

Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension
Development Framework
Supplementary Planning Document
Screening Statement



**Screening Statement for the MKE SUE Development Framework
Supplementary Planning Document**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment
Appropriate Assessment**

**Milton Keynes Council
November 2018**

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
MKE SUE Development Framework (MKE SUE DF)**

1. Title of SPD:

MKE Strategic Urban Extension Development Framework

2. Subject:

The SPD is required to provide guidance on the future sustainable development of the Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension (MKE SUE) in terms of Policy SD14 of the emerging Plan:MK.

The SPD will set out the policy background for Milton Keynes East and how development can be brought forward in a co-ordinated, properly phased and planned manner.

3. Consultation:

The statutory public consultation for the MKE SUE DF will take place during February – March 2019.

Over the past few years, there has been ongoing consultation on the emerging Plan:MK, consultation that has included the strategic allocation of Milton Keynes East for development purposes.

4. Consultation Address:

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is set out in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) – now Housing, Communities and Local Government – practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC, and in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 These documents place an obligation on local planning authorities to undertake a SEA on any land use plan or programme “which sets the framework for future development consent of projects.”
- 1.3 There are however exceptions to this requirement for plans “which determine the use of small areas at a local level” or which only propose “minor modifications to plans,” if the local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.4 To assess whether a SEA is required the local planning authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This must be subject to consultation with the three consultation bodies: Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England.
- 1.5 Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Statement, which is required to be made available to the public.
- 1.6 Previously all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) required Sustainability Appraisal (SA). SA incorporated the requirements for SEA. The Regulations were amended in 2009. These amendments removed the requirement for the SA of SPDs.
- 1.7 Whilst it is anticipated that all Local Plans are likely to require a SEA because they contain statutory planning policies used to determine applications, there is no such certainty for SPDs. Though not part of the statutory Development Plan, SPDs cover a range of issues, which generally provide further details on policies in the Development Plan.
- 1.8 If a SPD is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects through the screening process, then the conclusion will be that the preparation of a SEA is not necessary.
- 1.9 Following consultation with the statutory environmental bodies, Milton Keynes Council determines that the MKE SUE Development Framework SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment. The full screening opinion report follows.

2. Policy context

- 2.1 Milton Keynes Council is preparing its Local Plan (Plan:MK) in accordance with Government advice set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
- 2.2 The NPPF states that SPDs are “documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.”
- 2.3 The Milton Keynes Local Plan was formally adopted by Milton Keynes Council in December 2005, and the Core Strategy was adopted in July 2013. Once adopted, Plan:MK will replace these documents as the statutory Development Plan providing the long term land use planning framework for Milton Keynes, and contain policies to determine planning applications and proposals. An examination into Plan:MK was held in Summer 2018, and it is anticipated that the plan will be adopted in March 2019.

3. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Plan:MK (November 2017)

- 3.1 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising the positives. SA of Local Plans is a legal requirement.
- 3.2 In-line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, a report (known as the SA Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that essentially ‘identifies, describes and evaluates’ the likely significant effects of implementing ‘the plan, and reasonable alternatives’. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan. A Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA has been undertaken during the preparation of Plan:MK and has been examined as part of the Examination in Public of Plan:MK¹. The Council, at the request of the examination Inspector, is preparing an Addendum to the SA/SEA to present information on the proposed modifications, and alternatives, with a view to informing the current consultation and subsequent plan finalisation. This was made available on the Council’s website on 31 October alongside a six week consultation on the Main Modifications to Plan:MK.

