

## Unitary Councillor Report

### Report from Cllr David Hopkins, Cllr Alice Jenkins & Cllr Victoria Hopkins – Representing Wavendon at MK Council

January 2017



#### Under 6 Sunday Football Coaching Sessions

One of the area's largest and longest established FA Standard Youth Football Clubs is launching a programme of coaching sessions aimed at girls and boys aged under 6 years. Commencing January 29th 2017 at the PowerLeague in Milton Keynes, they will run every Sunday from 11am till 12 Noon (during term time) for 12 weeks. The sessions will then switch to one of WWFC's grass pitch locations.

The aim is to provide a safe and fun environment for children of all abilities to develop skills, techniques and experience whilst making loads of new friends. This will be a direct feeder into the Club's Under 7 teams and the MK & District Development League for next season. FA qualified WWFC coaches will guide and control all sessions. They have full Safeguarding & DBS certification, placing the care and protection of children first.

"The Club places huge importance on these sessions, ensuring that youngsters and their families enjoy a safe, fun-filled introduction to grassroots football that will set in play years of excitement and achievement" commented Robert Hill, Club Chairman.

Spaces will be limited, so please contact Ian Williams to secure your place. Mob:- 07802572233.

Email:- [ian.williams@connectedness.co.uk](mailto:ian.williams@connectedness.co.uk)



### Briefing note from December 2016 – Charles Hurst – Network Rail

Update meeting for the areas of Bow Brickhill, Woburn Sands and Aspley Guise.  
(AKA East of Bletchley)

There were no specific agenda items to be discussed so the East West Rail Alliance (“EWR”) gave a project update.

EWR reported that the proposed consultation events (2nd round) had been moved from early January until mid-May. The reason for this change was mainly due to the removal of electrification from the Oxford to Bletchley section and the re-work necessary in the Environmental Impact Assessment. Some ecology issues may be affected but mainly the issues were to do with noise and vibration. EWR reported that this work should be completed during the spring of 2017 and a draft Environmental Statement would be available for the consultation events, however, further delay was due to local elections which are due to be held in May with a purdah period of 6 weeks preceding this.

EWR reported that the venues and dates for the consultation events had been provisionally decided on although they were not yet in a position to release them. It was requested that consideration should be given to arranging a consultation event at the Summerlin Centre in Woburn Sands and it was confirmed that this information would be relayed to the organising team.

EWR confirmed that the consultation would include all detailed plans and designs and, as before, would include a digital interactive map and details will be available both digitally (on computer) and in hard copy format.

EWR confirmed that after the consultation events had concluded there will be a period for sifting the comments received and evaluating whether any changes to the proposed design will be necessary. The submission date for the Order is presently planned to be December 2017 with an estimated time frame of 12-18 months for Secretary of State approval. The project is hopeful that the Order will be made in

approximately twelve months although this will depend on the level of objection to the scheme.

EWR confirmed that planning approval for the ramped bridge at Woburn Sands School Crossing had been granted although there was a very late attempt by Mr Bradley (owner of part of Station Yard) to ambush proceedings with a lengthy and detailed letter from his solicitor suggesting that there may be procedural issues with granting consent. EWR explained that although planning permission was granted it was quite unlikely that the footbridge will be constructed in advance of the rest of the scheme because it did not provide powers to acquire the land needed to construct the bridge on the south side (land owned by Mr Bradley). It was unlikely that agreement would be reached with Mr Bradley to acquire the land and, therefore, EWR would seek powers under the Transport and Works Act Order to acquire the land through compulsory purchase measures.

As noted above, EWR confirmed that electrification had been removed from the scheme and this will tend to increase noise levels due to the rolling stock which will be used on the line.

EWR confirmed that the current thinking at Lidlington was to close the School Crossing and to divert users over the existing (controlled) road crossing. They acknowledged that this issue was the subject of ongoing discussions and that Central Bedfordshire did not agree with this proposal at this point in time. EWR also confirmed that the Marston Road crossing in Lidlington was to be replaced with a road over the railway bridge. This bridge would blight Chuffer Cottage and EWR confirmed that they had discussed and received agreement from the owner that their preference was to move rather than agree to noise and vibration mitigation measures being constructed which may not be totally successful.

