

Draft Core Strategy: “A Well Connected Milton Keynes”

Officer response to proposed revised text and policy from Cllr Bint

COUNCILLOR COMMENTS	OFFICER RESPONSE
<p>80. The transport networks and services of MK must meet the leisure, shopping, education, and business/commuter needs of residents and visitors, and the needs of businesses & other organisations operating in MK during this period of a massive growth in the borough’s population combined with the need to cut the carbon footprint of travel.</p>	<p>Agree – add to preamble before Policy CS11 (before 1st para)</p>
<p>81. Pressure to do better than merely “more of the same” comes from physical constraints of existing infrastructure, the growing average distance of everything from everything else as the conurbation becomes physically bigger, the need to reduce the carbon footprint of travel, and known weaknesses of the current facilities.</p>	<p>Agree – and new 2nd para to preamble to address this point and add cross-reference to the SWOT (Table 2.1 – LDF AG Agenda page 29)</p> <p>NB MK is better described as a single urban area rather than a ‘conurbation’</p>
<p>82. Milton Keynes’ transport facilities are unique and are fundamental to its residents’ quality of life. MK has an iconic grid road system which enables the population of over 270,000 to get anywhere in the conurbation by car within 15 minutes, as well as helping to attract and retain employers and improve the amenity and safety of residential streets by removing the through traffic.</p> <p>This enables residents to work anywhere in MK regardless of where they live and have access to a very wide range of leisure and retail opportunities. This large catchment area in turn contributes to the richness of MK’s social, sporting and cultural life, and enables MK to offer venues of national significance and play a role as a regional hub. The accessibility of everywhere in MK (and thus, everything that is happening) makes a major contribution to MK’s sense of community identity.</p> <p>The new city also enjoys an extensive network of footpath / cycleways (the “redways”) and similar pathways through the linear parks and other leisure</p>	<p>Grid roads system: this is covered in The Story of Place Introduction (LDF AG Agenda page 24)</p> <p>Accessibility: only residents who have access to a car are able to easily reach jobs, facilities, events and activities anywhere in MK.</p> <p>Redways: already covered in 5th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79)</p>

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areas, which collectively provide safe, convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists.	
83. MK has considerable strategic accessibility to the rest of the country, not only by road but increasing by rail, with London Euston only 40 mins away, Birmingham 55mins, Chester only an hour and a half. This location and accessibility is a key factor in attracting business. The station is an important gateway to the city and it is crucial that it is a seamless and efficient transport interchange to serve MK's residents, visitors and businesses.	<p>Strategic transport links: already covered in 3rd para of "A Well Connected MK" (page 79)</p> <p>Importance of MK's location: already identified as a strength in The Story of Place (LDF AG agenda page 24) and the SWOT analysis (Table 2.1, page 29)</p> <p>Station: agree – add reference in Policy CS11 to role of MK Central station as gateway and interchange</p>
84. Improved public transport, and increased levels of cycling and walking are reflected in the objectives of the Sustainable Integrated Transport Strategy, LTP2 and the Transport Strategy review. Considerable improvements to public transport have been made recently. "Carshare MK" is seen as a national exemplar.	<p>Already covered in 1st para of "A Well Connected MK" (LDF Agenda, page 79)</p> <p>Carshare MK: agree - add reference to 'Carshare MK' as an exemplar scheme</p>
<p>CHALLENGES FACING MK</p> <p>85. MK has been designed with a deliberate dispersal of employment, retail and leisure destinations. As well as the "city centre" (CMK), within the conurbation there are four older town centres, two district centres, and over 100 other retail destinations (plus numerous other isolated shops). Leisure and employment locations are similarly dispersed across the 6-mile wide urban area. This creates challenges to the provision of attractive alternatives to family car use: at any moment, there are too few people wanting to go from any one starting point to any one destination. One particularly challenging consequence is the prevalence of multi-destination journeys: eg an individual resident or family choosing to visit a sequence of retail & other locations during one day out.</p>	<p>General: already covered in 'The Story of Place'</p> <p>Dispersal of employment, facilities: agree - add references to the transport challenges presented by a dispersed pattern of development, including in the SWOT analysis (Table 2.1, LDF AG agenda page 29)</p>
86. The projected housing growth and the increasing distance that people	Agree – but this does not apply to all residents; it relates to