¹ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/plan-mk-evidence-base>

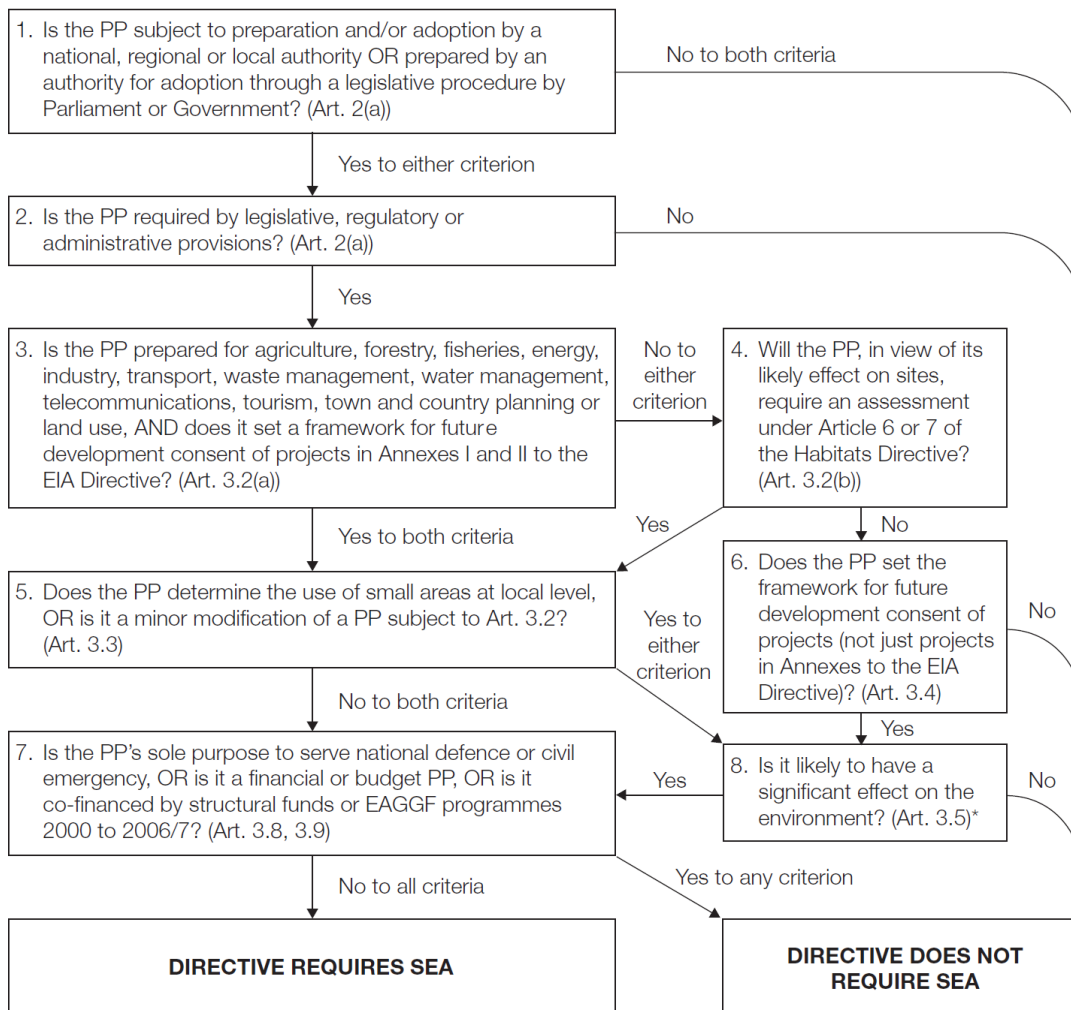
4. MKE SUE Development Framework SPD

- 4.1 The emerging Plan:MK allocates Milton Keynes East as a strategic urban extension. **(Appendix 2)** The site will be developed for around 5,000 homes, around 105 hectares of employment land, and associated uses, including schools, community and retail facilities and open space.
- 4.2 Policy SD14 of the emerging Plan:MK sets out the policy framework for the development of MKE SUE. Policy SD12 sets out the requirement to prepare a development framework for strategic urban extensions (appendix 2).
- 4.3 The preparation of a Development Framework for the Milton Keynes East site is an essential first step to guide all future stages of the development and will set out the policy background and how development can be brought forward in a co-ordinated, properly phased and planned manner.
- 4.4 If necessary and if required, detailed further planning guidance in the form of Master Plans and Design and Access Statements for all subsequent development phases will cascade from and follow the Development Framework.
- 4.5 The Development Framework will evolve as a shared vision that meets the requirements and aspirations of Milton Keynes Council, the community, service providers, landowners, other related stakeholders, developers and other key partners, and will build a consensus for common and joint action.
- 4.6 Extensive public consultation, in accordance with the relevant regulations and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), will be an integral part throughout the preparation of the Development Framework prior to its adoption.

5. The Screening Process

- 5.1 The key to the screening decision is the determination of whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects, using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are set out in the table in Appendix 1 together with the Council's response in relation to the SPD.
- 5.2 The emerging Plan:MK has been subject to the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA which has also considered the sustainability of the allocation of the Milton Keynes East site for development.
- 5.3 Despite no longer requiring sustainability appraisal, SPDs may still require SEA. The ODPM practical guidance provides a checklist approach based on the SEA regulations to help determine whether SEA is required. This guide has been used as the basis on which to assess the need for SEA as set out below.

Figure 1: Establishing the need for SEA



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage	Answer	Reason
<p>1. Is the SPD subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government? (Article 2(a))</p>	Yes	The SPD is to be adopted by Milton Keynes Council
<p>2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))</p>	Yes	The SPD is required in terms of emerging Plan:MK Policy SD14
