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This document has been prepared by Savills on behalf of

South East Milton Keynes Consortium

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part one: introduction

Figure 1a: Site location

Aerial views of the site
1. INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared on behalf of the SEMK Consortium. It forms part of the Consortium’s response to consultation on the Secretary of State’s Proposed Changes to the South East Plan that were published in July 2008. The purpose of this document is to support the Consortium’s written representations and confirm that the proposals for the site are deliverable in accordance with the recommendations of the Panel Report dated August 2007. To this end the document:

- describes the background to the proposals and the strategic analysis undertaken to date;
- defines the parameters for expansion having regard to technical and environmental considerations;
- explains the concepts that inform the master planning framework for the site and the deliverable land use elements; and
- describes the wider benefits to Milton Keynes, particularly new infrastructure, that would be delivered by the proposal.

The Consortium’s land is located to the south east of Milton Keynes in the area extending from Cranfield Road in the west to Junction 13 of the M1 motorway in the east (Figures 1a and 1b). This triangle of land forms part of the wider South East Strategic Development Area (SDA) identified in the Secretary of State’s Proposed Changes. The land therefore has the potential to make a unique and important contribution to the plan-led growth of Milton Keynes in the period up to 2026.

Figure 1b: Site context
2. MILTON KEYNES GROWTH & SOUTH EAST EXPANSION

At regional and sub-regional levels Milton Keynes has been confirmed as a growth area, with continued growth up to 2031. A series of studies have been undertaken to produce ‘a vision for 2031’ in order to guide this change over the full period of growth in accordance with the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (March 2005). These studies provide a valuable resource of background information and have been reviewed as part of the evidence base for the South East Plan and include the following:

- Milton Keynes and South Midlands Study (Sept 2002);
- Milton Keynes Growth Area Study (May 2003);
- Babtie Study (2004);
- Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy (2005);
- Direction Papers: Options for Growth (November 2005);
- Colin Buchanan Report (2006);
- Milton Keynes Growth Strategy (June 2006); and

In each case the land at South East Milton Keynes (SEMk) has been found to perform well as a development location. Extracts from these documents are set out in the following paragraphs of this document. To this list of studies can now be added the Proposed Changes of the Secretary of State, which confirm the scale and extent of the South East Strategic Development Area (SDA).
2.1 The Milton Keynes and South Midlands Study (2002):

‘There is potential for more limited development to the east of Milton Keynes up to the motorway and north of the Bletchley to Bedford rail line with provision for noise attenuation set backs and screening.’ (Paragraph 5.70)

2.2 Milton Keynes Growth Area Study (2003):

‘The sites (to the south east of Milton Keynes) have no significant natural resources and are well connected to the existing and planned road network. The Kingston District Centre and local employment areas are easily accessible. Provided that the issue of motorway noise is overcome, this area has many attractions for urban growth.’ (Paragraph 5.24) (Figure 2)

2.3 Babtie Study (2004):

In 2004, Babtie Group’s study for the Milton Keynes Partnership (MKP) stated that the landscape character areas it identified to the south east of Milton Keynes were in ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ condition and had low-moderate sensitivity and moderate to high development potential.

2.4 Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy (2005):

‘New development will be delivered through a combination of urban intensification and the development of new sustainable urban extensions, integrated with the provision of new and enhanced public transport systems and interchanges. Locations for development will be...on the basis of areas of search around the western, southern and eastern edges of the urban area’ (Paragraph 99). (Figure 3)

2.5 Directions Papers - Options for Growth (2005):

In November 2005, MKP published ‘Options for Growth’ that set out six options for meeting planned levels of growth at Milton Keynes up to 2031. The SEMK urban extension is present in five of the six strategic options presented in the ‘Options for Growth’ document, comprising a mix of uses both housing and employment. (Figure 4). Four of the five strategic options that include a South East Growth Area show it to have a residential capacity of 10,400 dwellings or more (up to 11,100 dwellings).

2.6 Colin Buchanan Report (2006):

In December 2006, Colin Buchanan reported the results of its findings for Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council. The SEMK area was reviewed as part of a ‘Land Suitability Review; by CB’s sub-consultants, Wardell Armstrong. The SEMK area formed part of ‘Area 5’ which Wardell Armstrong described as:

“Strong urbanising influence of M1 motorway and industrial development to east and west. Site suitable for development subject to historic asset setting issues.”

The concluding text (para 3.3.60) states:

“Landscape capacity to accommodate development is relatively high... The existing settlement edges are often well vegetated but range from strongly to weakly defined. Development is therefore unlikely to improve or detract from the nature of the current urban edge. The rising topography and wooded slopes of Aspley to the south forms a strong and logical boundary against further development beyond the site to the south...both areas are strongly influenced by the urbanising influences of the M1 motorway...as such, development within this area will not adversely affect the tranquillity of the area”.

2.7 Milton Keynes Strategy for Growth (2006):

In June 2006, MKP agreed a growth strategy for Milton Keynes that formed the basis of its submission to the South East Plan Examination in Public (EiP). The Growth Strategy includes a South East Growth Area comprising a mix of uses including a Strategic Employment Location and some 7000 to 8000 dwellings to be delivered in the period 2016-2021 (Figure 5). The report identifies the benefits that could be delivered through the implementation of the proposed growth strategy including:

“V. The potential for development to contribute to an improved environment by requiring high standards of design and sustainable construction, protecting and enhancing environmental assets (including landscape and bio-diversity) and providing green space and related infrastructure.” (Paragraph 9.6, p.45)
The Growth Strategy also identified a set of ‘core sustainability principles’ to highlight some of the ways in which sustainability can be maintained and embraced through the life of the proposed Growth Strategy. Table 10.3 identifies these principles in relation to environmental assets including:

- The maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and wildlife habitats;
- Provision of high quality green infrastructure, strategically planned to encompass both new and existing development;
- Opportunities to enhance the value of landscapes with well designed and laid out development which is sensitive to existing landscape features; and
- The form and layout of development should respect heritage assets and their settings, seeking to enhance their value wherever possible.

