

Wards Affected:

All Wards

ITEM 14**CABINET****12 SEPTEMBER 2017****CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Gifford, Cabinet Member for Place

Report Sponsor: Brett Leahy, Head of Planning Tel: 01908 252609

Author and contact: Michael Moore, Senior Planning Officer, Tel: 01908 252352

Executive Summary:

This report details the implications of proposals within the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) draft Local Plan and this Council's response to it. As public consultation on this plan closes on 29 August and there is no Council meeting in August to consider this report, Officer comments on this plan, incorporating initial Member feedback, will be sent to CBC as an interim response. Following discussions with CBC, any additional comments made by the Council at this Cabinet meeting will be sent to CBC for their consideration.

This report recommends that if CBC decides to allocate land for development on the periphery of Milton Keynes, this Council should work with CBC to assess the impacts of those proposals on the Borough including the road network. If CBC prepares Development Frameworks for these sites then this Council should become involved in their preparation. The report recommends infrastructure requirements generated by peripheral development should ideally be met on site or elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire. If infrastructure needs to be provided within Milton Keynes, financial contributions should be sought for its provision.

This report also recommends in undertaking joint working with CBC, Milton Keynes Council should be guided by Core Strategy policy CS6 which sets out this Council's principles for achieving high quality well-designed development in other local authority areas. Additionally, it is recommended that both CBC and MKC approach Highways England about expediting work on the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway in both local authority areas so a route can be identified as early as possible. Finally if a new strategic employment area is developed at Brogborough the feasibility of linking this site to the rail network should be investigated.

1. Recommendation(s)

That the following responses be made to the Central Bedfordshire draft Local Plan consultation:

- (i) Thank Central Bedfordshire Council for the opportunity to comment on its draft Local Plan.

- (ii) If Central Bedfordshire Council allocates land for development on the periphery of Milton Keynes in locations such as the Aspley Guise triangle, MKC wishes to work with CBC to assess the impact of that development and how any adverse impacts might be mitigated.
- (iii) As far as possible, this Council expects any need for infrastructure and facilities arising from new peripheral development within Central Bedfordshire to be met on site or elsewhere within Central Bedfordshire. Infrastructure provided within the proposal should not only be sufficient to cater for the needs generated by this development but be future-proofed so if future residential development occurs, infrastructure and facilities could be expanded to cope with increased demand. If infrastructure and facilities needs cannot be provided on site and provision needs to be made within this Borough, then this Council would seek financial contributions for the provision or improvement of necessary infrastructure and facilities.
- (iv) No allocations of land in Central Bedfordshire should prejudice the implementation of the East-West rail scheme or the proposed Expressway between Oxford and Cambridge.
- (v) Given the uncertainties over the route of the Expressway through both Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes, both local authorities should request a meeting with Highways England asking them to expedite work on the alignment for this section of the Expressway.
- (vi) If Central Bedfordshire Council prepares Development Frameworks for sites on the periphery of Milton Keynes then the Local Plan should reference the need for neighbouring authorities to be included in the preparation of those Development Frameworks.
- (vii) If a new strategic employment area is developed at Brogborough near junction 13 of the M1 the feasibility of linking this site to the rail network should be investigated.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Council has been consulted on the Regulation 18 draft of the Central Bedfordshire draft Local Plan. The consultation closes on 29 August 2017.
- 2.2 Over the plan period 2015-2035, the Central Bedfordshire Plan (CBC) aims to deliver a minimum of 24,000 jobs and 20,000 dwellings in addition to existing housing commitments of 23,000 dwellings. Subject to a further assessment of sustainability and deliverability, additional housing and employment growth could come forward at a selection of sites identified in policy SP1 (Growth Strategy). This policy identifies thirteen potential locations where an additional 10,000 dwellings and up to 6000 warehousing jobs along the M1/A1 corridors could be located. CBC have not yet decided which of these locations will be allocated for development, but potential development locations closest to Milton Keynes include:

- Potential new villages in the Aspley Guise triangle
 - A new strategic employment area of around 40 hectares in Brogborough near junction 13 of the M1
 - Four new villages in Marston Vale comprising 5,000 dwellings and 40 hectares of employment land
- 2.3 The plan highlights that there are sufficient housing sites to meet the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) figure for Central Bedfordshire of 32,000 dwellings. If provision of 30,000 new jobs is achieved, this represents delivery of around 1600 dwellings and 1500 jobs per annum.
- 2.4 The plan divides Central Bedfordshire into four areas and all of the sites above are in what the plan describes as area C. Within this area, development opportunities are related to future strategic infrastructure investment including the proposed Expressway and East–West Rail.

Details of the Aspley Guise Triangle Allocation

- 2.5 In the Aspley Guise triangle of land north-east of Woburn Sands, between Cranfield Road, the A421 and north of the Bletchley to Bedford railway line, part of which is within this Council’s area, the plan identifies scope for mixed use development in the form of villages linking in with the planned development of Milton Keynes. One village (Hayfield Park) is already being promoted by developers for 650 dwellings and a planning application for this is expected to be made to CBC shortly.
- 2.6 The key diagram of the plan (reproduced in the annex to this report) suggests three new villages around Aspley Guise with capacity for around 3,000 dwellings and employment land. CBC recognises that any strategic development at this location could include a series of linked villages separated and screened from neighbouring settlements by appropriate landscape buffers.
- 2.7 Among the advantages of development at this location cited by CBC are good access to Milton Keynes, the M1, East – West Rail and the planned Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. CBC consider that development in the Aspley Guise triangle should not proceed until the route of the Expressway has been identified and safeguarded, which could potentially affect the deliverability of development within this area within the plan period.