<p>3. Is the SPD prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Article 3.2(a))</p>	Yes	The SPD is for town and country planning/land use purposes and which sets a policy framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (Urban Development Projects)
<p>5. Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification a SPD subject to Article 3.2? (Article 3.3)</p>	Yes	The SPD will determine the use of small areas at a local level.
<p>6. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)</p>	No	<p>The Plan:MK SA does not identify any significant environmental effects associated with Milton Keynes East, although it does identify some negative environmental impacts. Plan:MK policies and the SPD will have a positive impact on mitigating these negative impacts.</p> <p>See also Appendix 1 below 'Determining the likely significance of effects'</p>

6. Statement of Reasons for Determination

- 6.1 The Council believes that the impact of this SPD through responses to the SEA Directive Criteria will not have significant environmental effects on the local area specifically or on the wider Milton Keynes area generally.
- 6.2 Moreover, the SPD is not setting a new policy framework; it is supplementing and providing further guidance on existing policies, in particular the emerging Plan:MK.
- 6.3 The Plan:MK SA does not identify any significant environmental effects associated with Milton Keynes East, although it does identify some negative environmental impacts. Plan:MK policies and the SPD will have a positive impact on mitigating these negative impacts.
- 6.4 Therefore, the Council considers that a SEA will not be required for this SPD.
- 6.5 Before this presumption can be confirmed, however, it is necessary to consult with the three statutory environmental bodies over this SEA Screening Statement for the SEMK SUE DF SPD.

7. Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the Habitats Directive

- 7.1 Legal protection is afforded to habitats and species of European importance through Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna - known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive require AA of plans to be undertaken. This involves assessing the contents of plans to ensure that their policies and proposals maintain the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The assessment must determine whether the plan would adversely affect the nature conservation objectives of each site. Where negative effects can be identified, other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 7.2 The application of the precautionary principle through the Habitats Directive means that plans can only be permitted once it is shown that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. In the rare case of there being no alternatives available or over-riding reasons of public interest why a plan needs to be implemented, plans that do have negative impacts may still be approved.

8. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

- 8.1 The first stage in carrying out an Appropriate Assessment for the Habitats Directive is screening, by determining whether the plan is likely to have any significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

8.2 As above with the SEA screening, it is not considered that the MKE SUE DF SPD would have any impact on sites covered by the Habitats Directive. A Habitats Regulation Assessment of Plan:MK² was undertaken when preparing Plan:MK. This concluded that “development in the Milton Keynes Local Plan will not have a likely significant effect on any internationally important wildlife sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.” Therefore, an appropriate assessment was not required. The MKE SUE DF SPD will inform developers about the design considerations in Milton Keynes when submitting applications, or reserved matters. The impact on any important habitats would be considered through the determination of the development proposal itself, and it is therefore considered that a full Appropriate Assessment is not required for the MKE SUE DF SPD.

9. Conclusions

9.1. The three statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) were consulted on the Screening Report. Their comments are detailed below:

Consultation Body	Comments Received
Natural England	<p>In our review of the Milton Keynes Strategic Urban Extension SPD SEA screenings we note that there are no designated sites or protected landscapes within the impact zones of the Urban Extension areas</p> <p>As a result we consider it unlikely that the Urban Extensions of South East Milton Keynes & Milton Keynes East to have significant environmental effects, and that the preparation of a SEA is not required.</p> <p>However, we would like to draw your attention to the requirement to conserve biodiversity and provide a net gain in biodiversity through planning policy, as well as the inclusion of Green Infrastructure features (Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and section 109 and 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework). These requirements</p>

² <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/51223/Habitats%20Regulations%20Assessment%20of%20Milton%20Keynes%20Local%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf>

	align with policies in Plan:MK (Draft), which contains express wording on environmental enhancement, Green Infrastructure and net gain. As such, we advise getting in touch with Natural England in regards to discussing how Green Infrastructure and a biodiversity net gain could be provided for, as plans for the strategic urban extensions are furthered.
English Heritage	<p>As noted in our comments on the Proposed Submission Plan:MK, this site includes the Grade II Moulsoe Buildings Farmhouse. We note that the SA of the Plan recognises this and concludes that “<i>given the amount of land area available, there can be confidence in the ability to mitigate heritage impacts through masterplanning</i>”. We agree with this assessment and consider that Policy SD14 has been adequately assessed through the SA of the Plan.</p> <p>We therefore agree with the Council that the proposed MKE SUE Development Framework SDPD need not be subject to further SEA.</p>
Environment Agency	We agree with your Authority’s conclusions.

9.2 In the light of the comments received by the consultation bodies, it is therefore considered that a SEA is not required.

APPENDIX 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Milton Keynes Council Response
1. Characteristics of the MKE SUE DF SPD, having regard to:	
The degree to which the SPD sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD provides additional guidance in terms of a policy planning framework for Policy SD14 of the emerging Plan:MK and provides guidance on future planning applications for land in the Strategic Urban Extension.
The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD will not influence any lower level plans or programmes.
The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Decisions made through the SPD will seek to integrate environmental considerations and promote sustainable development.
Environmental problems relevant to the SPD.	<p>The site has low to medium landscape sensitivity to residential development and is not subject to any landscape designation. There are no TPO trees identified within the site. There are some small areas of woodland which have some ecological and landscape value in the site, but most of the site comprises habitats of limited nature conservation interest. Where habitats of higher interest are present (floodplain grassland along the River Ouzel) these can be retained and enhanced. Landscape and ecological impacts will be considered and addressed via the Development Framework, but they are not considered to be a significant constraint on development of the site.</p> <p>The River Ouzel and associated floodplain (see appendix 3) runs through the site. Built development will be kept out of areas of flood risk in line with Policies FR1 and FR2 and national policy</p>

