

Milton Keynes Council Planning Service

Annual Monitoring Report 2019-2020

July 2020



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Introduction

The Annual Monitoring Report

- 1.1** Local authorities are required to produce and publish monitoring reports by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). On 30 March 2011, the parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Bob Neill MP, wrote to authorities announcing the withdrawal of Annual Monitoring Report Guidance, meaning authorities are now free to choose which targets and indicators to include in their reports (providing they are in line with relevant UK and EU legislation). As a result of the changes to monitoring requirements brought about by the Localism Act, a copy of the monitoring report is no longer sent to the Secretary of State.
- 1.2** This monitoring report covers the period January 2019 to March 2020 and is the first to be prepared since the adoption of Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) new Local Plan; Plan:MK, which was adopted on 20 March 2019. As such, this report monitors progress towards achieving the strategic objectives set out in Plan:MK and analyses the implementation and performance of Plan:MK's policies in enabling delivery of these objectives, with reference to the targets and indicators outlined in the Plan:MK monitoring framework (contained in Appendix F of Plan:MK).

Milton Keynes Background Information

- 1.3** Milton Keynes Borough covers the 'new city' of Milton Keynes as well as its large rural hinterland which includes many villages and the towns of Newport Pagnell, Woburn Sands and Olney (see Figure 1.1). The Borough is located in the centre of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) which brings together businesses, universities and colleges, community groups, social enterprises and local government in 8 local authority areas which include Buckinghamshire (Unitary Authority Area), Central Bedfordshire, Bedford and South Northamptonshire. The aim of SEMLEP is to promote the South East Midlands as a prime growth location for business, investors and visitors. It is one of 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England established by the Coalition Government to play a central role in determining local economic priorities and to undertake activities that drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.
- 1.4** Milton Keynes was designated as a New Town in 1967. The development of the city was subject to the 1970 Master Plan, implemented by the Milton Keynes Corporation until 1992. Milton Keynes has been, and continues to be, one of the fastest growing areas in the UK. A lack of reliable population data means the current population number is uncertain; 2011 Census data remains the only reliable source. Between Milton Keynes' designation, the Borough's population grew from 60,000 to 248,800 at the time of the 2011 Census. The

Local Planning Authority Performance

Progress on Planning Policy and LDS Implementation

- 2.1** The Local Development Scheme (LDS)¹ sets out the planning policy documents that MKC intends to produce over a three-year period and the timetable for producing them. It is essentially a summary of the more detailed project management behind each document.
- 2.2** Following the adoption of Plan:MK in March 2019, MKC prepared a new LDS which was agreed by Delegated Decision on 17 September 2019. The LDS covers the period 2019 to 2022 and sets out the timescales for the review of Plan:MK. This is reflected in Plan:MK Policy DS0 which mentions that the next plan is to be submitted for examination before December 2022. The LDS also sets out the timescales for preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and outlines a risk assessment covering the risks that could impact upon the delivery of the work programme.

Progress on the Review of Plan:MK

- 2.3** As outlined in Section 6 of MKC's current LDS, a number of key milestones for the initial stages of the preparation of the review of Plan:MK were set to be carried out in 2019/20 and early 2020/21. These milestones were all related to the pre-production stage of the review and are outlined in Table 2.1, with progress against them reported below.

Table 2.1: 2019/20 LDS milestones for Plan:MK Review	
Task	Timescale
Agreement of new LDS by Cabinet	September 2019
Public consultation on the draft Strategy for 2050	November 2019 – February 2020
Commissioning and preparation of evidence base studies	Start April 2020
Adoption of the Milton Keynes Growth Strategy	June 2020

Agreement of new LDS by Cabinet

- 2.4** As outlined above the updated LDS was agreed in September 2019 in line with the LDS timetable.

