town. The development will also involve provision of an employment area comprising small starter business units and offices, provided as part of an attractive town square/neighbourhood centre, with a small local shop and extended medical centre.

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<sup>5</sup> The Masterplan was financed by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Department of the Environment, Food and Environmental Affairs (DEFRA), from their Rural Masterplanning Fund.

This large mixed use allocation will need to be delivered in phases. The area is owned by 5 organisations/individuals, and there will be a need to continue working together to facilitate comprehensive delivery.

A new roundabout will be required on the A142 to serve the Eastern Gateway area (including a re-developed Garden Centre/employment site), and provide a direct link to the centre of Soham. The roundabout is also required to serve the proposed employment allocation to the east of the A142 (see Policy SOHAM 6). The roundabout will be located partly within the Eastern Gateway site, but will also require some land from within the employment allocation to the east. The roundabout will not be required to facilitate the early housing phases of the development of the Eastern Gateway, but will be required once a critical mass of housing is reached. If the Garden Centre site or the employment allocation to the east of the bypass want to come forward before that stage is reached, this will provide a challenge in terms of delivery, and will require co-operation from all landowners. The District Council recognises the delay that this may place on development, and will investigate alternative sources of funding to address this infrastructure issue. However, in this is not forthcoming, developers may need to investigate front-funding and later re-imburement from the other parties, in order to facilitate delivery.

*Concept Masterplan for Soham Eastern Gateway (illustrative framework only)*



**Part Two: Village/Town Visions – Soham****Policy SOHAM 3: Housing-led / mixed use allocation, Eastern Gateway area**

Approximately 33 hectares of land is allocated for a housing-led/mixed use development in the Eastern Gateway area. Within the site, provision will be made for:

- Approximately 500-600 dwellings
- Approximately 0.5 hectares for B1/B2 employment uses in small industrial or starter units/offices, providing 2000-2500m<sup>2</sup> of employment space
- A small local shop serving top-up needs
- Approximately 0.4 hectares for the extension of the Staploe Medical Centre
- Approximately 0.8 hectares for an extension of the Weatheralls Primary School site
- Approximately 3.6 hectares of allotment land
- Approximately 8 hectares of public open space and Commons land
- Approximately 3 hectares for the provision of a new Garden Centre, or employment uses (B1/B2/B8)

The Masterplan will need to be updated & submitted as part of an outline planning application for the whole site, and approved by the District Council. The revised Masterplan will need to build on and reflect the key principles and elements in the Conceptual Masterplan. It may or may not include the Garden Centre site, but will need to have regard to it.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 30%) as required under Policy xx, with priority being given to people in local housing need.
- Provide a mix of dwelling types & sizes to reflect current evidence of need in Soham
- Provide alternative land of an equivalent size within the site to facilitate the re-location of the existing allotments. The allotment land should be provided in multiple locations, be accessible by car, foot and cycle, and include the provision of a water supply.
- Provide extensive areas of public open space within the site (incorporating a number of play areas), and a new Commons area adjoining the A142 which provides a link between Qua Fen Common and East Fen Common.
- Provide a town square/neighbourhood centre comprising business/starter units and offices and a small local shop, adjacent to the expanded medical centre
- Have particular regard to the layout and the scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to provide a high quality scheme which enhances the setting of Soham, and minimises amenity impact on adjoining properties.
- Provide a new roundabout on the A142 and link road through the scheme to Pratt Street. Contribute towards safety improvements of the junctions of Northfield Road, Qua Fen Common and Paddock Street on the A142
- Retain and enhance the existing rights of way which cross the site, and provide an upgraded cycle/footpath link between the link road and Kents Lane. Provide new pedestrian & cycle access points to adjoining roads, as indicated in the Conceptual Masterplan.
- Provide safe and secure access to the site past Weatheralls School, with necessary junction and highway improvements on the road, and at the junction with Pratt Street.
- Demonstrate that the flood risk on the site can be adequately mitigated.
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

## **4. Employment**

Soham has a range of employment opportunities, mainly provided on business parks on Regal Lane, Mereside, and The Shade. Other key employers in the town include the schools, Medical Centre, and shops and businesses located in the town centre.

Whilst the service and education sector remain strong, over the last 11 years a significant amount of commercial land has been lost in Soham, mainly to housing redevelopment (about 4 hectares of land net loss between 2001 and 2012). The amount of land and premises for industrial, office and warehousing is limited compared to the population size – and most residents out-commute to jobs.

The District Council is keen to try and provide more jobs in Soham, and increase the levels of self-containment. The current self-containment level is estimated to be approximately 45%, e.g. with 3500 jobs available for 7790 people of employment age (16-64 years)<sup>6</sup>. As part of this strategy, a number of new sites are proposed for employment development in Soham, to try and increase the stock of commercial premises. This includes an extension to the Northfield Road Business Park, a new employment site adjoining the new primary school on the Shade, and a large new business park to the east of the A142 – see Policies SOHAM 4, 5 and 6 below. In addition, new industrial/starter units and offices are proposed as part of the new housing developments off Station Road and the Eastern Gateway (see section 3 above). A summary of employment potential on these sites is set out in the table below. The table also includes an estimate for additional homeworking employment in Soham over the Plan period. Additional jobs from these sites/sources alone could help to increase the level of self-containment in Soham to an estimated 52% by 2031 (with 4926 jobs available from an estimated 9350 people of employment age)<sup>7</sup>. However, this is a conservative estimate and self-containment is likely to be higher, as it doesn't take account of other potential increases in jobs in the town from existing businesses, schools and shops.