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<p>will need to travel to access high quality facilities will create congestion on the grid road system and (without management) will reduce the attractiveness of MK as a place to live and work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the longer distances that residents in the SDAs will need to travel (compared to people living closer to CMK) to access jobs, shops and facilities in the city centres • the potential for more people to travel into MK from the surrounding area, attracted by the jobs and facilities on offer as a result of the city's growth. <p>Add reference to the impact of growth in 2nd para of "A Well Connected MK" (LDF AG Agenda page 79)</p>
<p>87. Car ownership levels per household are already higher than the national average (for entirely legitimate reasons linked to the demographics and layout of MK) and are projected to rise over the next decade. Therefore non car modes of transport have to increasingly induce car owners to leave the car at home for some journeys rather than merely serving non car owners. If every car owner could be encouraged to use a different means of transport for some journeys, then all those car owners would benefit from less congestion on the roads and more parking space at their destination on those occasions when they do need to use their car.</p>	<p>Already covered in 4th para of "A Well Connected MK" (LDF AG Agenda page 79)</p>
<p>88. Many people have problems finding their way around Milton Keynes due to lack of signage. Many people judge distances from their car journeys and have no idea that footpaths and cycle routes can provide much shorter journeys. Information on transport choices is very difficult to access.</p>	<p>It is generally held to be the lack of landmarks visible from the grid road system that causes problems of orientation, rather than lack of signage. This is addressed in Policy CS13 (point 6) but add reference in SWOT analysis.</p> <p>Transport information (bus timetables etc) is available on the MKC website and Real Time Passenger Information is being introduced at bus stops on the Quality Bus Routes. Making information more accessible is something for the Transport team to address.</p>
<p>89. Those households for whom there is no affordable way of getting to the big supermarkets, markets or other major retail areas will remain trapped in a spiral of poverty caused by the higher prices of local neighbourhood shops.</p>	<p>The need to improve accessibility for those without access to a car is already covered in 4th para of "A Well Connected MK"</p>

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90. For the 19% of the population of MK without a car there are issues of accessibility and therefore social exclusion. In particular, access to skills training for young people can be governed by accessibility by public transport. In order to increase the skills base of MK and reduce social inequalities there has to be a step change in the actual and perceived availability of sustainable transport provision (cycling, walking, buses).	Already covered in The Story of Place (LDF AG Agenda page 25) but <u>add reference</u> in preamble to effect of limited transport choices on social exclusion
91. Insufficient parking is becoming a constraint on the attractiveness of CMK to shoppers, retailers, and other businesses. People living nearby are already complaining that their residential neighbourhoods are being used as overflow parking for the city centre.	Insufficient parking in CMK: this is contrary to 6 th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) and not supported by the CMK Parking Strategy. Parking in neighbourhoods adjacent to CMK is a parking management issue which can be addressed outside the Core Strategy.
92. Some Milton Keynes residents (especially in areas of greatest need) cannot get the training and skills necessary to improve their prospects if there are not buses at the right time to get them to college.	Already covered in 4 th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79)
93. Many new schools in new neighbourhoods have initially been filled with children from other parts of the borough, who often travel by car because of the distances involved. Residents then move into new houses nearby, find the nearest school full, and have to travel large distances to alternative schools thus also resulting in travel by car. Thus effective school travel planning for any new school is seriously hampered until the entire initial intake of the school (all year groups) have been replaced by successive entry-year intakes drawn from a more local catchment.	This has been an issue in some new schools but is already being addressed by MKC Education to ensure that there will be capacity in new schools to serve their local population - e.g. Priory Rise, Tattenhoe Park
94. If Milton Keynes is serious about getting busy residents to use buses then those buses must be fast and reasonably direct, i.e. must travel predominately on grid roads. Such buses need to be focused around times of employment and commuting patterns.	The Bus Strategy addresses this issue. The new bus service linking the Eastern Expansion Area with CMK (Service 300) is a direct, frequent and limited stop service. <u>Agree</u> to add to preamble.