Section 12 considers the ‘Spatial Principles’ which should underpin how development is taken forward. The Strategy states that protecting landscape character was one of the key considerations in determining directions for new growth and that the identification of areas suitable for growth excluded areas which had particular environmental, topographical, cultural or landscape qualities (Paragraph 12.13).
In August 2007, the EiP Panel Report was published and contains an analysis of the options for the growth of Milton Keynes drawing on the evidence of earlier reports and submissions to the EIP that took place in March 2007. The Panel acknowledged that there was an unusually high level of information to allow them to make recommendations on the future direction of growth:

'We conclude there is clear justification in this case for the RSS to set out an unambiguous strategic framework for LDDs, as envisaged in PPS11, paragraph 1.17.' (Paragraph 23.65)

The Panel Report concludes that having reviewed all of the evidence that the South East Growth Area – identified by the Panel as the South East Strategic Development Area (SDA) - is the most sustainable of the options for expansion of Milton Keynes. In relation to the scale and distribution of residential development, the Panel concluded:

‘we consider that it would be appropriate for the Plan to provide for 10,400 dwellings within an extension to the south east of Milton Keynes – 4,800 of these dwellings being apportioned to Milton Keynes and 5,600 to Mid Bedfordshire.’ (Paragraph 23.123)

This conclusion reflects the ‘Options for Growth’ paper, which identified 10,400 dwellings as the potential capacity of the South East Growth Area in four of the options presented, and also the evidence put forward by the SEMK Consortium at the South East Plan EiP in March 2007. This has now been included in recommendation 2.3.5 of the Proposed Changes to the South East Plan, which advocates a South East SDA comprising 4,800 houses in Milton Keynes and 5,600 in Mid Bedfordshire which is shown graphically in Figure 6.

The following sections of this document provide further analysis of the South East SDA and explain how it can be delivered on a comprehensive and integrated basis.

2.9 Context of the South East Milton Keynes SDA

The site context will be changed by development allocated in the adopted Local Plan. The Eastern Expansion Area (EEA) is a mixed-use development located to the north of the A421. The EEA is in the process of being implemented and includes commercial development immediately to the north of the A421 - the Nova MK Logistics Park - and widening of the A421 to dual carriageway standard from the Kingston roundabout to the access to Nova Park. Once complete the EEA will extend the urban area of Milton Keynes up to the motorway between Junction 14 and the A421.

Land to the south of the A421 is the focus of further planned development identified in the Local Plan. In the Local Plan, sites at Glebe Farm, Eagle Farm and Church Farm are allocated as strategic reserve areas (SRAs) with potential for development after 2011. The SRAs at Glebe Farm and Eagle Farm and the intervening land immediately south of the A421 (the Wavendon Gateway) were the subject of planning applications submitted in May 2007 for some 3,290 dwellings in total. These planning applications were determined by MKP in March 2008 and were refused permission; however, the allocation of these sites as SRAs establishes the principle of their future development, which will need to be co-ordinated with the development of the proposed South East SDA.
Figure 7: Landscape character
3. SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 The site

3.1.1 Location:
The extent of the South East SDA is defined by the A421 to the north and east, the Bedford/Bletchley railway line to the south and the current edge of Milton Keynes to the west. These are established physical boundaries that provide containment to the future extent of development. Beyond the A421, on the north eastern boundary of the site, is the M1 motorway. Junction 13 of the motorway is located at the far eastern end of the SDA. The character and context of this area, both now and as planned, are described in the following section.

3.1.2 Context:
The site lies on relatively low-lying land and is well-defined within strong existing features. To the south, beyond the railway, the site is contained by the Brickhills Ridge which is occupied by the settlements of Husborne Crawley, Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands (Figure 7). This higher land is distinctively different in character from the site as it contains mature woodland and associated parkland which contains a golf course. The M1 motorway to the north and the Junction 13 in particular is a dominant feature in the landscape. East of Junction 13 lies a very prominent commercial development containing warehousing. A number of villages are located to the north of the motorway including Hulcote and Salford.

3.1.3 Character:
The site comprises mainly farmland under arable cropping. Due to the effects of modern farming the pattern of historic hedgerows has been diminished, with few features of intrinsic importance. Within the southern areas of the site the pattern is more enclosed with smaller fields used for grazing. On the southern edge of the site is recent residential development, which is part of Woburn Sands. The village of Wavendon is also located within the western part of the site. A golf course is located in the central part of the site, which includes areas of mature woodland.

Additional residential properties exist along some of the roads across the site; along Berry Lane south of Hayfield Farm and north of Aspley Guise along Salford Road, north of Apsley Guise. In terms of natural features, there are very few trees within the site. A stream passes through the far eastern margin of the site with a limited flood plain. Further streams cross the middle of the site to the west of Hayfield Farm.

3.2 Analysis of influences

3.2.1 Landscape

As can be seen from Figure 7, the South East SDA is not the subject of any landscape designations, either statutory or non-statutory. Although a former Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) lies to the south, the overall character of the South East SDA is not of high historical or aesthetic value, rendering it suited to accommodate development. These conclusions are corroborated by the descriptions of the site’s landscape found in the relevant independent landscape assessments covering the area commissioned by Milton Keynes and Mid Bedfordshire Councils. Figure 7 illustrates the locations of the published landscape character assessments relevant to the site:

The western part of the SDA is defined in ‘Milton Keynes Landscape Character Assessment Draft Report 2007’ as falling within the ‘Southern Clayland Fringe’ to the south and ‘Broughton Flat Claylands’ to the north. These areas are described as follows:

- “Southern Clayland Fringe – an area of largely open arable land …containing a mix of urban fringe uses and a more historically intact area around Wavendon”.
- “Broughton Flat Claylands – …The area is in generally poor condition and contains a number of urban fringe and industrial uses”.
- The assessment for the ‘Southern Clayland Fringe’ recognises the more historically interesting and intact local landscape around Cross End and Wavendon House, however, the overall evaluation recognises that the ‘interrupted’ landscape pattern with the objective to ‘improve and restore’ this landscape.
part three: site characteristics and analysis

South East Strategic Development Area

Non-statutory Designations
(MK Wildlife Corridors, County Wildlife Sites, Biological Notification Sites)

Waterbodies (within and in the vicinity of the SDA)

Principal woodland blocks
Species-rich grassland

Great crested newt records

Figure 7: Ecological assessment

Figure 8: Ecological issues
The ‘Broughton Flat Claylands’ are described as having a weaker landscape character in generally poor condition and with considerable opportunities for enhancement within the planned development of the city.