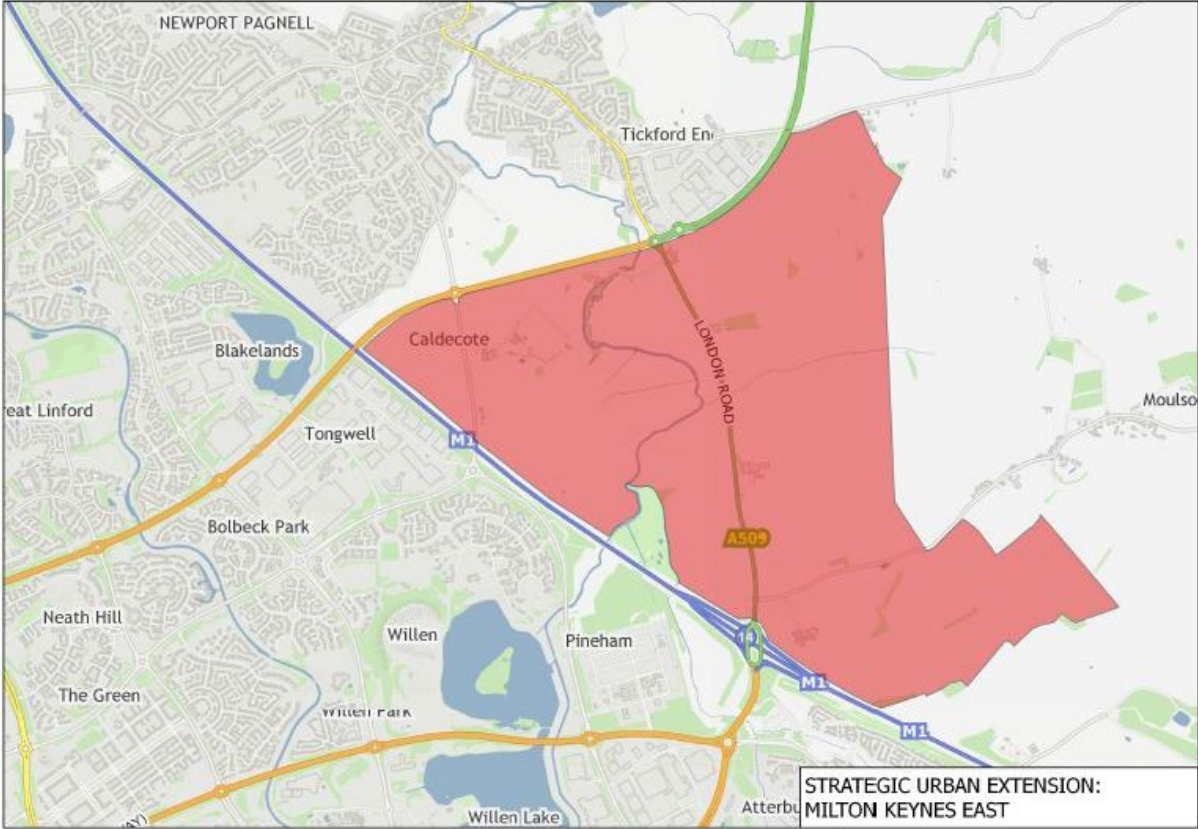
	and guidance.
<p>The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>In the light of the policies within Plan:MK and relevant legislation, the SPD will guide the form, layout and nature of development within the site so that it minimises its impact on the water and natural environment, mitigates carbon dioxide emissions, furthers the ability to adapt to climate change and prevents or minimises pollution of the wider environment.</p>

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

<p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</p>	<p>The anticipated effects on the sustainability of the MKE SUE DF are expected to be positive and enduring with no negative effects.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD.</p>	<p>Preparation and adoption of the SPD would allow development to occur within Milton Keynes East. There are other permitted and anticipated urban development sites within the immediate area and the wider MK borough, however, these are not of a scale that together with Milton Keynes East would give rise to significant effects upon the environment.</p> <p>Milton Keynes and the site in question reside with the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc, a geographical area identified and described by the national Infrastructure Commission as being an area which could and should accommodate the provision of new and significant transport infrastructure and housing development. At this time, no discrete plans or programmes have been established by the UK Government, local authorities or other bodies which prescribes the scale and location of how such infrastructure and housing development may take place.</p>
<p>The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD.</p>	<p>There are no trans-boundary issues.</p>
<p>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).</p>	<p>Air quality in Olney. Whilst an Air Quality Assessment will be required as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment for any planning application on MKE, based on predicted traffic levels it is not anticipated that MKE will lead to the AQMA threshold limits being breached. Growth at MKE will therefore not be at odds with measures identified in the 2012 Local Air Quality Management Action Plan for Olney.</p>

