JOINT CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE AND AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SUBMISSION TO THE MILTON KEYNES CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION

PROPOSAL IN DOCUMENT AD/1

On 11 July the above submission (and a further amendment from Milton Keynes Council) was made. This was led by the developers present on the first day of the Examination in reaction to the Inspector’s consideration of the need for the Core Strategy to be in general conformity with the South East Plan.

The two principal authorities of Central Bedfordshire Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council have the following concerns about the proposals contained in AD/1 (and further amendment by Milton Keynes). The concerns in summary are:

- The proposed change is a fundamental shift in approach contained in the Core Strategy. It seeks to reinstate the provision of the South East Plan contrary to the approach taken by Milton Keynes Council, which is supported by the surrounding authorities.

- The suggested approach has not been subject to sustainability appraisal, public consultation, or democratic input (from any council). This change of policy would need to include an open and transparent discussion with surrounding authorities under the duty to co-operate and which should be based on a current and up to date evidence base.

- The proposed policy (AD/1) fails to recognise the new approach to housing need assessment as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which should be locally based and undertaken working with surrounding authorities.

- The proposed policy (AD/1) attempts to hard-wire the spatial approach set out in the South East Plan into the long term growth of Milton Keynes. This was based on a policy led redistribution of growth around the South East region, and not locally set. This is against the background of clear government statements that the South East Plan (along with all Regional Strategies) is to be revoked in the near future. As such the approach is not robust in the short/medium term let alone potentially up to 2026 and beyond.

- There remains a legislative requirement (for as long as it is in place) for emerging plans to be in general conformity with the South East Plan in any case, hence there is no need for a policy to repeat what is already set out in practice and law.

Notwithstanding the above points, should the Inspector consider that a policy such as that proposed in AD/1 is necessary we believe that it should read:

NEW POLICY
The Council will undertake an early review of the Core Strategy in the form of Plan:MK, to 2031 or such longer period as the Council chooses, with a projected adoption date of 2015. This will be led by the NPPF approach of objective housing and employment assessment, and take into consideration the South East Plan requirements.

The amended supporting text put forward by Milton Keynes Council is accepted (should the policy be required), except for the text ‘or in planned extensions to Milton Keynes urban areas in adjoining authorities as the South East Plan anticipates’ at the end of the first paragraph which should be deleted.