¹ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-scheme-lds>

Public consultation on the draft Strategy for 2050 & Adoption of the Milton Keynes Growth Strategy

- 2.5** In January 2020 MKC published the Draft Strategy for 2050 for public engagement. The Strategy seeks to progress the recommendations and aspirations of the MK Futures 2050 report, the Council Plan 2016-2020 and the National Infrastructure Commission report 2017, which outlined ambitions to expand the city and its wider area to a population of approximately 500,000 people by 2050.
- 2.6** The Strategy which seeks to outline a framework for how this additional growth could be delivered in a manner which delivers on a number of key objectives based around inclusive growth principles, is supported by a large evidence base which has been prepared specifically for the Strategy and MK Futures work. This includes, amongst other studies:
- a. Milton Keynes Strategic Growth Study, prepared by David Lock Associates;
 - b. An economic growth study, prepared by Ortus Economics;
 - c. A Mobility and Mass Rapid Transit System study, prepared by Integrated Transport Planning;
 - d. A Growth Options Assessment document;
 - e. Demographic modelling prepared by Opinion Research Services.
- 2.7** The Strategy for 2050 whilst not a statutory planning document, once it is adopted by MKC will be a key consideration in preparing the review of Plan:MK. Furthermore, the evidence base that informs it, and the feedback gained during the consultation period will provide useful information and data to assist the preparation of the new plan.
- 2.8** The LDS had outlined that consultation on the draft Strategy would be undertaken between November 2019 and January 2020. This consultation period was however delayed due to the general election that was announced and held in late 2019. The Strategy was instead published in January 2020 for an intended period of 3 months. During February and March, MKC hosted many public meetings across the Borough and within parishes of neighbouring authorities that border Milton Keynes. Due to the onset of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown, the remainder of the programmed engagement events scheduled for the end of March and April 2020 had to be cancelled. Due to this, MKC decided to extend the consultation period until 22 May 2020 to enable people further time to review the Strategy and associated documents and provide comment.
- 2.9** Whilst the delays associated with Covid-19 will in themselves have an impact on the initial programme for finalising and adopting the Strategy for 2050, MKC also want to give some thought to the possible impacts of the current Covid-19 situation and how the Strategy for 2050 will respond.

- 2.10** During June and July 2020, MKC published some thoughts and questions to be considered in relation to Covid-19, and to provide an opportunity for people to respond to these issues, and what adaptations may be appropriate to include in the Strategy. All the feedback received to date, as well as from the Covid-19 discussions, will then be considered and assist in improving and refining the Strategy for 2050. It is then intended to publish a revised Strategy for 2050 in Autumn 2020 as an opportunity for further feedback on the changes that have been made, before taking the final Strategy through Cabinet and Council processes for adoption early in 2021. This is a delay from the intended adoption date outlined in the LDS.

Commissioning and Preparation of Evidence Base Studies

- 2.11** With regards to evidence base studies to support the preparation of the review of Plan:MK, MKC have begun work on these in line with the LDS programme, which envisaged work would start on these in April 2020. Briefs have been prepared for a number of the key evidence base documents and preparation has begun on a number of those which will be carried out in-house.
- 2.12** For those evidence base documents which require the assistance of external consultants, tender briefs are in the process of being prepared, however the onset of Covid-19 has temporarily impacted upon the ability of the Development Plans Team to tender for work or to appoint consultants. This may create delay in terms of the completion of a number of key pieces of evidence.
- 2.13** Considering the delay in finalising and adopting the Strategy for 2050 and the impacts of Covid-19, the LDS will be kept under review, both in relation to the preparation of the review of Plan:MK and Supplementary Planning Documents, of which more details are provided below.

The Duty to Cooperate

- 2.14** The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) is a statutory duty that MKC is bound by and which requires strategic planning policy-making authorities to cooperate with each other, and other bodies, when preparing, or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters.
- 2.15** The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that these authorities should produce, maintain, and update one or more Statement(s) of Common Ground (SoCG), throughout the plan-making process. In preparing Plan:MK, MKC prepared a number of SoCG with our immediate neighbouring authorities and with other key bodies, such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. With regards to our neighbouring authorities of Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), who also

both submitted plans in 2018, which currently remain at examination, the SoCG between these authorities and MKC remain active for the purposes of their live examinations.

2.16 During 2019/20 limited work specific to the duty to cooperate has taken place in relation to the preparation of the review of Plan:MK. This is as a result of a number of factors including, the ongoing examinations of both the AVDC and CBC Local Plans which has limited their ability to begin discussions in relation to a new plan; the unitarization of neighbouring AVDC to form part of the new Buckinghamshire Authority which took place on the 1 April 2020, and the ongoing proposals for unitarization of South Northamptonshire to form part of a new West Northamptonshire Council (expected in 2021); and also due to the early stage of preparation that MKC are currently at with regards to the review of Plan:MK.