*Table x.x – Employment potential on new sites in Soham*

<b>Location</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>Estimated jobs growth</b>	<b>Policy reference</b>
Land east of The Shade	5 hectares	293	Policy SOHAM 4
Land west of The Shade	2 hectares	232	Policy SOHAM 5
Land east of the A142 bypass	11 hectares	429	Policy SOHAM 6
Station Road	0.5 hectares	140	Policy SOHAM 2
Eastern Gateway	0.5 hectares	132	Policy SOHAM 3
Home working		200	-
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL JOBS</b>		<b>1426</b>	

It is also important to try and prevent the loss of existing business premises and land, in order to support local economic growth. This is even more crucial in the context of the current economy where viability and profits margins are low for business development, particularly speculative schemes. The District Council is keen to retain the existing stock of business land and premises in Soham. given this context. Proposals to re-use employment sites in Soham for other purposes will therefore only be permitted in certain circumstances – as set out in Policy xxx in the Employment Chapter.

Large-scale new employment development should be focused in the allocated employment/mixed use sites – in order to facilitate their development, ensure suitable access, and minimise impact on the setting and character of Soham. However, small-scale employment schemes that come forward on the edge of Soham may be supported in principle – subject to Policies xx, xx and xx (as set out in Chapter x).

<sup>6</sup> The estimate is for the whole parish of Soham, rather than the town. Source for number of jobs – ONS 2009. Population estimates as derived from Cambridgeshire County Council's Research Group mid-year estimates for 2010.  
<sup>7</sup> Future population estimate as provided by Cambs County Council Research Group, based on the housing trajectory

### **Employment/mixed use allocation – land east of The Shade**

The site is currently agricultural land on the edge of Soham, adjacent to the existing Northfield Road Business Park. The area was identified in the District Local Plan (2000) as an area for employment development. However, the area failed to come forward, and was subsequently 'de-allocated' in the Core Strategy (2009). Since then, the area has been identified in the Soham Vision Masterplan as a potential site for future new employment development – including a small neighbourhood centre with a small local convenience store.

The area is identified in the Local Plan as employment-led development, incorporating a small local convenience store to serve the northern residential part of Soham. The site is bounded to the north by the A142 bypass, and is highly visible from the main road. Therefore, any scheme will also need to include a significant strip of open land between the built-up area and the road, to provide an attractive buffer and a green setting for Soham.

The site is currently bounded by an attractive byway (Longmere Lane) on the south side, with a footpath link partly alongside a watercourse. As part of the historic network of green lanes around Soham, it will be vital to retain and enhance this feature in any development scheme. Other public rights of way across the site should also be retained and enhanced. There are a number of existing trees and hedgerows on the site which should be retained wherever possible.

Access to the site will be provided from The Shade, rather than Northfield Road (due to capacity restrictions at the junction of Northfield Road and the A142 bypass). Access should be provided at a point opposite Kingfisher Drive, to allow for a shared roundabout or traffic signals.

The District Council will require the preparation of a Masterplan for the whole site, prior to approval of a development proposal. The Masterplan will establish the broad location of land uses, roads, services, open space and landscaping, and look at principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. It will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of Policy SOHAM 4, and ensure a high standard of comprehensive planning.

**Policy SOHAM 4: Employment/mixed use allocation, land east of The Shade**

Approximately 5 hectares of land is allocated for employment-led development for B1/B2/B8 uses on land adjacent to Northfield Business Park. Within the site, provision will also be made for a small local convenience store (serving local top-up needs), and a minimum of 1.5 hectares of undeveloped land adjoining the A142 as a buffer strip.

A Masterplan will need to be prepared and submitted as part of an outline planning application, and approved by the District Council.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access from the area onto The Shade opposite to Kingfisher Drive, via either a roundabout or junction with traffic signals.
- Provide other necessary highway improvements on the road network, as demonstrated via a Transport Assessment.
- Retain and enhance the adjoining existing green lane (Longmere Lane) and other byways and public rights of way which cross the site.
- Maximise the retention of existing trees and hedgerows on the site.
- Have particular regard to the scale, height, design and massing of buildings and landscaping, in order to minimise visual impact from the A142, and minimise amenity impact on adjoining residential properties.
- Provide landscaping as part of the buffer strip adjoining the A142, and on the boundaries with adjoining residential properties.
- Provide a small local convenience store on the road frontage with The Shade.
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Comply with other policies of the Local Plan.

**Employment allocation – land west of The Shade**

The site is currently agricultural land on the edge of Soham, and adjoins the site of the new primary school. The site is identified in the Soham Masterplan Vision as a potential future area for employment development.