- The remaining part of the SDA falls largely within the ‘Salford-Aspley Clay Vale’ character area of the ‘Mid Bedfordshire District Landscape Character Assessment’. This is described as a “large to medium scale, flat and open clay vale…arable farming remains the predominant land use…the vale has been subject to large scale fragmentation. Highly urbanised transport corridors including the embanked M1 corridor and areas of marginal land are frequently in view”. Overall, the ‘Salford-Aspley Clay Vale’ is assessed as being ‘moderately sensitive’ to change in terms of both landscape character and visual amenity.

- The South East Plan Panel Report confirms that development to the south east of Milton Keynes would have the least landscape impact of all the options considered as potential directions for growth (paragraph 23.113).

### 3.2.2 Noise

The main source of noise locally is the M1 motorway. Noise studies show that the effect from the motorway will influence the form and location of residential development within the site. It is therefore proposed that noise sensitive development will be set back from the motorway. A setback of some 125-150m comprising bunding and planting is proposed to mitigate any noise effect on the new residential community and other noise-sensitive issues. Employment that is not noise sensitive can be accommodated within this zone.

### 3.2.3 Air quality

Locally air quality is principally affected by emissions from vehicles on the motorway. The prevailing wind direction transports emissions from the motorway away from the site. Therefore the safeguarded strip retained to mitigate the effects of noise will also serve the function of mitigating any air quality issues.

### 3.2.4 Integrity of settlements

The MKSM and Growth Area Studies identify the need to protect the setting of the nearby settlements of Woburn Sands, Aspley Guise and Husbourne Crawley. An analysis of these settlements has therefore been undertaken to ensure that the proposals for the SDA properly respects the presence of these villages. All three settlements have an historic core and are located to the south of the railway line. Beyond their historic core, recent modern development has extended the edge of the settlement to the north of the railway line. The settlement of Wavendon is also located in the western part of the SDA. To respect the distinctive character of Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands it is proposed that a parkland area be incorporated within the proposal north of the railway.

### 3.2.5 Ecological issues

A desk-top study combined with a walkover survey of the SDA (to an enhanced Phase I level across a vast majority of the SDA) confirms that the largely intensively farmed landscape yields – as one would expect – habitats of generally low intrinsic interest (Figure 8). This is reflected by the fact that there are no statutory ecological designations within the SDA although there are two non-statutory designations located on-site, with an additional two non-statutory designations adjacent to the site. A limited number of specific ecological constraints exist which are readily capable of integration into any future masterplan and do not represent ‘in principle’ constraints to the capacity of the SDA;

- one field of purported species rich grassland towards the centre of the site;
- some ecologically important hedgerows (in terms of species diversity and/or as potential wildlife corridors);
- the presence of Great Crested Newts in a small number of ponds;
- areas of bat and barn owl roosting potential; and
- potential habitat for otter and water vole.

These issues are not unexpected for such a large land area. Masterplan proposals can retain and enhance them within the layout of the development, including an adequate safeguard area where necessary.

Indeed, given the relative dearth of ecological constraint – a product of the generally intensively farmed landscape – considerable scope exists to enhance the net overall biodiversity of the site as part of re-development proposals in line with the guidance given in PPS 9.
part three: site characteristics and analysis

South East Strategic Development Area

Scheduled monument
Park or garden of special historic interest
Listed building
Locally recorded archaeological site
Locally recorded archaeological site
Local Conservation Areas

Figure 9: Archaeological issues
3.2.6 Archaeological issues

Desk-based assessment shows that the SDA contains only one nationally important archaeological site (Figure 9). This is a probable medieval motte, located south east of Wavendon and designated as a Scheduled Monument.

This does not represent an in principle constraint to the development of the SDA, although there is a presumption in favour of its physical preservation, as well as that of its setting. However, both can readily be accommodated within the SDA framework in an area this size.

The same applies to the small number of locally important archaeological sites, monuments and findspots, recorded within the SDA boundary, where further investigation may be required in advance of development, if preservation in situ is not deemed to be appropriate.

A number of listed buildings are located within the SDA. These are focused on the historic settlement of Wavendon, although further, scattered, examples are located as far east as Aspley Guise Station.

The SDA does not contain any locally designated conservation areas although the villages to the north and south of the SDA on the Greensand Ridge all have historic cores which fall within designated conservation areas.

Even so, it is clear that, whilst the designated archaeological remains and built heritage resources will be a consideration within the master planning process, they do not represent an in principle constraint to development. Indeed, there are, in short, few significant constraints to the development of the SDA.

3.2.7 Public Rights of Way

The principal opportunities and constraints for recreation and pedestrian circulation within the SDA area are set out in Figure 10 on the following page. The extensive SDA site has a number of existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) within it. These are generally in a north – south orientation and act as pedestrian linkage between existing settlements. There are three key cross-SDA area linkages which present an opportunity within the SDA for enhancement and incorporation within green corridors. One of these key cross-SDA links also has an existing promoted recreational route within it. One of the key linear recreational opportunities lies in creating a towpath link along the proposed canal, and functional linkage into this from surrounding settlements would be implemented.

Further ‘green links’ around the edge of the SDA may provide linear recreational opportunities in conjunction with their landscape or wildlife functions. A further opportunity for rights of way linkage is likely to exist within the proposed areas of green space that will be retained around the existing settlements. These offer an ideal opportunity to provide formal circular walks and rides on the edge of existing settlements and thus prevent trespass onto surrounding farmland.
part three: site characteristics and analysis

South East Strategic Development Area

Existing public rights of way
Existing promoted routes
Settlement coalescence constraint: Recreational opportunity
Proposed canal corridor linear: recreational route
Proposed green link: Recreational opportunity
Key cross-SDA right of way opportunity

Figure 10: Rights of Way
3.2.8 Transport

The SDA is located at one of the key entrance points to Milton Keynes. Much of the commuting into Milton Keynes takes place via Junction 13 and along the A421. The importance of this location will increase in the future due to planned infrastructure improvements, particularly:

- M1 widening as far north as Junction 13;
- A421 improvement to dual carriageway standard from Junction 13 to Milton Keynes; and
- upgrade of Junction 13 as part of the Highways Agency scheme for improvement of the A421 between Bedford and the M1 motorway.

