

Plan:MK Examination

Inspector Note: Points of clarification sought by MKC at final hearing session on 30 August.

31 August 2018

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

In short, the approach verbally outlined by Mr Fessey of AECOM in response to the note of 14 August 2018 sounds like a constructive and objective way forward and I will look at the SA addendum prior to consultation on proposed main modifications. In addition, the SA addendum will need to reflect on the relevant proposed main modifications.

Milton Keynes East – Housing Trajectory

In response to the Stage One discussions it has become evident that a clearer role is required for the site at Milton Keynes East (MKE). Various main modifications would make clear that the site is positively allocated in Plan:MK for residential and commercial development and associated infrastructure with the potential to come forward within the plan period. Following the Stage 1 hearings additional work was undertaken to look at possible trajectories as to what scale of housing might be yielded at the site under two scenarios linked to potential infrastructure funding. I note that there is a consensus between the Council's officers and those leading the promotion of MKE on potential delivery under the two scenarios.

My advice to the Council is that having clarified the site is allocated in Plan:MK, a judgement needs to be applied as to whether it can reasonably deliver a scale of development in the plan period. In my view there is evidence that would justify some positive allowance at MKE (recognising the extent of the plan period), particularly for housing development. From the evidence presented, I would suggest that a case could be made for the alternative trajectory of at least 1,475 dwellings from 2026/27 onwards as being justified, effective and positively prepared having regard to the following factors:

- (i) The content and agreement of the 25 July 2018 Briefing Note, recognising the positive HIF progression of this site but also the reasonableness and timing of alternative funding scenarios. This provides a reasoned basis for an "at least" scenario of 1,475 (295 dpa from 2026/7 onwards). The potential of a positive HIF outcome enabling an earlier and stronger rate of delivery would be reflected through ongoing monitoring and the early plan review proposed.
- (ii) Making a positive allocation at MKE would be, in principle, consistent with national policy to significantly boost the supply of housing at sustainable locations. It would be for the SA addendum to comment on any significant adverse individual or cumulative effects either a strategic level or at a site specific level, noting that a scenario of 1500 homes has already been considered (Option 8+) although this may need some clarification through the updated assessment work.
- (iii) It would be unclear for the site to be allocated (as opposed to being a strategic reserve) but not assigned a quantum of growth within the plan period, unless there were compelling reasons to do so. I remain unclear, following the 25 July

- 2018 Note and agreement on trajectories, as to what the persuasive reasons would be for not assigning at least 1,475 homes to MKE during the plan period?
- (iv) The SA outlines that were MKE to deliver homes within the Plan period it would deliver employment and thus negate the need for the proposed employment site at South Caldecotte. I am not persuaded based on the evidence before me that would be a reasonable scenario.

South East Milton Keynes – Omitted Land

Having referred to the submission from O&H properties on the small area of omitted land from the SEMK allocation at Appendix 1 to their Statement I would not find the Plan unsound were the Council minded to amend the proposed allocation to include it. This could be done as part of MM4 and reflected in updated Schedule of Proposed Policies Map Modifications. As with the other proposed changes to the boundary of SEMK, it is imperative that comments can be made on it as part of the main modifications consultation.

This note is in response to the Council's questions at the final hearing session. I am not inviting comment on its content. It is for the Council to action and progress the proposed main modifications and if required I am happy to provide further clarification to the Council.

David Spencer

Inspector.