The site is identified in the Local Plan as an employment allocation, with approximately 2 hectares of land for industrial, storage or office development (B1, B2 and B8). Vehicular access to the employment area (and the primary school) will need to be provided via a new arm on the existing roundabout on the A142. Additional pedestrian and cycle access to the employment area should also be provided directly off The Shade.

The site is in a highly visible location, located at a key gateway into Soham. It will be important to ensure that the design, layout, massing, and landscaping of a scheme is of high quality, and provides an attractive setting and entrance to the town.



**Policy SOHAM 5: Employment allocation, land west of The Shade**

Approximately 2 hectares is allocated for employment land (B1/B2/B8 uses).

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access to the site, via a new arm off the roundabout on the A142.
- Provide an additional access point into the site for pedestrians and cyclists directly from The Shade
- Retain and enhance the existing public right of way which adjoins the western side of the site
- Have particular regard to the scale, height, design and massing of buildings and landscaping, in order to minimise visual impact on the surrounding countryside, and provide an attractive setting and entrance to Soham.
- Retain the existing tree belt on the northern edge of the site, and provide high quality landscaping to minimise the impact of the scheme from the A142.
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with other policies of the Local Plan.

**Employment allocation – land east of the A142 bypass**

The site is currently agricultural land, lying to the east of the A142 bypass, and north of Isleham Road. The site was identified in the Core Strategy (2009) and the Soham Masterplan Vision (2010) as a potential future area for employment development (about 11 hectares).

The development of this land for employment purposes should help to provide additional jobs in Soham, and reduce the amount of out-commuting from the town. As a large site, it should be able to accommodate a mix of employment uses – including industrial, office and storage/distribution uses (B1/B2/B8). Delivery of the site is anticipated in the second part of the Plan period.

Vehicular access to the area will need to be provided via a new roundabout on the A142, which will be delivered as part of the development of the Eastern Gateway area to the west (see Policy SOHAM 3 in section 3 above). It is likely that new slip roads and other potential upgrades to the roundabout may be required to accommodate the employment development. In addition, safety upgrades to the other junctions on the A142 (at Northfield Road, Qua Fen Common and Paddock Street) are also likely to be required. A pedestrian and cycle footbridge or underpass over or under the A142 will also be required. This should link with the new cycle and pedestrian path across the Eastern Gateway development, to provide a sustainable route to the town centre.

The site has a flat topography and is highly visible from the A142. Particular regard should be had to the layout, design and massing of development, in order to provide attractive views along the A142 and from the Eastern Gateway development, and minimise adverse visual impact. This should include the provision of landscaping and open areas.



Part of the site is located in an area of high flood risk. A Flood Risk Assessment of the site has been carried out (to inform the Core Strategy in 2009), demonstrating that this risk can potentially be mitigated. This will need to be reviewed, and careful regard had to the mitigation of flood risk in the detailed design and layout of the final scheme.

This large allocation is likely to be delivered in phases. The District Council will require the preparation of a Masterplan for the whole site, prior to approval of a development proposal. The Masterplan will establish the broad location of land uses, roads, services, open space and landscaping, and look at principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. It will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of Policy SOHAM 6, and ensure a high standard of comprehensive planning. Whilst the boundaries of the site are identified on the Soham map, it is recognised that the site is very open, and that the precise boundaries may alter as a result of further technical work carried out to as part of the preparation of the Masterplan.

#### **Policy SOHAM 6: Employment allocation, land east of the A142 bypass**

Approximately 11 hectares of land is allocated for employment development (B1/B2/B8) on land east of the A142 bypass.

A Masterplan will need to be prepared and submitted as part of an outline planning application, and approved by the District Council.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access to the site from the roundabout on the A142, including any necessary highway upgrades or works.
- Provide a new cycle and pedestrian bridge or underpass over or under the A142, linking up with the new cycle and pedestrian route across the Eastern Gateway development.
- Contribute towards safety improvements of the junctions of Northfield Road, Qua Fen Common and Paddock Street on the A142
- Have particular regard to the scale, height, design and massing of buildings, and landscaping, in order to minimise visual impact on the surrounding countryside, and provide an attractive development scheme when viewed from the A142.
- Provide landscaping and a buffer zone along the boundary with the A142, and landscaping along boundaries with adjoining agricultural land.
- Demonstrate that flood risk on the site can be adequately mitigated.
- Demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the sewage treatment works and the foul sewage network
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with other policies of the Local Plan.