EWR confirmed that they were not now planning to build a road bridge at Green Lane Stewartby. Covanta (energy to waste plant) were required, as part of their DCO, to upgrade the crossing to the approval of NR and ORR. Therefore, EWR have decided that this upgrade work will be sufficient for the proposed train movements.

EWR confirmed that Berry Lane crossing at Aspley Guise will be closed and that a drive to the north of the line, running west, will be constructed to allow existing home owners access. A track to the north of the line and running east will be constructed to facilitate farm traffic and field access.

EWR confirmed that they were now involved in monthly development meetings with MK Council (Anna Rose) to help ensure that future developments along or close to the route were properly considered in their entirety. These meetings will hopefully inform EWR/NR about future developments but will also inform developers where they can work with the railway to enhance and improve crossings and include such plans in their development proposals.

EWR confirmed that they hold periodical meetings with O&H properties to achieve similar results as described in the meetings with MK Council.

Further discussions took place regarding the Old Station Yard and the need for EWR to regularize the activities which were being carried out on the site. EWR confirmed that their information suggested that the services which had been installed by the owner had not been done so in accordance with Utility Company's standards. EWR confirmed that they had been informed by MK Council that the activities currently being undertaken did not have planning permission. EWR stated particular concern over the open storage of vehicles and the potential for fire risk (fuel in the vehicles) should one of the vehicles be set alight.

A recent fire which was thought to have been started deliberately in a nearby building sufficiently illustrated the potential for damage, as well as safety of the public, if such an issue occurred in the car storage area.

HS2 was an issue which affected the project but not the area east of Bletchley. However, EWR explained that the recent announcement in the Autumn Statement which awarded £110 million to EWR was mainly to cover early works required for HS2. The work was generally between Charndon and Steeple Claydon and concerned the blockade on the Bicester to Bletchley section and the need for this work to be undertaken early so as not to delay the HS2 programme. The main area of work was where HS2 went under EWR and this necessitated major civils works and early environmental measures to enable the work to proceed. £100 million has been allocated to this enabling work and it is existing EWR budget which is being brought forward. The remaining £10 million was to allow the planning and early design of the Central Section (Bedford to Cambridge) to continue.

EWR confirmed that the current plans at Woburn Sands did not involve electrification and there was no change planned to the crossing; the only change to the existing situation would be an additional train per hour in each direction. Platform extensions at the station would also be required for the additional (longer) service.

Next meeting will be planned for early March 2017 – Friday 3rd March is the proposed date. Please let me know if this is not convenient as soon as possible.

From all at EWR we wish you all a prosperous and happy New Year.



**Weight to be attached to Neighbourhood Plans**

## **A Briefing Note**

### **Introduction**

A valid planning application has to be determined by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The LPA cannot refuse to consider, or delay a decision on a planning application because a community is preparing a neighbourhood plan. However, like all planning policy documents, neighbourhood plans will gather increasing weight as a material consideration, the further they get through the process towards becoming a 'Made' Plan.

This Briefing Note is intended to provide a short guide as to the weight that should be given to a Neighbourhood Plan, when considering planning applications, as the Plan moves through that process.

### **The Legislative Framework**

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that an 'emerging neighbourhood plan may be a material consideration'. However, it also states that in deciding how much weight should be given to an emerging Neighbourhood Plan, an LPA needs 'to consider include the stage of preparation of the plan and the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies' and 'should respect evidence of local support prior to referendum when seeking to apply weight to an emerging neighbourhood plan'.