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<p>95. In order to attract the skills base and business/cultural activities needed to compete with European cities, MK needs to have high quality public transport and good amenities for walking and cycling. This is also crucial to meet the government’s carbon targets and the objective of smart growth where Milton Keynes increases its overall prosperity but reduces its carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Need for good quality public transport: already covered in 4th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) and the SWOT analysis (page 29)</p> <p>Carbon emissions from transport: already covered by reference to climate change in preamble (8th para, page 80)</p>
<p>THE WAY FORWARD</p> <p>96. The goal is to meet the transport needs and wishes of residents, visitors and businesses, while the population increases substantially and the growing significance of MK leads to greater numbers of visitors. Key to doing this is to provide and promote attractive alternatives to private car use where these are practical, so that for those journeys where there is no attractive alternative, the grid roads are less congested and there are adequate parking spaces. This is crucial to preserving the quality of life which attracts both residents and business.</p>	<p>Already covered in 1st para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) and reference to growth in 2nd para.</p>
<p>97. Therefore it is essential to support alternative travel modes where they provide an attractive alternative to the car, as this modal shift will preserve the uniqueness and freedom that is engendered by the grid road network and increase accessibility to retail and other business destinations. Alternative modes can also have considerable health benefits. Affordable and attractive public transport, cycling and walking options, car sharing and travel planning can play a key role in retention and productivity of all levels of staff and thereby increases the attractiveness of the area to business.</p>	<p>Already covered in 2nd and 4th paras of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79)</p>
<p>98. Residential areas need sufficient car parking spaces to match the projected levels of car ownership so they are well designed communities which buses and the emergency vehicles can access, where children can play safely and where it is safe to cycle, walk and push buggies. If the resident has had to park in an unofficial space they will be more likely to</p>	<p>Already covered in design Policy CS13 (point 8 as revised) (page 84)</p>

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<p>move their car at the earliest opportunity rather than use another mode of transport for their next journey.</p>	
<p>99. The greatest successes elsewhere in promoting modal shift and reducing congestion and parking need have been through travel planning using the Smarter Choices agenda, which covers the range of alternatives including home-working and tele-conferencing, information provision, e-commerce, car sharing, shared taxis, car pools, cycle promotion, improvements to public transport and especially workplace travel planning, school travel planning, and personalised travel planning.</p>	<p>Already covered in 6th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) but <u>add clear definition / explanation</u> of “demand management” and references to demand management in preamble and delivery sections.</p>
<p>100. It may be possible to eliminate some journeys entirely: by conducting the transaction over the phone, or via the internet, and by encouraging home working. In some cases home shopping is more achievable than “park and ride”, although both have their place. Local centres with a choice of general stores rather than just one would offer more attractive prices for convenience shopping within walking distance.</p>	<p>Already covered in 2nd para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79)</p> <p>Local centres: Local Plan Policy LC2 seeks to ensure at least one convenience store in each Local Centre. It was introduced to allow a wider range of uses in vacant units in local centres. This policy will be reassessed in the Development Management DPD. A policy to require more than 1 convenience store may lead to more vacant units rather than more convenience stores. Further research required with local centre owners/agents and our retail consultants.</p>
<p>101. The challenge for the major retail centres (CMK, the four older towns and the two district centres) is how to serve almost a doubling of the MK suburban population without a corresponding doubling of car traffic and parking. Mild demand management may be acceptable to all shoppers but more severe demand management will harm local jobs and the local economy if shoppers chose to drive to somewhere less restrictive. Shops may be able to persuade customers to visit less often and buy more on each visit. Shops may be able to offer a home delivery service, enabling shoppers to dispense with the car that is usually needed to get the goods home. And an increase in internet shopping may reduce some of the pressure on traditional shops.</p>	<p>The population of the Borough is not forecast to double in the period covered by the Core Strategy (2006 -2026), it is forecast to increase by about one third (35%) (Source: MK Population Bulletin 2008/09). This does not include growth in the SDAs outside the Borough boundary which would increase the population of ‘greater MK’ by about another 10%. The impact of this growth on shopping patterns has been addressed in the Retail Capacity Study.</p>