## **5. Town centre**

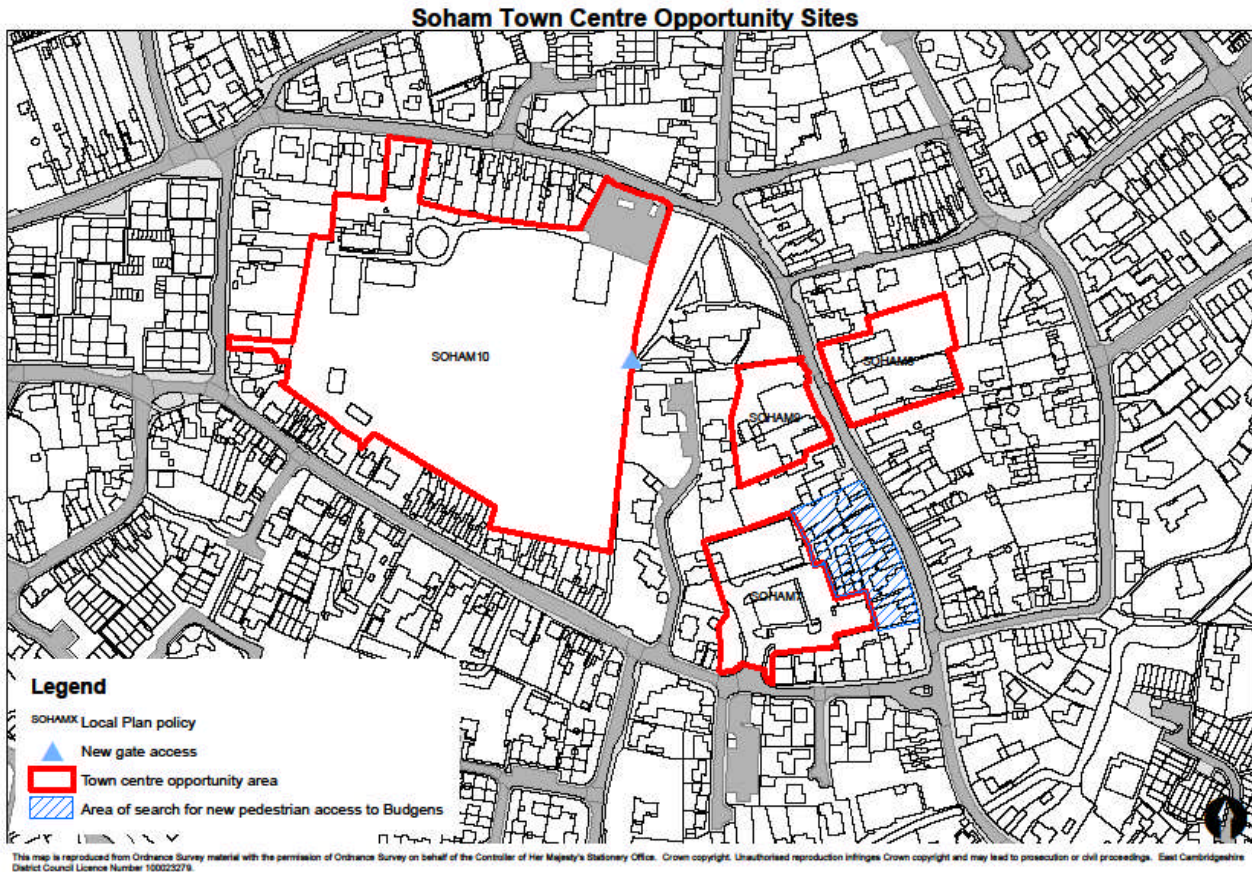
Soham has a historic town centre which provides a range of food (convenience) and non-food (comparison) shops, pubs, community facilities and other services. The current key attractors are Budgens and the Co-operative store. There are also a number of important community facilities in and around the town centre, including the church, library, public park, community meeting rooms and Youth Theatre. The main shopping area is focused on the traditional linear High Street, and part of Churchgate Street.

However, the town centre appears to be underperforming, given the population of Soham and its catchment area. Whilst it provides a good range of community facilities, there is a limited choice of shops, restaurants and pubs, and the retail offer could be greater. Footfall in the town centre is relatively low for a town of its size, and the turnover of retail units is high. There is scope to increase the quality and range of the retail offer, and to make the town centre a more vibrant hub for the Soham. Improvements could also be made to the appearance and character of the town centre, to make it more attractive and pedestrian friendly. The town centre does not currently have a market, although it has historically had one. Its re-introduction could be beneficial to the town.

The regeneration of the town centre will require action on a number of levels, and from a variety of sources. The Town Council will continue to play a leading role in this process, and in helping to co-ordinate local action. The recent establishment of a new 'Town Centre Forum' of local businesses should help to focus community efforts and make changes.

As outlined in sections 2 and 3 above, part of the Local Plan strategy to tackle the regeneration of the town centre involves the provision of housing development close to the centre of Soham. New housing providing easy pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre should help to increase footfall and support its vitality and viability. Some of the improvements may involve the amalgamation of existing small retail units into larger ones, or the renovation and extension of existing units. The protection of existing retail units and community uses, as set out in Chapter x of the Local Plan, is a critical part of this. This includes the protection of existing public car parks on the edge of the town centre, which are essential to serve the needs of local people and visitors.

There are also a number of key opportunity sites in the town centre, which are currently vacant or under-used, and which could provide opportunities for additional retail and mixed-use development. The Local Plan can play an important role by helping to protect these sites for retail and town centre uses. These opportunity sites are identified in the Map below, and described in Policies SOHAM 7, 8, 9 and 10 below. New or intensified retail provision on these sites should help towards meeting the future food and non-food retail needs of Soham's growing population – as identified in the Council's Retail Study (2012). The Retail Study indicates there is a need for perhaps 595 square metres of additional food retail floorspace and 658 square metres of additional non-food retail floorspace up to the year 2031.