Annex 1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also explains how weight may be given to policies in emerging plans. The starting point for such decisions must be the NPPF and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is unlikely that a decision to refuse an application on the basis that it is premature would be successful at Appeal unless it is clear that the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, taking the policies in the Framework and any other material considerations into account. Such circumstances are likely, but not exclusively, to be limited to situations where both:

- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging Neighbourhood Plan and
- b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified before a Neighbourhood Plan has completed its public consultation

period. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the Council would need to indicate clearly how the grant of permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.(NPPG)

### **Before Publication**

Until a Neighbourhood Plan is published for consultation it can be given no weight. So even if the relevant Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are at a quite advanced stage in preparing the draft plan: they have had a lot of community engagement and the draft document is just waiting for the dotting of the 'i's and the crossing of the 't's it carries no weight.

### **Following Publication**

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is published, the steering group bringing the plan forward should have evidence of public support for aspects of the plan. Some very limited weight could be given to those policies where it can be demonstrated that there is clear public support for them. Once the Plan has been checked for compliance with the NPPF and existing Development Plan Policies by Milton Keynes Council a little more weight can be given to those policies.

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states: From the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

### **Following Public Consultation**

Comments received during the formal Public Consultation period can provide stronger evidence of public support for policies and increase the weight that can be given to them. However, even at this stage the weight that can be given to the policies is a long way short of full weight.

### **Following Examination**

Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been through the examination process and the Examiner has concluded that the Plan is in conformity with the NPPF and

any Development Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan carries considerable weight, but not yet full weight.

### **Following the Referendum**

Once the referendum has been held and there is clear public support for the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan and its policies carry substantial weight, although still slightly short of full weight.

### **Following Adoption**

Only once the Neighbourhood Plan has been 'Made' by the LPA does it carry full weight when considering planning applications.

Neighbourhood Plans versus 5 Year Housing Land Supply Paragraph 83 of National Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning advises (issued 11.02.16):

"Neighbourhood plans are an important part of the plan-led system. The Government's policy intention when introducing neighbourhood planning was to provide a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure they get the right types of development for their community, while also planning positively to support strategic development needs.

Decision makers may find themselves considering applications in an area with a neighbourhood plan that has passed referendum and been "made", and thus forms part of the development plan, but where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

In such instances paragraph 49 of the Framework is clear that "relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites." Paragraph 49 applies to policies in the statutory development plan documents which have been adopted or approved in relation to a local planning authority area. It also applies to policies in made neighbourhood plans.

Where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 14 of the Framework states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development requires the granting of planning permission, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

