

NOTES OF MEETING

CROSS BOUNDARY MEMBERS' REFERENCE GROUP  
28<sup>th</sup> February 2008  
MKP OFFICES

**Attendees:**

Members

Cllr Cec Tallack	MKC / SEERA (chair)
Cllr Chris Williams	MKC
Cllr Fiona Chapman	Mid Beds DC
Cllr Martin Tett	Bucks CC
Cllr Carole Paternoster	AVDC
Cllr Tony Duggan	Beds CC
Malcolm Brighton	MKPC

Officers

Ian Haynes	MKC
Rachel Jones	BCC
Trevor Saunders	Mid Beds DC
Andy Barton	AVDC
Tim Earthy	Beds CC
Sheila Keene	MKP
Cheryl Montgomery	MKP

Regional organisations

Neil McKillen	GO - East
David Paine	GOSE
Adrian Cannard	EERA
Mark Williams	SEERA
Gareth Ralphs	SEEDA

GVA Grimley

Stephen Hollowood
Simon Phillips
Gary Stephens

Item No.		Action
1	<b>Welcome / introductions / apologies</b>	
2	<b>Election of chair for the meeting</b> It was agreed that Cllr Tallack would chair the meeting and that the chair would rotate around the local authorities.	<b>MKC</b>
3	<b>Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007 meeting</b>	
3.1	The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.	
4	<b>Terms of Reference: Cross boundary Members' Reference Group</b>	
4.1	Members noted that the revised Terms of Reference had been circulated following the last meeting. These will now apply.	

## 5. Strategic Development Area (SDA) Study

5.1 Ian Haynes introduced the project. The five local authorities and MKP had identified the need to test (at a strategic level) the amount of development proposed in the EiP Panel Report for the two SDAs. Milton Keynes Council, on behalf of all the partners, had commissioned GVA Grimley to follow-up their previous work.

5.2 The work had been jointly funded by the 6 partners and once agreed by partners, would form part of the necessary evidence base for responding to government's consultation on the Regional Spatial Strategy later this year.

5.3 Ian's presentation included a brief slide show of both SDAs.

### Presentation by GVA Grimley

5.4 The consultants highlighted some of the key points in their draft report:

- The EiP Panel Report recommended the number of additional homes to be provided in Strategic Development Areas SE and SW of the city to be 10,400 and 5,390 respectively
- A set of common standards had been agreed with the 6 partners for the purposes of the study, including standards for the amount of land required for other land uses – e.g. school, open space, employment etc. There would need to be an integrated approach to transport and infrastructure, including green infrastructure and drainage
- Assumptions underpinning the work to assess capacity included: the need to secure the integrity of existing settlements; protecting and providing green space to the existing MK standards; the importance of East West Rail to both SDAs, including a new station at Newton Longville; and the importance of maintaining a “whole city” approach.
- The Panel recommend the SDAs should be phased as follows:

	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026	Total
SW SDA		2,450	2,940	5,390
SE SDA	600	4,800	5,000	10,400

- The study looked at 3 different density scenarios - 30, 40 and 50 dwellings per hectare.

5.5 The consultants concluded that in general terms the SW SDA could accommodate the level of development proposed. There were options available in terms of the location and extent of development south of the EWR route, and the best place for a new station.

5.6 The conclusion in the SE SDA, however, was that levels of development proposed could only be achieved at densities of 50 dwg / ha or, if green

space standards were adjusted, at densities in excess of 40 dwgs/ha. While it would be possible to accommodate the total number of dwellings (10,400), it would not be possible to accommodate the Panel's recommended figure of 5,600 homes within the Mid Beds part of the SDA.

#### Members' questions and discussion

- 5.7 Cllr Chapman queried whether the consultants had allowed sufficient land in the SE SDA for dualling the A421. Stephen Hollowood and Simon Phillips advised that the diagrams should not be taken too literally: the land budget allowed for transport corridors which would need to be worked up in more detail at the next level (a development framework for each SDA). Protecting the integrity of the existing settlements - Aspley Guise, Woburn Sands and Wavendon - will be a key objective for the development framework.
- 5.8 Cllr Duggan asked whether the impact of M1 widening had been taken into account, particularly in relation to increased noise. He also highlighted the need for the SDA work to tie in with the proposed improvements to Junction 13. Simon Phillips said that the need for noise attenuation alongside the M1 (a bund) had been taken into account and was mentioned in the report.
- 5.9 Cllr Tett asked how a decision to locate a new station at Newton Longville to the east of Whaddon Road (instead of to the west) would affect the consultants' recommendations. Cllr Paternoster queried whether this new station was part of the proposed East West Rail service, or mainly for local services to and from Milton Keynes. Sheila Keene advised that the new station was included in the "base case" for the East West Rail reopening; however delivery of the station itself would depend upon the timing of the proposed development at Newton Longville as this would provide the funding.
- 5.10 Stephen Hollowood and Gary Stephens noted that the study was not intended to determine where the station should be located. They felt that it made sense to focus new development around a new station but that the station was only one factor in determining the extent of the SW SDA. The Eastern Quadrant of the SDA, the closest to Newton Longville village, was very sensitive while the Western Quadrant offered more scope and flexibility to accommodate development.
- 5.11 Ian Haynes said that although EWR was primarily of strategic rather than local significance, it made sense for development to take advantage of it and also for development to contribute to the costs of the new station. Sheila Keene explained that the GRIP 3 option development study had shown that there was a business case for EWR based on the Consortium's preferred option: the main share of funding would need to come from the private sector, with some public money for pump priming. More work was needed on the details of new rail services on the route.