### **Budgens site**

The site is currently a Budgens supermarket, with extensive car parking and landscaping. Planning permission has been granted for the extension of the supermarket, almost doubling its size. As at September 2012, this has yet to be implemented.

The site is located to the rear of the High Street, and is considered to be a key site to retain for future food retail uses, to support the vitality of the town centre. It is therefore identified on Map xx, and Policy SOHAM 7 below seeks to protect its current use. Any future re-development of the site will need to be in line with Policy SOHAM 7 below, and take the form of predominantly food retail development – or food retail on the ground floor with other town centre uses on upper floors (such as residential accommodation, offices and community uses).

The site could benefit from enhanced pedestrian and cycle links directly to the town centre, and opportunities should be explored to improve these links. Development proposals on the site, or on land between 17 and 37 High Street, will need to demonstrate that opportunities for enhanced or new links have been fully investigated. Applicants will be expected to provide viability or practical justification for not proposing improved or enhanced links.



**Policy SOHAM 7: Town centre opportunity site, Budgens site**

Approximately 0.55 hectares of land is identified as a 'Town Centre Opportunity Site'. The site should be retained for its current food retailing use. Re-development schemes will only be appropriate where they involve the re-provision of food retailing floorspace – or food retail on the ground floor with other town centre uses above.

Opportunities should be explored to improve the pedestrian links between the site and the High Street. Proposals for development on the site, or on land between 17 and 37 High Street will be required to demonstrate that opportunities for new or enhanced links have been fully investigated.

Any development proposals will be required to undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)

**Church hall area**

The area includes a vacant site previously occupied by the Church hall, an office building, car parking areas, and a small number of residential units. It presents a key opportunity for comprehensive re-development to provide an expansion of the town's retail and town centre facilities. This could include redevelopment for one large retail unit, or several retail units of a range of sizes – along with the provision of new car parking in the heart of the town centre. It could also include a number of other town centre uses such as offices and community facilities. Residential development on upper floors may also be appropriate, to facilitate scheme viability.

The site is the last significant area of land adjoining the town centre, and therefore provides the last remaining opportunity to expand and consolidate the town centre to meet the needs of future Soham residents. The site has planning permission for 8 dwellings, but this is unlikely to be brought forward. Residential development only on this site would present a significant lost opportunity to improve the health and long-term vitality of the town centre. Identifying the site as a



Town Centre Opportunity site should help to maintain its availability for future town centre retail investment over the Plan period.

The area adjoins several areas of private residential land which landowners have indicated are not currently available for re-development. However, when a scheme is put forward for the Church hall area, developers will be expected to demonstrate that they have explored all opportunities for the delivery of adjoining sites, and to develop the area for retail-led development in a comprehensive way.

#### **Policy SOHAM 8: Town centre opportunity site, Church hall area**

Approximately 0.4 hectares of land is allocated as a Town Centre Opportunity Site. The site should be developed for retail purposes – or for a mixed use scheme with a significant element of retail provision plus other town centre uses such as offices and community facilities. Residential development will be appropriate on upper floors of any development scheme.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access from one point onto the High Street, and any necessary highways improvement works.
- Provide car parking, to an appropriate standard, which is linked to the town as a whole.
- Maximise opportunities for the provision of retail development on the ground floor and the frontage of the site.
- Provide an interesting area of new townscape which enhances the Conservation Area, and is sympathetic to the setting, appearance and character of the historic core and adjoining Listed Building.
- Demonstrate that the area can be developed comprehensively, and that additional opportunities to expand the site have been fully explored.
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)
- Comply with other policies in the Local Plan.

#### **Cooperative store area**

The area includes a Cooperative food store with adjacent car parking, and the Post Office which includes the delivery office and vacant land to the rear. The site is considered to offer an opportunity for potential intensification and redevelopment. The current Cooperative store is small and does little to enhance the appearance and setting of the High Street and adjacent church. There is vacant land to the rear of the Post Office, and scope for the delivery office to be located elsewhere in or close the town centre. The site offers an opportunity to provide attractive new retail units and additional floorspace, whilst enhancing the appearance of the High Street. Any redevelopment scheme will need to be retail-led, given the site's location in the heart of the High Street.

The Cooperative store is one of the key attractors in the town centre which is important to retain. Therefore any re-development of the site should include the provision of a foodstore of at least equivalent floorspace. This could potentially include other town centre uses on upper floors to increase scheme viability (including residential accommodation, offices and community uses). Alternatively, if at least equivalent new food retail floorspace is to be provided on the Church hall site, this could help to off-set the loss of any food retail on the Cooperative site, and could justify its

re-development for other retail uses. In these circumstances, these applications would need to be linked.

A small amount of car parking is currently provided for the Cooperative store customers. This level of parking would need to be retained in any redevelopment scheme which involves replacement of the food floorspace. If the Cooperative store area is redeveloped for non-food retail uses, the provision of on-site carparking will need to be considered in the context of the Council's car parking standards and provision available in the locality.

