

Note on correspondence with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding MKC Transport Modelling work

This note has been prepared in the light of discussions and points raised during the Matter 1 hearing session of the examination of Plan:MK on 10 July 2018.

The note outlines the chronology and purpose of the communications between Milton Keynes Council (MKC), Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and AECOM during 2017 regarding the potential to 'join' each authority's respective transport models and create a single model for the purpose of testing growth proposals across both Milton Keynes and Central Bedfordshire. The note also outlines the judgements made by MKC at the time around developing a growth Scenario 3 to test future growth beyond Milton Keynes in the light of this.

Chronology of Communications

Date/Period	Method	Content and purpose of the communication
Early-Mid May 2017	Email from MKC to CBC	To advise that MKC were commencing work to define growth scenarios for testing within the Milton Keynes Multi-Modal Model (MKMMM) and to invite a discussion on whether it would be possible and desirable to develop growth scenarios that include growth planned to come forward under CBC's emerging local plan. Unfortunately, neither MKC nor CBC still has a copy of this email. However, a very similar email which was sent to Aylesbury Vale DC around the same time is reproduced at Appendix 1 to illustrate the broad nature of the email sent to CBC.
25 July 2017	Phone call between Andrew Turner (MKC) and Lynsey Hillman-Gamble (CBC)	Follow up phone call made by MKC to CBC regarding the May email, in order to progress a discussion on possible growth scenarios for testing. CBC advised they would be content for MKC to include strategic sites from their emerging Local Plan but cautioned that it was unlikely all of them would be within the final Regulation 19 plan. During the phone call it was established that AECOM were being used by both authorities for transport modelling work and therefore it was decided to explore whether or not the two models could be 'joined up'.
26 July 2017	Email from MKC to CBC, and reply (Appendix 2)	Follow up email (and reply) to the phone call of 25 July 2017 regarding contact details for the AECOM team working on the CBC transport model.
26 July 2017	Email from MKC to AECOM (Appendix 2)	Emailed instruction requesting the AECOM team working on the MKMMM to discuss with their colleagues elsewhere in AECOM the potential for 'joining up' the MKMMM with the CBC transport model.

16 August 2017	Internal AECOM meeting	To discuss the potential for joining the two models
23 August 2017	Progress meeting 9 between MKC and AECOM	<p>The potential to join the two models was discussed at a regular progress meeting between MKC and AECOM. The relevant text from the meeting notes is provided below</p> <p>“Collaboration with Central Beds Model Team</p> <p>Further to ATs request to combine models/inputs, AECOM MKMMM / CBC Model teams had initial discussion around the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two models focus on different areas and so could not be used individually to provide forecasts in the other model area (due to e.g. network density and zone sizes). • The highway assignment models could not be combined as they had been developed and would need to be re-validated. • It may be possible to combine the trip end models but that would require identical zone systems. • It may be possible to combine PT models as they are built in the same software. • Consistency in the use of planning/forecast data was desirable and could be coordinated between the two models to ensure consistency in this respect. <p>AT advised if MKC planning data could be used in the CBC model that would be good, and similarly agreed CBC planning data in MKMMM. CBC have plans for 5,000 houses off the A421 immediately east of the MK border. Development also proposed in Marston Vale. AT highlighted that the MKMMM model only has a large zone which does not just cover Marston Vale specifically. MC advised that although the zones could not be altered for testing Plan:MK, it is something that could be looked at in the future as part of the on-going model maintenance.”</p>

Defining cross-boundary growth Scenario 3

Following the events outlined above, MKC subsequently made a judgement to not develop a Scenario 3 which included the draft allocations within neighbouring authorities’ emerging local plans for the purposes of informing Plan:MK. The principle reasons related to:

- a) the fact that Aylesbury Vale DC had intimated that there may not be any medium or large scale allocations occurring on the edge of Milton Keynes within the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (which turned out to be the case), and
- b) the fact that Central Bedfordshire Council had intimated that it was highly likely that some of the larger and medium allocations within the Regulation 18 Central Bedfordshire Local Plan close to Milton Keynes would not filter through to the Regulation 19 version of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (which turned out to be the case).

Whilst a number of variations on a Scenario 3 could have been defined and tested, to include various collections of sites from neighbouring authorities in different combinations, Milton Keynes Council considered this to be disproportionate to what was needed to inform Plan:MK under the NPPF and PPG. Conversely, developing a Scenario 3 that included all of the potential allocations from the Regulation 18 Central Bedfordshire Local Plan stage would have provided an illustration of potential traffic and congestion effects which in all likelihood would not come to pass within the Plan:MK plan period, as it was unlikely that all of those sites would filter through to the Regulation 19 plan. Therefore it could potentially 'cloud' discussions and decisions on the scale of the effects associated with both plans and what the appropriate mitigation measures should be. In short, the stages of plan-making the two authorities were at in late summer 2017 meant that a reasonable growth scenario that included future planned growth in Central Bedfordshire could not be defined.

Appendix 1 – Copy of email sent to Aylesbury Vale District Council regarding the testing of growth scenarios within the MKMM

From: Turner, Andrew <Andrew.Turner@milton-keynes.gov.uk>

Sent: 26 April 2017 18:13

To: Williams, Peter; Kirkham, Andy; 'jhancox@buckscc.gov.uk'; 'jeverett@buckscc.gov.uk'

Cc: Rose, Anna; Cheston, John; Gohil, Ishwer

Subject: Modelling of VALP growth proposals to the SW Milton Keynes

Hello,

Milton Keynes Council have recently finalised an update to the Milton Keynes Multi Modal Transport Model are now beginning to test growth proposals set out in the emerging Plan:MK.