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<p>102. Recent trends towards ultra small cars (golf buggy sized or smaller) could massively increase the vehicle capacity of existing car parks (e.g. at the railway station) and would provide carbon footprint benefits especially if they were electric or hybrid.</p>	<p>Add reference to electric car scheme (MK was recently announced as one of the pilot areas) and the need for supporting infrastructure (e.g. charging points).</p> <p>Most parking spaces in CMK are not parallel, on-street spaces – they are at right angles to the carriageway (or to the access route in multi-storey car parks). Given that the ‘Ford Focus’, representing the public’s buying habits, is 17% wider than the ‘Smart ForTwo’, there does not appear to be the scope to ‘massively’ increase the capacity of existing car parks. However, the size of parking spaces should be considered as part of the review of parking and smaller spaces could be considered in the design of new parking areas.</p>
<p>103. Due to the substantial increase in the elderly population, there will be an increase in demand for community transport such as the successful “Plusbus”. The Milton Keynes strategy of creating retirement villages as well as more traditional homes for the elderly facilitates the delivery of these services.</p>	<p>This is an issue for the Transport Strategy</p>
<p>104. Promotion of cycling for leisure associated with Sustrans Route 51 (which passes through Milton Keynes) and other routes can be expected to increase the use of cycling for other purposes.</p>	<p>Cycling is already covered in 2nd and 5th paras of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) but add reference in Core Strategy to the SUSTRANS routes that pass through the city.</p>
<p>105. Workplace travel planning can reduce car usage by up to 25% and personalised travel planning as shown through the sustainable travel demonstration towns of Darlington, Worcester and Peterborough can reduce car usage by up to 12%. Travel planning is a low cost solution.</p>	<p>Principle already covered in 6th para of “A Well Connected MK” (page 79) but include travel planning in proposed definition / explanation of demand management (see point 99 above).</p>
<p>106. In order to deliver the modal shift needed to support the grid network, travel planning and a step-change in information needs to be provided. As Milton Keynes is a regional hub it should offer a transport planning advice centres at the station and at other key gateways. Transport advice centres also play a key role in promoting the overall opportunities and visitor attractions within MK.</p>	<p>Information / advice centres: this is an issue for Transport colleagues and the Transport Strategy</p>

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<p>107. Transport Hubs must offer convenient amenities both for MK residents travelling elsewhere and for visitors to MK, with services that facilitate joined up journeys at times that suit the travellers (including both ends of the commuters' working day). MK's key hubs will be the MK "Station Quarter", the Junction 14 / Coachway complex, and a proposed "Gateway to MK" interchange in the A421 / Junction 13 area.</p>	<p>Agree – identify key transport interchanges in Policy CS11 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MK Central rail station • Bletchley rail station (West Coast Main Line / East West Rail) • J14 Coachway / Park & Ride • J13 / A421 (e) / P&R / East West Rail (recognising that a location close to J13 would be outside the MKC area) • A421 (w) / P&R / East West Rail (within the SW SDA, outside the MKC area) • Denbigh North P&R • A5 North & A5 south P&R <p>All to be served by high quality, direct bus services to/from CMK</p>
<p>108. High quality travel planning will contribute to modal shift and therefore is included here because it has spatial implications for road capacity and parking demand.</p>	<p>See points 99 and 105 above</p>
<p>POLICY CS11</p> <p>109. Ease of movement of people and goods, and the resultant quality of life for residents, the attractiveness of MK to business & visitors, and the sense of place of Milton Keynes will be protected and enhanced by the following:</p>	
<p>110. The grid-road network and the redway network (footpath/cycle-ways) will be extended to new neighbourhoods wherever possible.</p>	<p>The extension of the grid road network to the SW and SE SDAs is covered in the Spatial Vision (point 7) and the policies for these areas (CS5 and CS6)</p> <p>Add reference (in CS5 and CS6) to extension of the redway network into these areas.</p>
<p>111. The effective capacity of the road network will be increased by targeted engineering works, by measures to encourage the use of</p>	<p>Already covered in Policy CS11 (point 3). "Highway capacity improvements" rather than "targeted engineering works" for consistency with the language</p>