The Post Office shop is also a key attractor in the town centre. This should be re-provided as part of any development proposal – or suitable alternative premises found elsewhere on the High Street. A new location for the delivery sorting office would also need to be identified in or close to the town centre.

Re-development could provide an opportunity to create an attractive new area of townscape. Development should have particular regard to the sites location in the Conservation Area, adjoining the listed Parish Church, and a listed residential property. It should also maximise opportunities to re-create an attractive frontage to the site, and for views to and from the Parish Church.

The area is in the ownership of the Cooperative Group and one private individual. The landowners/developers will need to work together to bring forward a comprehensive re-development scheme for the site. If this cannot be facilitated, extensive evidence and practical reasons (such as viability) will need to be provided by the landowners/developers to justify why this requirement should be set aside.



**Policy SOHAM 9: Town centre opportunity site, Cooperative store area**

Approximately 0.3 hectares of land is allocated as a Town Centre Opportunity Site. Re-development schemes should include the provision of food retail floorspace, at least equivalent in net square metres to the current Cooperative store, plus other retail uses or office or community uses. Residential properties may be appropriate on upper floors. An element of carparking will be required to support food retail floorspace. The Post Office counter facility will need to be re-provided on-site or secured elsewhere on the High Street. The delivery office facility will need to be re-provided elsewhere in or close to the town centre.

The loss of equivalent food retail floorspace on the site will only be appropriate if it can be demonstrated that alternative equivalent provision will be delivered on the Church hall site, to offset the loss.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide an interesting area of new townscape which enhances the Conservation Area, and is sympathetic to the setting, appearance and character of adjoining Listed Buildings.
- Provide a new attractive street frontage which enhances the historic streetscape, and maximises views to and from the Parish Church.
- Maximise opportunities for the provision of retail development on the ground floor and the frontage of the site.
- Demonstrate that the site can be developed comprehensively, and that additional opportunities to expand the site have been fully explored. If comprehensive development is not proposed, applicants will be required to submit extensive evidence and practical reasons to justify why it cannot be achieved.
- Undertake a programme of archaeological works in advance of construction (to be secured via planning condition)

**Fountain Lane recreation ground and car park**

This area is adjacent to the High Street, and includes a large recreation area, and a range of community facilities, including The Pavilion meeting hall, Scout hut, Fire station, public car park and toilets. The Soham Masterplan Vision identifies the area as a key part of the town centre, and highlights its function as an important open space facility for the town.

The public car park is one of the two main car parks which serve the town centre. It also contains some public toilets and a disused ambulance station. The car park is currently small, and the whole area is unattractive and could benefit from being re-developed in the future as funds become available. Any re-development should look at the potential to reconfigure and increase the number of car parking spaces available, whilst retaining as much of the open space and green areas as possible. Access to the car park should be made clearer, and more user friendly. The frontage of the site should be opened up and landscaped, with views into the park from Fountain Lane. To facilitate this the ambulance station will need to be demolished, and opportunities explored to refurbish or re-locate the public toilets within the site.

The Pavilion building is a vital community hub which houses the Town Council, and has a range of meeting rooms. There are plans by the Town Council to refurbish and upgrade the building and adjoining car park area. This facility should be retained and enhanced for the people of Soham.



The recreation ground could benefit from improved pedestrian and cycle access links, both to the site, and within it (i.e. to the Pavilion), as well as improved signage and landscaping. Opportunities to improve or provide new access points and routes should be investigated and brought forward wherever possible. In particular, focus should be placed on:

- Upgrading or improving on the existing route from the town centre to the Pavilion
- Formalising the pedestrian/cycle link across the Fire Station site. If the Fire Station is re-developed, a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided across the site as part of any re-development scheme.

**Policy SOHAM 10: Town centre opportunity site, Fountain Lane recreation ground and car park**

Fountain Lane recreation ground and car park (including The Pavilion and other facilities within) should be retained and enhanced, as a key facility for the people of Soham.

Development proposals to improve Fountain Lane car park will be supported. Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide additional car parking space to serve the town centre
- Improve the appearance and setting of the park, including views into the site
- Improve the setting of the church and churchyard
- Provide refurbished or relocated public toilet facilities within the site

Any development proposals to re-develop the Fire Station site should provide a cycle and pedestrian link across the site from Fountain Lane to The Pavilion/recreation ground.

Opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle links and access to the recreation ground should be explored, with particular focus on:

- Upgrading or improving on the existing route from the town centre to the Pavilion
- Formalising a walking/cycling link to the Pavilion/recreation ground, across the Fire Station site

## **6. Green lanes and Commons**

Soham has an excellent network of public footpaths, including a large number of historic 'green lanes' which used to provide key routes from the town out into the surrounding countryside, and to the Commons and Mere. Many of these footpaths are along tree-lined routes or bounded by hedgerows, providing very attractive walking routes which enhance the character and setting of Soham. Cambridgeshire County Council has definitive rights of way maps, whilst the Soham Footpaths Society's website provides further information on routes and walks around the town ([www.soham.org.uk/leisure/footpaths/index.htm](http://www.soham.org.uk/leisure/footpaths/index.htm)).