	<p>Noise/pollution from M1. A preliminary noise assessment has been undertaken. Road traffic noise is a constraint, greatest close to the M1 as well as other major roads through the area. However, internal noise impacts can be mitigated through building design (e.g. glazing, ventilation systems) whilst a range of measures are available to mitigate noise in external areas including set-backs, bunds, noise barriers which can all be implemented without affecting site suitability or the development capacity of the site.</p>
<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the SPD.</p>	<p>The magnitude and accumulation of impacts is not likely to cause any local adverse environmental impacts and any impacts will be at the very local level and limited to a small geographic area.</p>
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, • Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, or • Intensive land use. 	<p>The Holiday Inn hotel on London Road is a Grade II Listed building and is central within the allocation. Beyond the site, the Grade I listed Church of St Mary in Moulsoe carries distant views from and across the site and is part of group of listed buildings in Moulsoe. The setting of these heritage buildings will be considered through the development framework. The area is also within an area where there is a likelihood of archaeological interest, and any below ground heritage will need to be explored and considered through the development framework.</p>
<p>The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>No effects identified. The SPD covers an area that is not in national, community or international protected landscape areas and will not have any impacts on nearby national, community or international protected landscape areas.</p>

APPENDIX 2: Map of Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension Allocation



APPENDIX 3: Policy framework with Plan:MK for Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension

Policy SD11 General Principles for Strategic Urban Extensions (showing current Additional Modifications)

Proposals for Strategic Urban Extensions, and the documents required under SD12 to guide their development, should be prepared in accordance with the principles set out below.

1. To provide an appropriate amount of employment and retail uses consistent with the role of the site within the wider strategy and relevant policies guiding those types of uses in the Borough.
2. To provide the necessary social, grey and green infrastructure at the appropriate stage, rate and scale to support the proposed development, in accordance with an approved Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Strategic Urban Extensions will be expected to make a contribution proportionate to its scale and impact for the delivery of strategic infrastructure requirements identified in the Local Investment Plan.
3. To be supported by or incorporate:
 - Environmental impact and transport assessment.
 - An archaeological investigation (with reference to the Historic Environment Record and further assessment if required) and consideration of the Historic Landscape Characterisation to inform the layout of development.
 - Design, land use, transport routes and mobility measures that integrate the Strategic Urban Extension with the existing built up area and enable future expansion beyond the Strategic Urban Extension where appropriate.
 - Where national planning policy indicates that urban expansion beyond the Strategic Urban Extension would be inappropriate and should be restricted, then the Strategic Urban Extension should incorporate layout and design features that create a permanent long-term development boundary.
 - A **landscape green infrastructure** and open space strategy to improve biodiversity, provide advanced structural planting, extend the “forest city” concept, create green road and street scenes, and incorporate public art and leisure and recreation facilities.
 - A management and maintenance strategy for open space and landscaping, outlining details of the owner, the responsible maintenance body, and how long term maintenance will be funded.
 - Planning obligations relating to the phasing of development and the provision of on-site and off-site infrastructure and facilities, to include land, capital and initial running costs.
 - **The monitoring of biodiversity or green infrastructure improvements should be delivered in accordance to the relevant Development Brief.**

This policy will also be applied to any planning application for unallocated strategic development sites.