As shown in the previous consultation on the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), Aylesbury Vale DC are considering allocating sites to the south west of Milton Keynes for around 4,500 dwellings and associated uses. Whilst Aylesbury Vale DC would be the local planning authority for this growth (in both plan making and decision taking), the transport implications of such growth would principally impact the Milton Keynes area given its proximity and the likelihood that residents of the new housing would look to Milton Keynes for services and amenities.

Growth proposed to the SW of Milton Keynes as set out within the VALP would need to meet the tests of soundness should they be carried forward into the Proposed Submission of the VALP. Further, any required mitigation measures of such growth would need to be better understood to inform Infrastructure Delivery Plans (or their equivalent) and the stakeholders involved. As such, we would like to discuss the opportunity of testing the growth proposals set out in the VALP via the Milton Keynes Multi Modal Transport Model. The enhancements which have been made to the model mean that it is capable of assessing the proposed growth in a more nuanced way, due to refinements that have been made the model's representation of the road network and zones outside of Milton Keynes to the south west.

We understand that the intention is for the Proposed Submission version of the VALP to be ready later this year. In order to ensure there is no delay in plan making for either authority, we would like to arrange a meeting with the relevant officers as soon as possible to discuss this further, agree the scope of any technical work that needs to be undertaken, and how this might be funded.

It would be appreciated if you could confirm which officers from Aylesbury Vale DC and Bucks CC would be best placed to attend such a meeting, and when their earliest availability would be.

If you have any queries in the meantime please give me a call to discuss.

Kind regards,

Andrew Turner

Senior Planning Officer | Development Plans | Growth, Economy and Culture

Appendix 2 – Email chain between MKC, CBC and AECOM regarding the potential to join up the authorities’ respective transport models

From: Forni, Jon [mailto:jon.forni@aecom.com]
Sent: 07 August 2017 10:25
To: Turner, Andrew; Chadwick, Mark P; Shepherd, Alistair
Cc: Gohil, Ishwer; Hayes, Steve; Cheston, John
Subject: [EXT] RE: Central Beds Transport Modelling

Hi Andrew

Apologies for the delayed reaction, the points you raise in relation to model forecast consistency are very valid and need to be addressed. I have set up a meeting with our Central Beds modelling colleagues for Wednesday 16th and will feed back to you any initial outcomes from this. We also have a MKMM meeting the following week.

Kind regards, Jon

Jon Forni, BSc MSc CMILT
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From: Turner, Andrew [mailto:Andrew.Turner@milton-keynes.gov.uk]
Sent: 26 July 2017 11:00
To: Chadwick, Mark P; Shepherd, Alistair
Cc: Forni, Jon; Gohil, Ishwer; Hayes, Steve; Cheston, John
Subject: Central Beds Transport Modelling

Hi Mark/Jon,

I spoke with Central Beds yesterday about defining growth in their area to go into Scenario 3 for the MKMM testing.

Whilst we could define Scenario 3 using their current draft plan (which Lynsey was comfortable with), there would still be uncertainty over how realistic this will be as Central Beds have not yet

settled on a preferred strategy for their area and like us have an number of options available to them (both large strategic sites and small/medium sites).

Central Beds will need to model their own growth at some point in the next few months and both authorities are happy to look at modelling growth across boundaries. Central Beds are working with AECOM on their transport model, which they say has just been updated in similar fashion to ours. Lynsey and I wondered whether a single run of modelling could be done that combines both authorities' models (or at least has them talking to each other) to save on the number of modelling runs the authorities need to do (and therefore time and cost) and mitigate against discrepancies between the authorities respective modelling outputs. It would seem strange and potentially awkward if each authority has to model the same inputs separately, and potentially produce different results in terms of impacts (this could be a good or bad thing, depending on how you look at it).

Would you be able to speak to your colleagues (details below) working for Central Beds and provide an initial view on whether there are possible efficiencies available with modelling growth across the authorities? The amount of growth in Aylesbury that would need to be built into Scenario 3 appears to be falling away, particularly as we will be including South West MK in the reference case. Not much else looks like happening.

MKC will need to have a conversation with Highways England about this.

Kind regards

Andrew Turner

Senior Planning Officer | Development Plans

From: Lynsey Hillman-Gamble [<mailto:Lynsey.Hillman-Gamble@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk>]

Sent: 26 July 2017 10:29

To: Turner, Andrew

Subject: [EXT] RE: AECOM Transport Model contacts

Sorry Andrew, I got distracted yesterday and forgot to send them on. Please see the contact details below.

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Kind regards

Lynsey

Lynsey Hillman-Gamble MRTPI

Interim Local Planning Manager

Planning Policy

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(Monday to Thursday)

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OFFICIAL – Loss could cause some damage to the Authority

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – Loss could cause severe damage to the Authority

UNCLASSIFIED – Loss would cause little or no damage to the Authority Central Bedfordshire Council

From: Turner, Andrew [<mailto:Andrew.Turner@milton-keynes.gov.uk>]

Sent: 26 July 2017 10:19

To: Lynsey Hillman-Gamble

Subject: AECOM Transport Model contacts

Hi Lynsey,

Further to our conversation yesterday, could you please forward contact details for your transport modelling consultants?

Many thanks,

Andrew Turner

Senior Planning Officer | Development Plans