This unique heritage should be protected and enhanced, for the benefit of the local community. All development proposals will be expected to respect the integrity, appearance and character of any green lanes/public rights of way within or adjoining development sites – and to demonstrate how they will be improved and enhanced. As a minimum, it should be assumed that all public rights of way should be retained in their original position and not re-located.

Soham also has a unique landscape setting, being surrounded by Commons to the east and west. The Commons cover a significant area, and consists of grazing land and meadows, with a number of ponds and waterways. The Commons are a haven for wildlife – but also provide an excellent green network and recreational facility for the people of Soham. As Common land, they are

protected against loss or re-use. However, it is also important that development proposals adjoining or close to the Commons respect its character and setting, and do not adversely affect biodiversity or access. Development proposals will also be expected to explore opportunities to enhance biodiversity and access to the Commons.



**Policy SOHAM 11: Green lanes and Commons**

Development schemes on sites which contain or adjoin green lanes and public rights or way should respect their integrity, and not adversely affect their appearance and character. Such schemes should also demonstrate how routes will be improved and enhanced. All public rights of way should be retained in their original position – unless alternative locations would provide significant access benefits.

The wildlife, landscape and recreational quality of the Commons should be protected and enhanced. Development proposals should demonstrate no adverse impact on the quality, character, accessibility and biodiversity value of the Commons. Development proposals in the vicinity of the Commons should explore opportunities to improve biodiversity, access and landscape improvements on the Commons.

## **7. Other infrastructure and community facilities**

Soham needs to be served by appropriate levels of infrastructure and facilities, in order to ensure the quality of people’s lives and prevent unnecessary travel. This includes infrastructure such as water, energy, sewerage treatment works, and roads – and community facilities such as schools, open space, health, and sport and recreation facilities.

As outlined in Chapter x, the District Council will continue to work with infrastructure providers to enable the delivery of necessary of infrastructure and facilities. The District Council will also seek to secure planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy monies from developers towards new infrastructure and facilities required as a result of new development.

It will also be important to protect existing community facilities. As set out in Chapter x, the loss of community facilities will be resisted under Policy xx. Proposals for new community development that benefits Soham will be supported in principle, subject to Policies xx and xx.

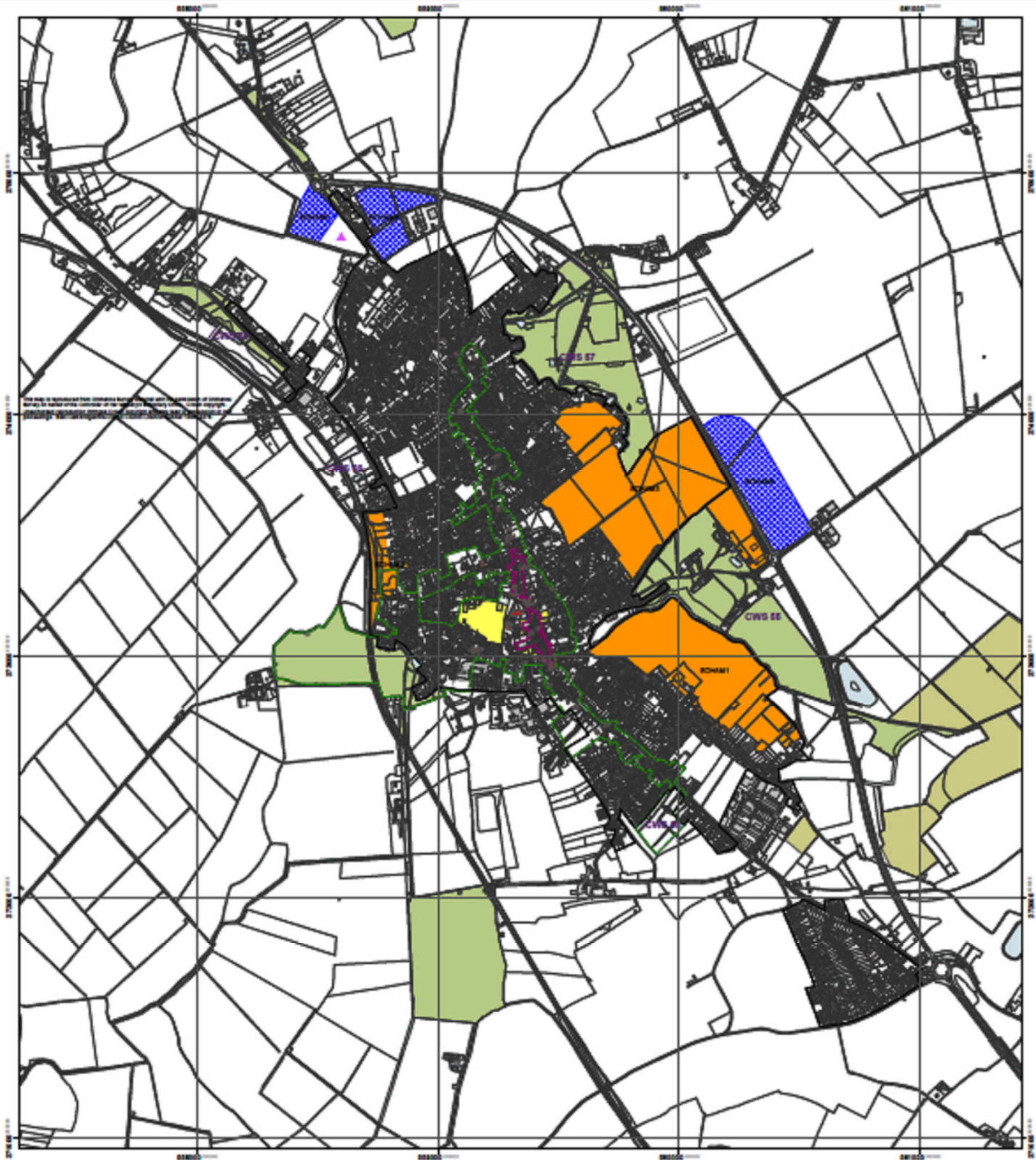
The key future infrastructure and service requirements for Soham are set out in the table below. These have been identified through technical work, discussions with infrastructure providers, and community consultation - and are linked to the estimated future levels of growth in Soham over the next 20 years.