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<p>significantly smaller cars, and by measures to encourage alternatives to individual car use for an increasing proportion of total travel, and particularly, alternatives to peak-time car travel.</p>	<p>in 'Transport Strategy...as Mk Grows'. <u>Add specific reference to improvements to roundabouts</u> to point 4 in Policy CS11, as an example of "highway capacity improvements.</p> <p>'Measures to encourage the use of significantly smaller cars': the capacity of junctions is determined by such factors as gap acceptance rules and junction geometry and not the length of a vehicle. It is not believed that significantly smaller cars would increase the capacity of the road network.</p>
<p>112. A step change in Travel Planning (workplace, school/college and personal) using the range of smarter choices for new neighbourhoods, businesses, visitor attractions and retail, in order that the grid road is kept flowing and the need for additional car parking space at destinations is reduced. New employers and new estates will have to provide a travel plan as part of the planning process. A comprehensive range of lower-carbon transport alternatives will be sought, including increased use of walking and cycling, elimination of some journeys, the use of smaller cars and electric/hybrid cars, and public transport solutions that offer reliable services at convenient hours of the day and evening. Alternatives to the traditional use of cars for shopping will be encouraged, including home delivery of goods and increased use of internet buying.</p>	<p><u>Agree</u> – but add more detail to delivery section rather than to Policy CS11</p>
<p>113. Continued investment in the provision of public transport, cycling and walking to serve both new and existing developments, and a substantial increase in information (to be provided within the city and across the wider region) on transport within MK and the location of MK's many attractions. Buses should offer some services that are fast, by running primarily along the grid-roads at business-oriented times, and other services that offer more door-step convenience by going into residential neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Already covered in Policy CS11 (point 1). <u>Add more detailed information to delivery section</u></p> <p>Bus services: the council can set the conditions for subsidised bus services but the bus operator effectively sets its own conditions for commercial services.</p>
<p>114. There will be an increase in the number of parking spaces within CMK and other major retail & leisure destinations to meet the increasing demand</p>	<p>CMK: one of the objectives of the 'Parking Strategy for Central Milton Keynes', adopted by Cabinet in Dec. 2008, is to increase the number of</p>

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<p>from both customers and employees arising from the projected growth in MK's population & visitor numbers.</p>	<p>parking spaces in CMK (from 20,000 to 31,000) but with a higher ratio of development to parking spaces. Any increase must be consistent with the Council's adopted parking standards.</p> <p>Other retail and leisure destinations: the Council can only require more parking spaces to be provided if there are plans to redevelop / extend any of these facilities, unless the Council is proposing to add more spaces itself.</p>
<p>115. Supporting the role of MK as a regional hub, there will be a provision of high quality integrated transport interchanges and gateways such as Milton Keynes station, the J14/Coachway area, and the proposed A421/J13/J13A transport interchange, and others gateways some of which will provide an integrated and comprehensive travel and visitor information advice service.</p>	<p>See point 107 above for full list of transport interchanges to be included in Policy CS11.</p>