Both the M1 widening and Junction 13 upgrade are committed schemes and are planned to be completed by 2016. The inquiry for the Junction 13 improvements has already taken place. The inspector’s report and Secretary of State have confirmed that the junction design will have sufficient capacity to accommodate traffic generation from the South East SDA.

The improvements to the A421 have already commenced with the road being dualled between the Kingston roundabout and the access to the Nova Park development. In addition, the southern boundary of the site adjoins the railway line between Bedford and Bletchley along which regular train services currently operate. Access to these services is provided by stations at Woburns Sands and Aspley Guise.

Furthermore, this section of railway is part of the East-West Rail (EWR) route. The Western Section of EWR has been the subject of a recent report prepared for English Partnerships and details a new network of railway lines and train services linking Milton Keynes to Oxford, Aylesbury and Bedford by 2012. The East-West Rail proposals will increase both the level of service and connectivity of the existing line, with the possibility of increasing line speed between Bedford and Bletchley to 70mph.

The ‘Public Transport Long Term Vision Study’ has identified the potential to achieve the integration of transport modes, with a P&R at Junction 13 linked to Central Milton Keynes by high-quality public transport. Proposals for the South East SDA can accommodate these measures and thereby facilitate their delivery (Figure 11).

![Figure 11: Existing facilities](image11.png)
Figure 11b: Summary of environmental issues
Constraints
- setback along the M1 for noise sensitive development;
- safeguarded important species and wildlife habitat;
- retention of important flora, hedges and trees where possible;
- flood plain in north east corner of site; and
- separation from Husborne Crawley, Aspley Guise, Wavendon and Woburn Sands.

Opportunities:
- opportunity to enhance public transport, highways, footways and cycleways and rail infrastructure and achieve integration of these travel modes;
- opportunity for landscape and ecological enhancement on land controlled by the Consortium south of the railway; and
- opportunity for integration with planned development east of Milton Keynes on a comprehensive basis.

3.2.9 Summary of environmental issues
Drawing all the findings of the baseline studies together, Figure 11b illustrates the principal environmental issues which will influence master planning of the South East SDA:

- The existing and proposed golf courses in the vicinity of Wavendon House will deliver a substantial central green space linked by new and existing recreational routes to the rest of the SDA;
- Undeveloped, open space setbacks will need to be provided around the perimeters of existing settlements to help protect their identity and ensure that new green space is positioned in a manner which makes it usable by both existing as well as new residents;
- The SDA already enjoys strong boundaries in the form of the Bedford-Bletchley Railway Line to the south and the M1 to the north-east; these will nevertheless need to be reinforced to enhance the physical identity of the SDA;
- The historic trackway across the SDA and other key recreational routes offer considerable opportunity and should be linked together wherever possible as part of the strategic master plan for the area;
- The few concentrations of ecological constraint should be retained and wherever possible enhanced in accordance with the provisions of PPS9.
- Taken together, the overall SDA is relatively unconstrained by environmental factors. The key issues illustrated represent relatively modest physical constraints to master planning options for the area, especially given the size of the SDA.
part four: an illustrative strategy
4. AN ILLUSTRATIVE STRATEGY

4.1 Approach

The aim of the Consortium is to deliver a sustainable mixed use community that is integrated with the existing Milton Keynes urban area and respects the setting of nearby historic settlements. Beyond the RSS there are further processes to be undertaken to prepare the relevant LDF policy provision and Design and Access Statement / Design Codes. It is through these further processes that the details for the site will be formulated. An extensive public consultation including community engagement will be conducted in order to understand and accommodate the aspirations of all stakeholders as the framework for the SDA is developed.

Whilst recognising this as an ongoing process, the Consortium has prepared an illustrative master plan framework for the site. The purpose of preparing this illustrative framework is to demonstrate the capacity of the site to accommodate development whilst at the same time safeguarding local environmental sensitivities. The Consortium also recognises that the proposals, which will be implemented over the period up to 2026, will need to have the achievement of sustainable development as a central objective. To that end this document outlines potential measures that would contribute to the overall sustainability strategy for the site.

4.2 Consultation

The preparation of an illustrative master plan for the SEMK land is an iterative process that will evolve to take account of new information/strategies and respond to public consultation.

The process of consultation has already commenced, with meetings having taken place with:

- Mid Bedfordshire Council;
- Milton Keynes Council;
- Milton Keynes Partnership;
- The Greensands Trust;
- British Waterways;
- Network Rail; and
- Buckinghamshire County Council

The process will continue with additional stakeholders as the proposals are progressed and refined.

4.3 Vision

The objective is to create a high-quality environment where people will want to live and work, with a diversity of buildings, functions and possibilities to create a vibrant extension to Milton Keynes with its own character and identity.