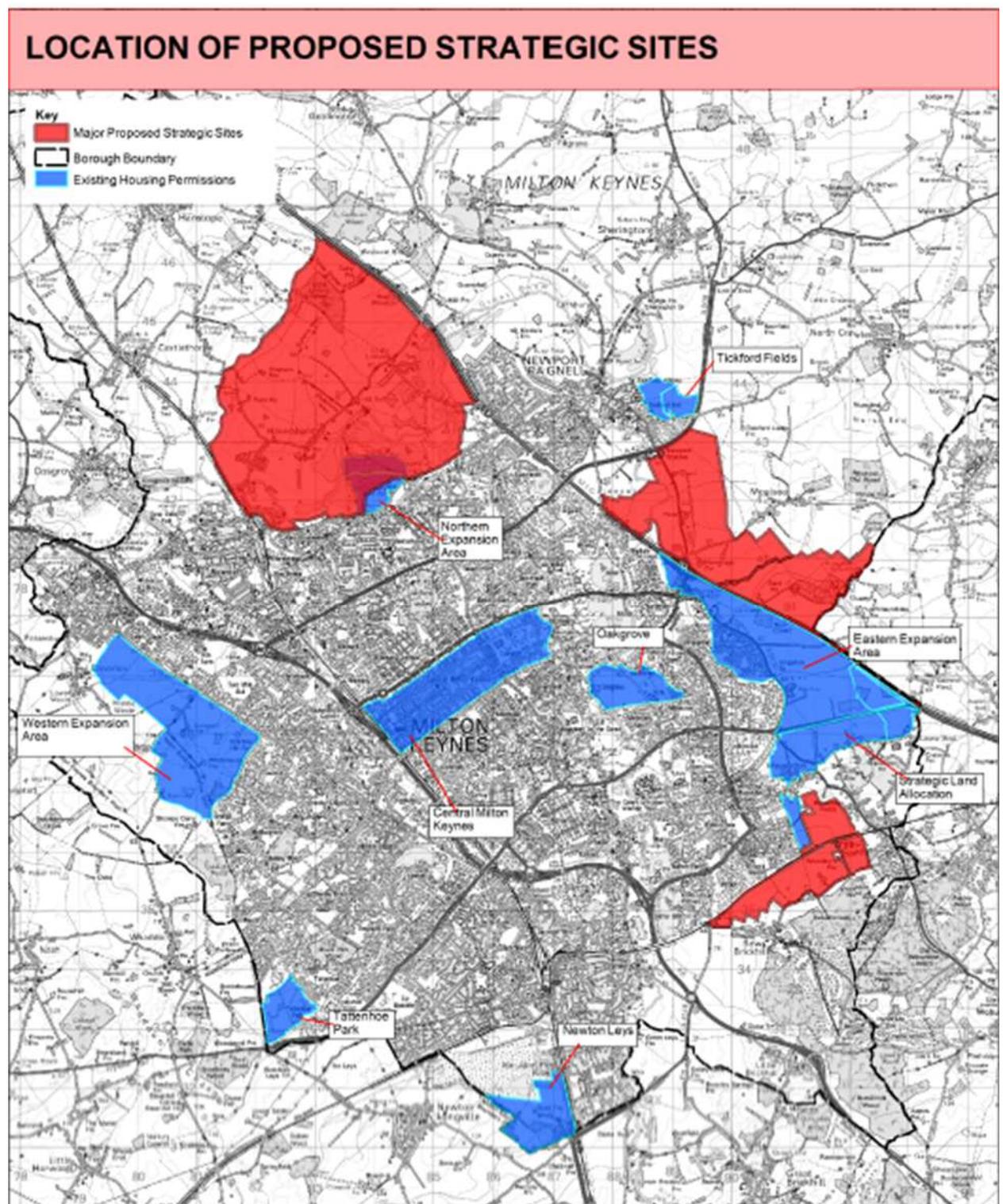
In this situation, when assessing the adverse impacts of the proposal against the policies in the Framework as a whole, decision makers should include within their assessment those policies in the Framework that deal with neighbourhood planning.

This includes paragraphs 183–185 of the Framework; and paragraph 198 which states that where a planning application conflicts with a neighbourhood plan that has been brought into force, planning permission should not normally be granted".

Paragraphs 183 – 185 and 198 of the NPPF would also need to be weighed in the balance against paragraphs 14 and 49 of the NPPF

# Plan:MK

- Local plans set out the homes, jobs, shops, offices and infrastructure that is needed in the area
- They have a time horizon of about 15 years
- Government needs councils to have up to date local plans that deliver growth
- Having an up to date plan in place is the best defence against unplanned development and 'planning by appeal'
- Plan:MK will replace both Core Strategy and Local Plan
- Plan period 2016 – 2036
- Progresses towards the aims of the MK Futures report
- Will contain mixture of large strategic sites and smaller sites
- An up to date local plan will strengthen neighbourhood plans



- Births exceeded deaths by an average of 2,150 over the period 2005-2015

- Milton Keynes incoming population from UK & abroad averaged 1,700 people per year over the same period
- Overall need for homes over the plan period is 34,500 (1725 per year)
- Plan:MK proposed housing provision 37,250 new homes
  - 1725 homes per year (2016 - 2026)
  - 2,000 homes per year (2026 - 2036)
- Homes already planned – 23,000
- Homes on brownfield sites within MK – 4,000
- Homes to be planned in proposed new development areas – 13,000
- Principles of city will continue (e.g. grid roads)
- Plan will provide for necessary infrastructure including schools & health
- Protections will be put in place (e.g. landscape buffers, linear parks)
- Proposed new development areas likely to include district centres and some employment (e.g. live/work units)
- Town & Parish Councils presentation – 15 December 2016
- Special Cabinet - 21 February 2017
- 12 weeks' public consultation on draft plan March - May 2017
- Proposed submission plan published for consultation – autumn/late 2017
- Submission of plan and reps to Secretary of State – spring 2018
- Public examination – summer 2018
- Adoption of plan – by end of 2018
- Plan review - 2021