Policy SD12 Delivery of Strategic Urban Extensions (showing current Additional Modification)

1. To ensure that Strategic Urban Extensions are brought forward in a strategic and comprehensive manner, planning permission will only be granted for land within Strategic Urban Extensions, following the approval by the Council of a comprehensive development framework, incorporating any necessary design codes, or phasing of development and infrastructure delivery, **including green infrastructure delivery**, for the Strategic Urban Extension as a whole.
2. Development frameworks will be produced by the Council in conjunction with and with the support of the developer(s). Development frameworks will also be prepared in partnership with landowners, adjoining local planning authorities, parish or town councils, infrastructure providers, regional and local agencies and services, statutory consultees, the Parks Trust and other stakeholders. Development frameworks will be prepared in consultation with the local community. The Council will adopt development frameworks as supplementary planning documents to guide future planning applications.

Policy SD14 Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension (showing current Main Modifications)

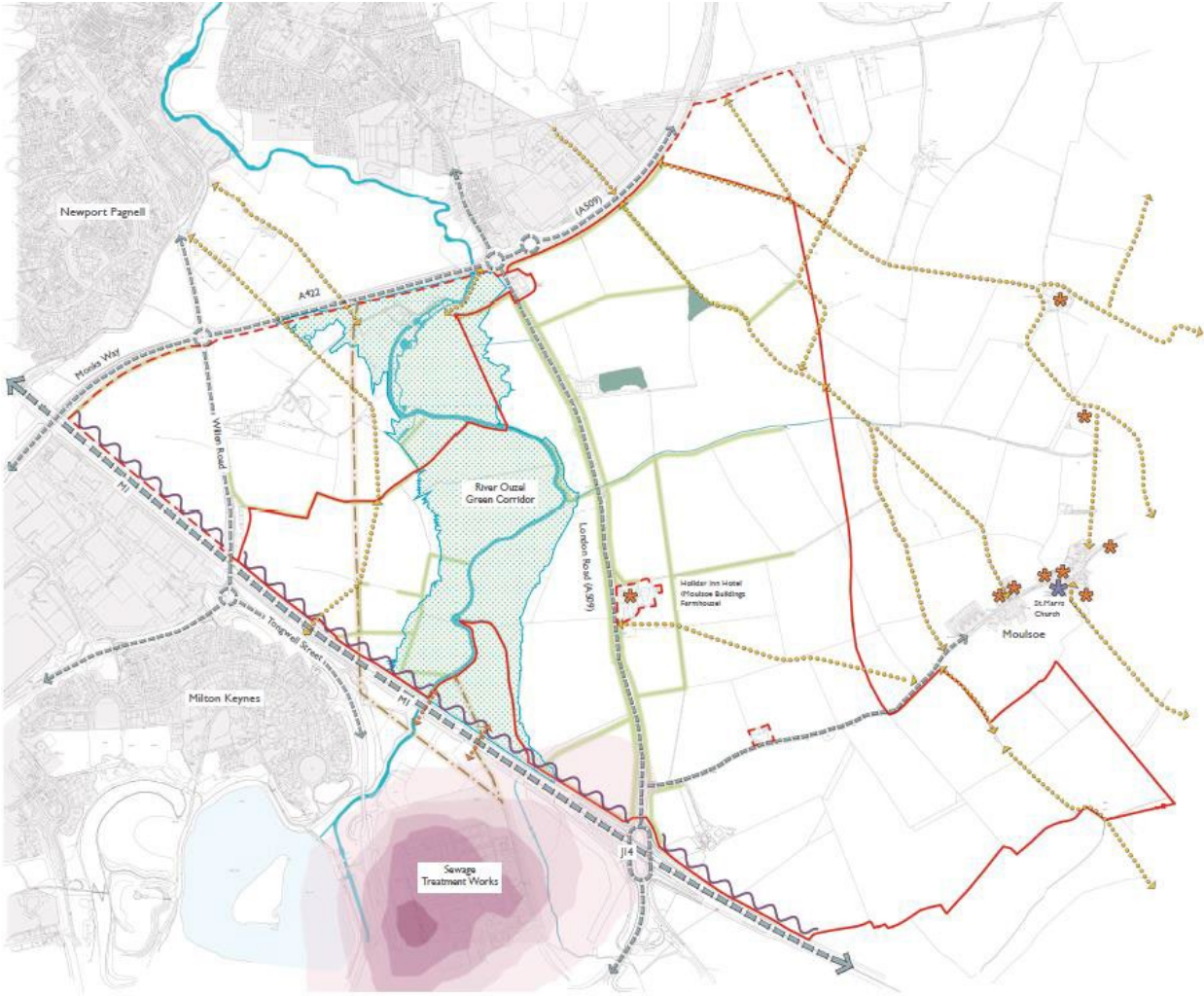
Land is allocated at Milton Keynes East – as shown on the Key Diagram and Policies Map – for a comprehensive new residential and employment development to meet the long-term needs of Milton Keynes. Development ~~will not~~ can commence ~~until after 2034~~ once unless the Council's bid to the Government for the necessary strategic infrastructure required to make the site deliverable is funded ~~ing is successful and is being delivered~~. In that circumstance, the development of the site will be allowed to proceed within the plan period as an additional source of housing and employment land supply.