<b>Infrastructure / facility</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Delivery date (est.)</b>	<b>Details</b>
Upgrade to sewage treatment facilities	Sewage Treatment Works, Mereside	Anglian Water	2015	Capacity in the STW is limited until the upgrades are completed. Development proposals in this period will need to be supported by Anglian Water.
New primary school	The Shade	County Council	Sept. 2013	Planning permission secured in October 2012. Included in the County Council’s capital programme
Extension to Weatheralls School	Pratt Street	County Council	2013	Facilitated as part of the Eastern Gateway development (see Policy SOHAM 3)
Extension to secondary school	College Road	County Council	TBC	Additional form of entry to be provided. To be included in the County Council’s capital programme
Two new pre-school facilities	NK	County Council	TBC	To be included in the County Council’s capital programme
New nursery	NK	Private organisation	NK	
Extension to Medical Centre	Staploe Medical Centre		TBC	Facilitated as part of the Eastern Gateway development (see Policy SOHAM 3)
Expanded Dentist provision	NK	Private company	NK	
Upgrade to The Pavilion	Fountain Lane	Town Council	2013+	Town Council has plans to refurbish this key community asset.
Improvements to Fountain Lane recreation ground	Fountain Lane	ECDC / Soham Town Council	TBC	Key community asset in the town centre. Future funding yet to be determined. CIL monies could assist.

Infrastructure / facility	Location	Provider	Delivery date (est.)	Details
Improvements to the Commons	Commons	Soham Town Council / Lord of the Manor	TBC	Partly facilitated via the Eastern Gateway development (see Policy SOHAM 3) and Brook Street development (see Policy SOHAM 5)
New open space and play areas	Various	Developers	Various	Facilitated as part of new housing development schemes
Provision of a new cricket ground	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Other improvements to sports facilities	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
New roundabout on the A142 and link road to Pratt Street	A142/Eastern Gateway	Developers / County Council	TBC	Facilitated as part of the Eastern Gateway development (see Policy SOHAM 3)
Safety improvements to junctions of Northfield Road, Qua Fen Common and Paddock Street on the A142	A142	County Council	TBC	Facilitated via the Eastern Gateway development (see Policy SOHAM 3) and the employment allocation to the east of the bypass (see Policy SOHAM 6).
New railway station	Station Road	County Council/ Network Rail / ECDC	TBC	Feasibility Study completed 2012. Future funding needs to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Creation of cycle link to Wicken Fen	Wicken to Soham	Wicken Parish Council/ National Trust/Soham Town Council	TBC	Funding to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Improvements to bus interchange in town centre	Town centre	Cambs County Council	TBC	Funding to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Improvements to Soham library	Clay Street	County Council	TBC	Funding to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Provision of a Town Museum	TBC	Town Council	TBC	Funding to be secured. CIL contributions could assist.
Pedestrian streetscape enhancements in town centre	High Street and Churchgate Street	County Council/ ECDC/ Soham Town Council	TBC	Funding to be secured. Could be facilitated via town centre development schemes or CIL.
Improvements to the cycle network	Various	County Council	Various	Funding to be secured. Could be facilitated via specific development schemes or CIL.
Cemetery	Adjacent or close to the existing site on Fordham Road	Soham Town Council	TBC	Estimated capacity within the current site for another 25-30 years. Will need to identify a site in the next Local Plan which is ideally adjacent or close to the current site. Site suggested in the Soham Vision Masterplan, but this should be investigated as part of the production of a site-specific Masterplan for any development between Fordham Road, Cherry Tree Lane and The Butts.



8. A spatial strategy for Soham 2011-31 (Map x)



**Key**

- Development Envelope
- Employment allocation
- Housing and Mixed use allocations
- Town centre opportunity areas
- Soham, new primary school
- ADHAM Local Plan policy
- Town Centre Boundaries, 05
- Conservation Area
- Listed Building
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Historic Parks & Gardens
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Area of International Importance for Wildlife
- Historic Parks & Gardens
- County Wildlife Site

Map x  
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