Issues raised by the Plan

- 2.8 One of the main issues raised by the potential development of sites within Central Bedfordshire is the possible impact of that development on Milton Keynes city infrastructure and services. The proximity of the Aspley Guise Triangle site to Milton Keynes means that new development there would function as an extension of Milton Keynes city and residents would look to the city for services and facilities.
- 2.9 If CBC does decide to proceed with developments on the periphery of Milton Keynes such as the Aspley Guise triangle, MKC should work with CBC to assess the impact of these proposals. The Council has already contacted CBC seeking its co-operation on work involving the Milton Keynes Multi Modal Transport model which is testing growth proposals in Plan:MK. Officers believe the proposed allocations in Central Bedfordshire will give rise to

significant movement to and from Milton Keynes particularly as it is likely that residents of the new housing would look to Milton Keynes for services and amenities. MKC should work with CBC so that the cumulative impact of development proposals on the highway network can be assessed on a comparable basis and any adverse impacts mitigated.

- 2.10 Additionally, MKC should work with CBC to identify the requirements for infrastructure and facilities (schools, health facilities etc) generated by these proposals. As far as possible, any need for infrastructure and facilities arising from new peripheral development within Central Bedfordshire should be met on site or elsewhere within Central Bedfordshire. Infrastructure provided within the proposal should not only be sufficient to cater for the needs generated by this development but be future-proofed so if any further residential development were to take place, infrastructure and facilities could be expanded to cope with increased demand. Where infrastructure and facilities needs cannot be provided on site and provision needs to be made within this Borough, then this Council would seek a proportion of the Section 106 financial contributions for the provision or improvement of necessary infrastructure and facilities within Milton Keynes.
- 2.11 The Council's Core Strategy contains policy CS6 (Place-shaping principles for Sustainable Urban Extensions in adjacent Local Authorities) which sets out this Council's principles for achieving high quality well-designed development within other local authority areas. This policy is reproduced in the appendix to this report. Among the principles in the policy are that the structure and layout of adjacent development should be based on the principles which have shaped the city. It is suggested that policy CS6 could serve as a basis for discussions with CBC on proposed allocations such as the Aspley Guise triangle.
- 2.12 We consider that nothing should be put forward in this plan which might prejudice the future provision of the East-West Rail proposal or the proposed Expressway between Oxford and Cambridge (see the appendix to this report for further details of progress on East-West rail services). An issue in both this Council's Local Plan (Plan:MK) and Central Bedfordshire's Local Plan is the uncertainty over the route of the Expressway, which may delay the delivery of new development in both local authority areas. Details of the route are not expected to be announced until 2019. To mitigate this uncertainty, Milton Keynes should approach CBC about initiating a joint meeting with Highways England with the aim of prioritising the alignment of the section of the Expressway through both local authority areas.
- 2.13 CBC often prepares Development Frameworks to guide the delivery of major new areas of development. If Development Frameworks are prepared for sites on the periphery of Milton Keynes then the CBC Local Plan should include a reference to neighbouring authorities becoming involved in the preparation of those Development Frameworks. This will give this Council an opportunity to influence the design of the scheme and resolve potential problem before they arise. If CBC decides to develop a new strategic employment area at Brogborough close to the existing Bletchley to Bedford railway line, the feasibility of linking this site to the rail network should be investigated; such a facility would encourage the use of rail for the carriage of freight.

3. Options

- 3.1 The preferred option is to comment on this plan rather than not to do so in order to make CBC aware of any Council concerns. This provides an opportunity for CBC to consider this Council's representations and thereby to influence the content of the plan.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

Milton Keynes Council has an interest in ensuring that developments on the periphery of the city are well designed, of high quality and well integrated with and accessible from the city and coalescence of settlements is avoided. Additionally, these new developments should not place an extra burden on schools, health facilities etc. within Milton Keynes. Comments from Education endorse the recommendations of this report and support the proposed approach to mitigating any impact arising from future development within Central Bedfordshire.

4.2 Resources and Risk

If residential development on the periphery of the city occurs, the concern is that people within those developments would look to the city to access services and facilities which could have revenue and capital consequences. However, this risk would be mitigated by recommendation (iii) infrastructure and facilities being provided on site or elsewhere within Central Bedfordshire, otherwise a financial contribution will be sought for their provision. Any work associated with the recommendations above will be funded by existing budget provision.

Y	Capital	Y	Revenue	N	Accommodation
N	IT	N	Medium Term Plan	N	Asset Management

4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

Not applicable.

4.4 Legal

Legal have no comments to make on this report.

4.5 Other Implications

The potential developments in Central Bedfordshire will be of interest to a number of key stakeholders and the plan is aiming to promote sustainable development.

N	Equalities/Diversity	Y	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	Y	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers:

Shaping where you live 2035, Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015-2035, Draft Plan consultation July 2017