The factors that underpin the illustrative master plan framework for the site are therefore as follows:

- to create a mixed-use, sustainable urban extension to Milton Keynes;
- to integrate with adjoining areas of potential development to facilitate a comprehensive approach to the SEMK Strategic Development Area; to incorporate facilities and services on-site to serve the emerging community;
- to provide services, facilities and job opportunities that are easily accessible by a range of transport modes;
- to facilitate vital infrastructure to serve the new development and the wider expansion of the city;
- to facilitate modal shift to public transport by the integration of travel modes;
- to contribute to the viability of public transport by maximising access to services and levels of patronage;
- to achieve efficient use of land with high density development at appropriate nodes, particularly those with access to public transport;
- to safeguard environmental assets and deliver landscape and ecological enhancement;
- to deliver generous amounts of open space that will contribute to the quality of life of residents and reflect the existing character of Milton Keynes; and
- to ensure that the above benefits of the proposed development are available and accessible to all members of the community.
part four: an illustrative strategy

Figure 12: Walkable neighbourhoods within the site linking through to existing wider connections

- proposed city street
- dualled A421
- M1 Motorway
- walkable neighbourhoods
- bus and cycle connection
- new link
- park & ride
4.4 Strategy

4.4.1 Access and Circulation:
The concept seeks to realise a series of viable neighbourhoods that jointly form a new urban quarter of Milton Keynes. Access arrangements will favour public transportation, walking and cycling. Running through the development is a City Street that will be the primary public transport route and provide connectivity between the centre of Milton Keynes, the planned neighbourhoods and the park and ride/train station (Figure 12). In addition, land alongside a possible canal can be used as a parallel pedestrian and cycle route which will also function as an ecological corridor, linking other wildlife routes within the site and providing opportunities for integrated sustainable drainage systems.

4.4.2 Connectivity:
The ‘City Street’ concept has already been proposed through the Eastern Expansion Area and the Wavendon Gateway, and therefore naturally extends through the site providing a public transport and red route ‘spine’. The City Street links the centre of Milton Keynes to the new park and ride at Junction 13 and the possible rail halt. Connectivity to surrounding villages is possible via existing lanes and rights of way which will be retained. New footpath links will assist in connecting the surrounding villages to new parks and facilities provided as part of the SDA.

The fundamental structure of the framework illustrative master plan is therefore of inter-linked villages (Figure 12). The villages will comprise a mix of land uses to provide access to local services and facilities. The range of facilities will include schools, shops, community centres, sports facilities and other services.

4.4.3 Neighbourhood Centres
Part of the structure of Milton Keynes is the provision of district centres in which local services and facilities are located. The nearest existing district centre is at Kingston, where the focus of community facilities also adjoins a concentration of employment uses. The design of the illustrative master plan framework extends the approach with the incorporation of a number of neighbourhood centres at highly accessible central locations within each of the proposed village areas.

The neighbourhood centres are proposed on the alignment of the public transport link through the site, including a stopping point for passengers. The neighbourhood centres would also be accessible by footpaths and cycleways that would permeate the development.

The local and neighbourhood centres would accommodate a range of facilities, including GP surgery, dentists, post-office/newsagent, bank/ATM and local food store. The centres might also include leisure facilities such as a public house/bar/restaurant and a gymnasium, and would be the preferred location for primary schools, with a secondary school and additional wider community facilities located in a central ‘village’ with a larger catchment area.

4.4.4 Public realm:
A clear definition of public and private spaces is required to ensure an attractive public realm that enhances quality of life. The public realm in this extension to the city will learn positive lessons from other parts of Milton Keynes to make a key contribution to place-making in this new part of the town. Quality public spaces will be central to each urban village with key plazas associated with community uses to provide the necessary social spaces for an integrated development. Secondary squares and less formal public spaces will be provided within residential and employment areas at important nodes.

Quality public realm
part four: an illustrative strategy

Figure 13: Green implementation strategy
4.4.5 Landscape

The objective of a ‘green implementation strategy’ for the SDA will be to protect the character of existing settlements - especially the historic conservation areas of the villages on the Greensand Ridge - while delivering open space where it is most needed by existing and future residents. This means placing open space where it will protect the assets of the SDA and connect these assets along green corridors and where open space will contribute to the mitigation of the potential visual effects of development particularly on nearby settlements.

A recommended landscape strategy for the SDA is shown on the plan opposite (Figure 13). The plan illustrates the landscape opportunities and constraints of the SDA:

- The more intact landscape surrounding Wavendon House and the existing and proposed golf course areas are recognised as a green ‘node’ within the heart of the development;
- Green spaces surrounding existing settlements are illustrated to help protect local identity;
- New landscape infrastructure along the south and north-east boundaries to reinforce the existing road and rail boundaries; and
- Green corridors are shown linking areas of existing green space; these corridors are located along existing ecological and recreational linear assets such as the Milton Keynes Wildlife Corridors, the Sustrans Route, and along streams.

Adequate open space, both formal and informal, is an essential land use component. The level of provision shown in the illustrative master plan accords with National Playing Field Association standards including sports pitches and informal space for recreation. The area of provision shown in the illustrative master plan is based upon a total development of 10,400 dwellings assuming an average household size of 2.4 persons per dwelling.

A sports hall / community hall could be provided on an integrated basis within an education campus to assist with management and maximise efficiency of use. A strategy for provision of local and neighbourhood areas of play will be developed as part of a more detailed phase of the design process.

The illustrative master plan shows the open space provision concentrated along the southern part of the site to mitigate any effect on existing settlements. These areas would be planted with tree belts to establish a parkland or wooded character and thereby assist in reinforcing the separation in visual terms between the proposals and Woburn Sands, Aspley Guise and Husbourne Crawley.

Proposed tree planting within the development is aligned predominantly NW-SE to mitigate views from the high ground to the south. For example, the City Street through the site will be heavily planted with trees as will the canal (or open space corridor if the canal is not constructed) so as to create a series of ‘waves’ of planting further structural planting will be provided along the route of the railway line. When mature, this planting will break down the scale of the development, particularly in views from the south. The effectiveness of planting along such corridors of movement is demonstrated within the existing urban area of Milton Keynes, where planting alongside the main grid roads provides screening to areas of housing beyond.

4.4.6 Open space:

Milton Keynes is well known for its formal parks, and this proposed extension will continue to promote the provision of formal landscaped open space in addition to informal landscape settings. The framework is designed to retain important existing landscape features, providing new vistas to the surrounding countryside whilst protecting and enhancing existing views through new planting. Linear and nodal parks will be accommodated within the site linked with green routes and wildlife corridors to enable maximum access for all to landscaped and open spaces throughout the site.