- 5.12 Malcolm Brighton pointed out that new development was not just about housing, it was about people and lifestyles. The population profile and lifestyles might be very different in 30 years time. How had these possible changes been taken into account? Stephen Hollowood said that this had been done, at a strategic level, in their work on the MK Growth Strategy (MK2031) but more would need to be done at the next stage of work on the SDAs.
- 5.13 Trevor Saunders queried what was an appropriate average housing density for each SDA. In the SW, the amount of housing proposed by the EIP Panel could be achieved at 30-35 dwellings / hectare whereas in the SE, the Panel's figure could only be achieved by building at 40-45 dwellings / hectare.
- 5.14 Stephen Hollowood described the capacity of the SW SDA as "not so tight" as the capacity of the SE SDA but pointed out that there was a large allowance for green infrastructure in the land budgets which provided some flexibility. From evidence elsewhere in the UK, about 40 dwellings / hectare was considered sustainable. Cllr Tallack noted that densities needed to reflect and relate to the particular character of MK; Cllr Tett that the land take would vary depending on the density scenario; and Gary Stephens that density should be locally determined and so could vary from a national average.
- 5.15 Adrian Cannard focussed on the housing figures for Mid Beds, which could cause a problem as they were not included in the current East of England Plan. EERA would also be looking at the extent of any employment allocation within or adjoining Mid-Bedfordshire and its economic impacts.
- 5.16 Cllr Paternoster noted that while the railway formed a boundary to the SE SDA, it would not do so in the SW. She also queried how a tariff approach would work, particularly in dealing with the need for infrastructure improvements further afield, such as the A421 around Buckingham. Stephen Hollowood and Sheila Keene noted that a tariff approach to the SDAs would need to be grounded in the LDF process (in Core Strategies and other DPDs). It was noted that discussions had taken place with local authorities along the route to agree a common approach to policy.
- 5.17 Gareth Ralphs noted that in terms of collaborative working, it might be worth talking to PUSH (Partnership for Urban South Hampshire). The MKSM Board and sub groups also provide a mechanism for cross boundary working; and that any further technical work – such as the work on the Economic Vision for MK, led by MKELP – needed to be done as soon as possible.

5.18 Members noted that the issue of capacity in the SE SDA required further work. MKC, MKP, Beds CC and MBC had already asked the consultants to do this, with a view to this additional work being completed by the end of March. It would then be published together with the main report.

### Next Steps

5.19 The report had identified where further work was needed in relation to the SDAs as part of more detailed development frameworks for each area – e.g. in relation to transport; planning obligations and possible tariff arrangements, particularly for “common” requirements, such as E-W Rail. Additional work was required on the capacity of the SE SDA and this was already in hand.

5.20 Agreed

1. The SDA Study to be published as part of the “evidence base” for commenting on the Proposed Changes to the South East Plan once additional work on the SE SDA had been completed

**MKC**

2. Members are interested in learning lessons from elsewhere regarding urban design and urban density, especially any examples of higher density development of a similar scale to the proposed SDAs.

**MKP<sup>1</sup>**

## **6 Development Plans update**

6.1 It was noted that the SDA Study included an update on the LDFs for each district (Table 2.2)

6.2 David Paine explained that Proposed Changes to the South East Plan would now be published “before the summer Parliamentary recess” – i.e. in June / July.

6.3 Neil McKillen noted that the government were due to publish the final East of England Plan in “spring 2008”, with the requirement for review of the plan to start as early as possible. Adrian Cannard added that EERA were already putting together an evidence base for the review and were aiming to produce a project plan for the review by July. It would take 12-18 months to build options. The review would focus on housing delivery to 2031.

6.4 Mark Williams said that SEERA were in a similar position to EERA but about 3-4 months behind. A project plan for a review of the SEP was scheduled for the plenary session in November. He also advised local authorities to “future proof” their Core Strategies and other DPDs as it was not known what the final housing figures in the SEP would be.

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<sup>1</sup> With potential input from EP’s National Consultancy Unit

## **7 Arrangements for Joint Working**

7.1 Ian Haynes introduced the item.

7.2 Cllr Tallack felt that the group should start to meet quarterly again, and that this would be a good forum in which to start thinking about the possibility of more formal joint working arrangements

7.3 Cllrs Chapman, Duggan and Tett all supported the principal of more joint working involving members.

### Agreed:

1. Scope areas of work that might benefit from a joint approach, to report back to the group **MKC / MKP**
2. Start to research joint working arrangements elsewhere and review potential models for cross boundary working, to report back to the group **MKC / MKP**
3. Consider the potential for a joint statement on the Proposed Changes to the South East Plan covering matters of common ground (as per the joint statement for the SEP Examination in Public) **ALL**

## **8 AOB: date of next meeting**

8.1 Cllr Tallack felt that the group should start to meet quarterly again, and that this would be a good forum in which to start thinking about the possibility of more formal joint working arrangements

8.2 Cllrs Chapman, Duggan and Tett all supported the principal of more joint working that involved members. Malcolm Brighton felt that, whatever the legal position, morally it was right to work in partnership through informal arrangements if not formal ones.

8.3 David Paine noted that, as an officer of GOSE, he could not be part of any discussion about the South East Plan at future meetings.

8.4 Agreed

Arrange further meetings of the group in June and September and quarterly thereafter

**MKC**