Development will be brought forward in line with all relevant policies in Plan:MK, particularly Policies SD1, SD11, SD12 and INF1. A comprehensive development framework for the site will be prepared in accordance with Policies SD1, SD11, SD12 and INF1 and approved by the Council prior to planning permissions being granted.

~~Amongst others, the d-~~The development framework and subsequent applications for planning permission will establish the quantum and form of development in more detail, but proposals for development will comprise be expected to meet the following criteria:

- Delivery of around 5,000 new homes, providing a range of sizes, types and tenures, including affordable housing, in accordance with other policies in the Plan.
- Around 105 hectares of land for a mix of employment uses, complementing the role and function of CMK ~~Land for employment uses B1c/B2/B8.~~
- Associated infrastructure including primary and secondary education, community facilities, health, retail and local services and a hotel. The development should comprise at least one district and/or local centre(s), of a scale commensurate to the needs of the new community and that would not adversely affect the viability and vitality of Newport Pagnell district centre, with a co-location of key facilities.
- The phased introduction of a comprehensive network of transport infrastructure in line with the Local Investment Plan, to include highway connections to Newport Pagnell and Central Milton Keynes (CMK), including new and/or enhanced vehicular crossings of the M1, involving highway works on and off-site.
- A corridor of land safeguarded for a fast mass-transit system, and associated infrastructure, enabling connectivity to CMK and other key destinations ~~Cranfield University~~. The width of the corridor should be sufficient to enable a range of possible transit solutions to come forward whilst also ensuring the efficient use of land for achieving the scale of development proposed within this policy.
- A network of segregated, and where appropriate grade-separated, new and enhanced footpaths, and cycleways and bridleways (including redways) to connect to existing routes beyond the site, including ~~redways~~ provision of appropriate pedestrian and cyclist crossings of the A422 and suitable safe and attractive crossings of the M1 as appropriate.
- A strategic landscape framework and green infrastructure network ~~of green spaces to meet strategic and local requirements~~ that follows the guidance in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Green Infrastructure Strategy to ensure ecological connectivity, protect the identity and character of nearby settlements and mitigate any significant impacts on the landscape in accordance with Policy NE5.
- The creation of a linear park through the site that broadly correlates with the River Ouzel floodplain and existing green infrastructure assets of value within and adjacent to it.
- Be informed by appropriate surveys of archaeology, built heritage and ecology with appropriate mitigation of impact as consistent with other policies of the Plan and the NPPF. An archaeological field study, including a Geophysical Survey, will required to identify potential below ground archaeology. Where feasible, the Council will expect below ground archaeology to be kept in situ in preference to its removal.

APPENDIX 3: Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension: Extent of River Ouzel Floodplain



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