4.4.7 Biodiversity:

Careful site planning will enable existing features with ecological value to be retained and set within a matrix of green spaces. The green network will provide for human activity and also for wildlife habitat and species. Habitat creation that recognises the importance of greenway connections and also island habitats will mean that some open spaces will overtly favour wildlife and support nature. An area of land to the south of the railway, which is controlled by the Consortium, provides an additional opportunity for habitat enhancement and access to the wider countryside, in accordance with aspirations emerging from Natural England.
Figure 14: Street hierarchy
4.4.8 Transport:
The Local Transport Plan notes that to meet targets for reducing car journeys in Milton Keynes a “radical addition to the present public transport system” will be needed. The proposals for the urban extension include an integrated transport strategy that combines existing, enhanced and proposed new infrastructure that will contribute to this objective. The ‘Public Transport Long Term Vision Study’ recommends a guided bus technology, which along its eastern alignment connects Central Milton Keynes, the Eastern Expansion Area, Kingston District Centre, and terminates at a park & ride at Junction 13. An opportunity therefore exists to establish Junction 13 as a key transport interchange – a ‘public transport gateway’ – for Milton Keynes.

The component elements of the interchange would include a new park & ride providing the terminus for the proposed guided-bus system near to Junction 13. The presence of the Bedford-Bletchley railway line means that there is also the potential to integrate the park and ride with rail services. In addition, development at SEMK will contribute to the patronage and therefore operational viability of public transport services, including the high quality segregated bus - link to CMK.

A dedicated and segregated public transport route will be provided along the City Street through the site connecting with the park & ride. The route will be aligned to minimise walking distances, ensuring the vast majority of residents are within 400 metres of a transit stop. The route, which will be a focus for higher density development, will also serve the neighbourhood centres and schools.

The City Street will provide the main route through the proposed urban extension and will contain provision for red routes linking to the neighbouring cycle networks. This street will form the primary public transport corridor, but will be linked to lower order roads providing local access (Figures 14 and 15). Residential streets will be dominated by provision for pedestrians in accordance with guidance in the Manual for Streets.
Residential yield from South East SDA sites based on comparison to SEMK land use budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land use</th>
<th>SEMK consortium land analysis (ha)</th>
<th>% of total based on detailed SEMK consortium land budget</th>
<th>South East SDA (MKC admin area)</th>
<th>South East SDA (Mid Beds admin area)</th>
<th>South East SDA TOTAL</th>
<th>Strategic Reserve Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>147.28</td>
<td>44.63</td>
<td>97.69</td>
<td>131.06</td>
<td>228.75</td>
<td>52.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>15.81</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>10.48</td>
<td>14.07</td>
<td>24.55</td>
<td>5.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>31.21</td>
<td>7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports/leisure</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Open Space</td>
<td>39.27</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td>26.05</td>
<td>34.95</td>
<td>60.99</td>
<td>14.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Open Space</td>
<td>52.11</td>
<td>15.79</td>
<td>34.56</td>
<td>46.37</td>
<td>80.93</td>
<td>18.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>48.91</td>
<td>14.82</td>
<td>32.44</td>
<td>43.52</td>
<td>75.96</td>
<td>17.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>330.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>218.88</td>
<td>293.67</td>
<td>512.55</td>
<td>117.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of dwellings from residential and high street areas. 7,000

Table 1: Land use budget
5. LAND USE

5.1 Land use budget

A preliminary land use budget (Table 1) and illustrative master plan have been prepared to demonstrate the capacity of the site to accommodate the development proposed and illustrate a potential associated arrangement of land uses. An illustrative master plan (Figure 18) has been produced as a result of the synthesis of constraints, opportunities and associated strategies (Figure 16).

The land use budget has been formulated through detailed analysis of policies at local and national level which influence the provision of infrastructure, services, facilities and open space. It is also the result of ongoing, detailed site analysis and testing by a team of expert consultants. The land use budget and capacity analysis is set out in a separate document and the conclusions are shown in (Table 1). The capacity assessment has been carried out with careful consideration of environmental constraints and subsequent detailed master planning of the SEMK Consortium land (shown in Figure 18). The resulting land use budget has then been extrapolated to assess capacity of the South East SDA as a whole.

5.1.1 Mix of uses

Variety of land use, both vertically and horizontally, is key to creating sustainable neighbourhoods and improving quality of life. Combining non-residential uses so that they provide mutual support and benefit all users will start with the careful location of schools, community uses, transportation linkages and retail activities. Block and building types that will enable change of use and enrichment of the pattern of uses over time are envisaged as a key element. The possible framework could accommodate a core district area within the central urban village which will provide a hub for key district uses and the required secondary school (Figure 17).

5.1.2 Residential

The zoning of residential development reflects the identified constraints and opportunities referred to earlier in this document. In addition, the broad objective has been to maximise the amount of housing that is located within 400 metres of neighbourhood centres and the stopping points of the public transport links. The neighbourhood centres would be the focus of community facilities/services as well as areas of higher residential density. The residential areas are also designed to be permeable to pedestrians and cyclists as is characteristic of Milton Keynes, but with improved legibility.

Having regard for the site context and site features that are to be retained and / or safeguarded, the estimated residential capacity of the SDA is some 10,900 dwellings. The total area available for residential development is some 235ha (including high street areas), which equates to an average residential density of some 46 dwellings per hectare. This relates favourably to recently completed schemes including Upton which achieves an upper average density of about 50dph. The South East SDA has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the housing requirements of Milton Keynes in the period up to 2026.

5.1.3 Employment

The proposal is close to existing commercial activities at Kingston District Centre and east of Junction 13. In addition, further planned employment is currently being implemented at the Nova MK Logistics Park as part of the Eastern Expansion Area to the north of the A421. There is therefore already access to local jobs within the vicinity of the site.

In addition, there are sustainable benefits to incorporating employment within the proposals to achieve a mixed-use urban extension. The framework plan therefore includes an element of employment land. 13ha of this is specifically dedicated to new distribution and industrial uses in accordance with the Milton Keynes Land Study 2006. These would be accommodated in one of the least visually sensitive parts of the site, adjacent to the A421 and motorway. Further office employment would be accommodated as part of the mix of uses in the local centres, with some additional office space in a business park.