### **The Hayfield Partnership - Proposals for the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan**

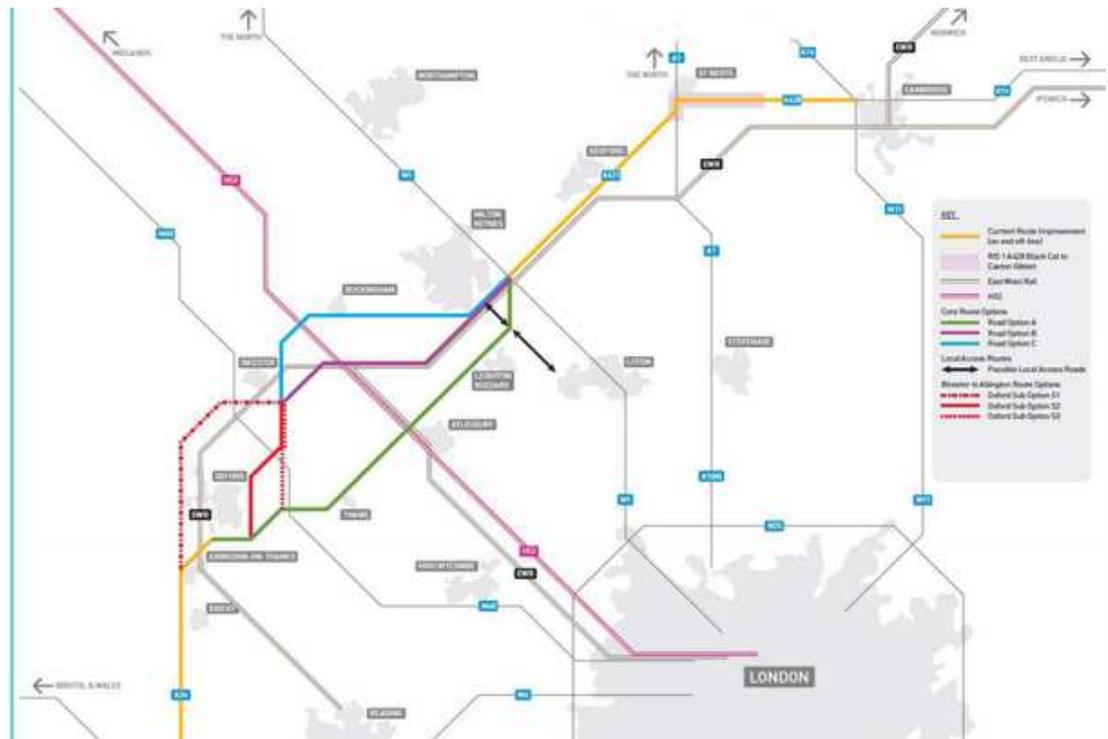
The Hayfield Partnership is promoting land in an area known locally as the Aspley Guise Triangle. The site represents a unique opportunity to deliver new homes, jobs

and infrastructure in a sustainable location identified as being well-suited for development



### Expressway

## Oxford – Cambridge (via MK)



**Delegated Decision – (20 December 2016) - Executive Summary:**

The relevant Cabinet member (Cllr Liz Gifford) took a delegated decision on 20 December to support the recommendation on west-route choice (Corridor B as per drawing below) as a preference for the corridor in which future preferred route will emerge for inclusion in the Government's Road Investment Strategy2 (RIS2) process, following our response to the National Infrastructure Commission consultation on the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor.

Note: The land east of Church Farm is therefore to be held as Strategic Reserve with no further development before 2026 at the earliest to allow a reserved corridor be established for this route

*David Hopkins / Alice Jenkins/ Victoria Hopkins  
Danesborough & Walton Ward Councillors*