Milton Keynes Core Strategy Examination

Hearing Statement: Matter 2 - Development Strategy, Settlement Hierarchy

Gallagher Estates

Respondent Ref: 273046

May 2012
0.0 INTRODUCTION

0.1 This Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Gallagher Estates. As background, Gallagher Estates controls and is the promoter of development at various strategic locations at Milton Keynes including the Western Expansion Area (WEA); land within the Strategic Land Allocation comprising Glebe Farm, Eagle Farm North and Eagle Farm South; and land immediately to the south of Milton Keynes at Eaton Leys (which forms part of the site identified by the Council as ‘MKSA9’).

0.2 This Statement seeks to address the questions raised by the Inspector, setting out the case on behalf of Gallagher Estates regarding the soundness of the Core Strategy as submitted and whether the legal and procedural requirements have been met.
Q2.1 In general, does the Core Strategy provide clear, sound guidance about the roles that will be played by various parts of the borough in its future development?

2.1.1 Policy CS1: Milton Keynes Development Strategy establishes the broad locational framework for future development in the Borough. The thrust of the policy approach is most clearly illustrated through Table 5.1 (Settlement Hierarchy). This identifies the main areas for development.

2.1.2 Gallagher Estates supports the identification of the Strategic Land Allocation (SLA) as a main area for development at Milton Keynes. For clarity, we recommend that Policy CS1 should cross-refer to Policy CS5 as this provides the relevant policy guidance for the development of the SLA together with details provided in Table 5.7.
Q2.2 Is the settlement hierarchy and broad scale and direction of growth as set out in Policy CS1 properly justified?

2.2.1 Gallagher Estates support the identification of Milton Keynes at the top of the hierarchy and therefore the focus for growth. This includes various key areas for strategic growth including the SLA to the south east of the City.

2.2.2 The broad scale of housing growth is set out in Table 5.2 of the Core Strategy. This identifies an urban housing target of 26,240 homes and 1,760 homes in the rural area (for the period 2010-2026). Approximately 93% of the total level of housing provision is therefore proposed at Milton Keynes urban area.

2.2.3 Gallagher Estates support this approach.
Q2.3  Is there a sound policy framework for the Rural Areas of the borough?

2.3.1  We have no comment on this issue.
Q2.4 In terms of their guidance and specificity, is the balance between the area-based policies and Table 5.7 appropriate?

2.4.1 The clarity of Policy CS5 and its supporting text in terms of its guidance and specificity would in our view be enhanced through incorporating details currently provided in Table 5.7. This particularly relates to the scale and type of facilities and infrastructure which would be required to support the development of the SLA. Where possible, the Core Strategy should seek to establish the precise requirements and avoid placing any unreasonable or unjustified burdens upon development.

2.4.2 We have commented specifically on this issue in relation to Policy CS5 and the SLA in our statement for Matter 6.