5.1.4 Community and Social Infrastructure

Education is an important component of the proposal and the requirements for the site will be refined in discussion with the local education authority. The illustrative framework plan shows two large site for education located within the development. These campus facilities could provide for pupils from nursery through to, and including, secondary level on an integrated basis. It is intended that these could be ‘community schools’ where playing fields and other school facilities are available for use by the community outside of school hours on a managed basis. Additional sites for primary education would also be provided as part of local neighbourhood centres. Further provision for community and social facilities within each ‘urban village’ might include local halls, places of worship, interpretation centres, nursery and child care provision and local offices for police or other services.
To the north, there are limited public viewpoints from which there are views to parts of the site. Existing views towards the site from the west are very limited. There are occasional narrow slot views of parts of the site from the east. The visual envelope of the site is contained to the south by the wooded slopes of the Greensand ridge. There are few public views available towards the site from the east.

Existing public views towards the site from the west are very limited. There are occasional narrow slot views of parts of the site. There are few public views available towards the site from the east.
Figure 17: Illustrative land use plan
Figure 18: Illustrative master plan
6. BUILDING IN SUSTAINABILITY

The South East SDA presents a significant opportunity to accommodate future urban expansion in a sustainable way. The development will take place over an extended period, during which the standards set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) will progressively come to be felt. By anticipating these standards in the master planning process from the outset, the master plan for the sector will be “future proofed” and a highly sustainable development will result.

The purpose of this section of the master plan document is to highlight the options for achieving a high standard of sustainability in all aspects of the development. Key among the range of sustainability measures is energy efficiency and the effective use of the site’s renewable energy potential. Review of potential initiatives in these areas is consistent with advice in PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (paragraph 22) and PPS22 Renewable Energy (paragraph 1), which explain the need to promote and encourage renewable energy and the efficient use of resources in the planning process. It is also consistent with policies D4 and D5 of the adopted Milton Keynes Local Plan, which promote sustainable construction and the use of renewable energy.

6.1 Sustainable energy principles

With sustainable development now the core principle underpinning planning, a high priority will be given to the use of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy in South East Milton Keynes. The Government’s Code for Sustainable Homes and the accompanying consultation document Building a Greener Future: towards zero carbon development (DCLG, December 2006) anticipate a rapid improvement in the energy performance of buildings.

The land at South East Milton Keynes will become available for development early in the next decade and it is essential that the master plan anticipates the sustainable energy measures likely to be required in new housing and other development by that time.

Planning applications for individual parcels of development in the South East SDA will be in accordance with the latest government requirements setting out as necessary the precise scale, extent and benefit of the individual energy efficiency and renewable energy measures proposed. In anticipation of this, the illustrative master plan and land use budget studies allow for the following measures.
6.2 Energy efficiency

6.2.1 Passive solar design (PSD):
This is a planning and design technique that seeks to optimise the use of solar heat, daylight and natural ventilation in a development, so reducing the need to provide these requirements by artificial means. To enforce the effective use of this method, the master plan and supporting design code would seek to ensure that:

- at least 90% of new residential units in South East Milton Keynes to have a principal glazed elevation (i.e. the front or back of the dwelling) facing to within 25% of south.
- the east-west axis in the masterplan should be maintained and should adapt elongated city blocks to optimise PSD.
- the design objective should be to ensure that the shadow of a property to the south should not reach higher than the ground floor window sills at noon on mid-winter’s day, to ensure solar heat gain at precisely the time of year when it is most beneficial.
- landscape and planting is designed so as to avoid overshadowing the south-facing windows of dwellings, and should, where possible, provide shelter from northerly wind exposure.
- all non-residential buildings, including those for employment, retail and educational use, should make use of the passive solar design methods appropriate to those building-types.

6.2.2 Combined heat and power:
This entails the simultaneous generation of heat and power, and thus represents a highly efficient means of using fossil fuels or renewable energy sources. CHP systems are available in a wide variety of scales, from neighbourhood-wide schemes housed in buildings similar in size and appearance to a typical industrial shed, to new wall-mounted micro-generation units serving individual households. They can be run on a wide variety of combustible fuel sources, including mains gas, renewable biomass fuels such as wood chips, and various waste streams including solid waste and biogas.

The Government’s strategy for combined heat and power to 2010 (DEFRA, 2004) sets ambitious targets for the uptake of CHP technologies and highlighted the range of fiscal, financial and regulatory incentives that would be applied to this end. The Code for Sustainable Homes identifies CHP generally and biomass CHP specifically as low carbon emissions technologies that might be applied to meet Code standards.

Accordingly, the potential for employing CHP in the South East SDA will be investigated. A site for a centralised CHP facility could be provided within the employment land allocation in the vicinity of Junction 13.

6.2.3 Higher sustainability standards:
The DCLG consultation document ‘Building a greener future: towards zero carbon development’ (December 2006) proposes that new development should comply with level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2010, Code level 4 by 2013 and Code level 6 by 2016 – with this latter standard equating to a zero carbon development. To this end the design process can adopt a permissive approach to the use of modern methods of construction, including modular building systems, where it can be demonstrated that such systems are of a high quality manufacture and are consistent with the urban design objectives of the proposed development area.
6.3 Renewable Energy

National and regional planning policy and guidance provide clear support for the principle of renewable energy use and the incorporation of renewable energy generation systems in new development. For example, PPS3: Housing states that, in identifying new housing sites, LDDs should take into account the ability of the development ‘to viably draw its energy supply from decentralised energy systems based on renewable and low-carbon forms of energy supply, or where there is clear potential for this to be realised’ (PPS3, paragraph 38). The Code for Sustainable Homes gives credits for the use of renewable energy.

In the light of a preliminary review of the renewable energy resources and technologies suited to the South East SDA, the illustrative master plan and land use budget anticipates the widespread use of the following systems.

6.3.1 Solar hot water photovoltaic (PV) systems:
The use of these technologies will be facilitated by the passive solar orientation of houses explained above, and they are also well suited for use in non-residential buildings. It must be acknowledged that PV installations are currently expensive, although costs are expected to fall appreciably over the next decade. Solar hot water systems are already cost effective.

6.3.2 Ground-source heat pumps:
These provide an alternative or complementary source of heat and hot water for buildings in the South East SDA. Developers of individual land parcels systems in south-east Milton Keynes will be expected to investigate the respective costs and benefits of ground-source heat pump systems serving individual buildings and groups of buildings, and to make provision for the use of such where practicable.

6.3.3 Wind energy:
According to Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR) data, a reasonable wind energy resource is likely to exist at South East Milton Keynes. There is scope to exploit this resource at locations on the periphery of the development site, provided that established wind industry and environmental health standards concerning noise, shadow flicker and telecommunications interference can be met. Consideration will need to be given to landscape effects given the potential views from higher land to the south.

6.3.4 Biomass CHP:
The potential for CHP is acknowledged above. It might be feasible to fuel CHP systems using biomass in preference to natural gas, if viable sources of wood chips or other biomass materials can be found within 25 km of South East Milton Keynes.

The assessment set out in this chapter identifies that there is scope for significant sustainable energy resources at the South East SDA. This list of renewable energy technologies reviewed above is not exhaustive, and a detailed strategy for the site will be established through more detailed feasibility study of preferred energy technologies. This further analysis and consultation will ensure that necessary provision for infrastructure and other measures, including design guidance, is established through the planning process so that the potential of the site is maximised.
7. DELIVERY

7.1 Phasing

The fundamental principle that will determine the phasing of the development is that infrastructure will be provided concomitantly with growth. The term infrastructure incorporates transport improvements, services and community facilities. Transport improvements are likely to be a key consideration because, as explained above, the infrastructure that is provided in this location will not only serve the development, but also the wider urban area of Milton Keynes.

The strategic park & ride and connecting high-quality public transport links to CMK, for example, will be essential if the required level of modal shift to public modes is going to be achieved. The park & ride is located at the far eastern end of the site at Junction 13 and will need to be connected back to the urban area by a corridor of development alongside the public transport route.

7.2 Comprehensive Development

Taken as a whole, the proposals for the South East SDA, represent a highly sustainable extension of Milton Keynes. The strategic framework and capacity testing of an illustrative layout has been informed by a team of consultants with an extensive understanding of the environmental, technical and planning context of the site. The design will continue to evolve through the LDF and although it is clear from the work undertaken to date that the proposal can provide:

- circa 10,400 dwellings including a proportion of affordable units;
- a high quality employment environment to address the deficiencies in employment land supply;
- district centres to include a local scale food store;
- integrated educational campus sites and further primary schools;
- public open space in accordance with NPFA requirements;
- landscape buffer to Apsley Guise and Woburn Sands; and
- vital new infrastructure that underpins the planned expansion of the city including strategic park and ride, new train station, a section of the high quality public transport link to CMK and part of the Milton Keynes to Bedford Canal.

The extent of the site and the fact that it is largely unconstrained means that there is considerable flexibility in the design and delivery of the proposals. Accordingly, the site can be delivered in a way that responds to the evolving needs of the city whilst adhering to the key principles of sustainable development, including the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity and environmental capital of the site. It is currently envisaged that the priority for development will be the residential ‘villages’ on the northern part of the site. This will facilitate the early delivery of the main infrastructure including the City Street through the site, which will link the new Park & Ride back to the Eastern Expansion Area and, via that and existing residential districts, to CMK.
8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Panel Report into the draft South East Plan provided a clear set of recommendations for taking forward the future expansion of Milton Keynes up to 2026. The Consortium welcomes the fact that the Proposed Changes broadly reflect the Panel recommendations, including setting the total capacity of the South East SDA at 10,400 dwellings, with 5,600 of this total being provided in Mid Bedfordshire District. The purpose of this document is to provide a further check on the capacity of the South East SDA including that part which is within Mid Bedfordshire District.

The Panel Report confirms that the South East SDA is the most sustainable direction for growth at Milton Keynes. This opportunity therefore should be maximised to achieve the greatest advantage from the benefits of this location. Since June 2006 when the Consortium published its earlier master plan, further site analysis and consultation with the local planning authorities has informed a review of the master plan. Whilst the parameters of the development have not significantly changed, the character of the illustrative master plan has been adapted to incorporate the principles of an urban village and extended to address the whole of the SDA.

The revised illustrative master plan is also underpinned by the objective of maintaining the inherent qualities of the city, which include:

- high quality infrastructure
- a strong economy that ensures job opportunities for the resident workforce
- a track record of innovation and high design standards in development;
- strong community structure supported by local facilities and services; and
- high quality urban environment including a rich provision of open space.

It is vital to the success of Milton Keynes that these qualities are maintained, whilst being adapted to fit with modern best practice and continually evolving innovation. The proposal for the Strategic Development Area delivers against these objectives. Indeed it promises more than this by utilising the unique locational advantages of the site.

One area of innovation is the achievement of more sustainable building techniques, including the use of renewable energy. Implementation of the South East SDA is due to commence in 2011 although the greater part of the proposals will be implemented from 2016 onwards. The Code for Sustainable Homes requires that development achieve the ‘zero carbon’ standard from 2016 onwards.

The South East SDA provides the opportunity to put in place a comprehensive development strategy for the eastern side of the city. As part of this, the Consortium land facilitates the delivery of essential infrastructure and provides a range of services, facilities & job opportunities in a sustainable arrangement. The key elements of the concept are:

- a new strategic park & ride at Junction 13 with the potential to include access to rail services;
- improvements to the A421 between Junction 13 and the access to Nova Park;
- a new high quality public transport service, as part of the transit link between Junction 13 and CMK;
- residential development of some 7,000 dwellings, including provision for affordable housing (30%);
- employment uses responding to quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in supply;
- provision of necessary local services and facilities, including education;
- mix-use District Centre for local services, facilities and employment uses;
- formal and informal public open space; and
- environmental enhancement, both within the site and south of the railway line.

There is no comparable opportunity at Milton Keynes that is able to deliver the range and scale of land uses while making such a significant contribution to the social, transportation & community infrastructure of the city. This has been acknowledged by the Panel Report and the Secretary of State recognises the South East SDA as the most sustainable solution. The South East SDA should therefore be confirmed in the published South East Plan on the basis of the Panel’s recommendations.