2.17 MKC have however during 2019/20 continued to engage with our neighbouring authorities in a number of areas, including:

- a. MK Strategy for 2050²: MKC held a number of individual meetings with neighbouring authorities (mainly officer meetings, but in some cases with the presence of members as well) prior to the publication of the draft Strategy so as they had advance notice of the contents, had the opportunity to provide comment and to assist us in determining the best manner with which to engage with parishes within their authority areas.
- b. During the consultation period of the draft Strategy (prior to the onset of Covid-19), MKC carried out a range of public engagement events with Parishes of neighbouring authorities to provide them with an opportunity to discuss and provide comment on the draft Strategy.
- c. Consultations: During 2019/20 MKC provided comments on the following consultations by neighbouring authorities:
 - Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation (December 2019);
 - Bedford Borough Council Revised Statement of Community Involvement Consultation (July 2019).

2.18 As Milton Keynes is a unitary authority and as such is the responsible authority for minerals and waste related planning within the Borough, and as minerals and waste are both strategic matters, the duty to cooperate also relates to these matters. These are covered under the Minerals and Waste chapters later in this AMR.

² <https://www.mkfutures2050.com/>

Progress on Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.19** Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detailed advice and guidance on the implementation and interpretation of planning policies set out in the Local Plan. Unlike local plans, SPDs are not required to be submitted for independent examination but are subject to public consultation and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 2.20** Following the adoption of Plan:MK, MKC reviewed all existing SPDs and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and made the decision to revoke a number of them, as outlined below. The main reasons for their revocation were because:
- a. Their content was based on the previous 2005 Local Plan, which has been replaced by Plan:MK;
 - b. The development to which the SPD/SPG related to has now been completed;
 - c. The SPD/SPG was inconsistent with national policy or guidance or Plan:MK.
- 2.21** At a Delegated Decision on 19 November 2019, the following SPDs/SPGs were revoked:
- a. Northern Expansion Area Development Framework SPG (May 2004);
 - b. Oxley Park Development Brief SPG (May 2004);
 - c. Oakgrove Millennium Community Development Framework (September 2004);
 - d. Wolverton West End Development Framework SPG (September 2004);
 - e. Stantonbury Park Development Brief SPG (January 2006); and
 - f. Forecourt Shops at Petrol Filling Stations SPG (March 2007).

Preparation of New and Updated Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.22** The following outlines the SPDs which MKC intends to prepare within the time period 2019-2022, as set out in the LDS, and the progress that has been made during 2019/20.

Planning Obligations SPD

- 2.23** MKC consulted upon a draft Planning Obligations SPD in May-July 2019. Following this consultation, changes were made to government's National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which had a significant bearing on the content that could be included within the Planning Obligations SPD going forward. As a result, a revised version of the Planning Obligations SPD has been prepared. A further consultation is required given the extent of the changes made to the document to bring it in line with the PPG.
- 2.24** On 24 March 2020 a Delegated Decision was taken to allow for the revised version of the SPD to be published for a public consultation period. Initially it was intended that this

consultation period would take place from May 2020, however this has been delayed due to the onset of Covid-19 and the impact this has had on MKC being able to fulfil the consultation in line with its adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and National regulations in relation to consulting on SPD's.

- 2.25** Following updated guidance from the Government in May 2020 in relation to carrying out consultations on planning documents during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, MKC are in the process of updating its SCI. Following this update, it will allow for the consultation on the draft SPD to take place. It is therefore likely that adoption of the updated SPD will take place in early 2021 instead of late 2020 as initially intended.

Affordable Housing SPD

- 2.26** Between May and July 2019, MKC held a second consultation period on the draft SPD, the document first having been consulted upon in 2018. Following the consultation, all comments received were taken into consideration and a final version of the SPD was adopted by Cabinet on 13 January 2020.
- 2.27** The newly adopted SPD replaces the previous Affordable Housing SPD which was adopted in March 2013 and provides guidance on how Policy HN2 (and other relevant policies) of Plan:MK will be implemented by MKC when determining relevant planning applications.

South Caldecotte Development Framework SPD

- 2.28** South Caldecotte is allocated for employment development in Plan:MK. The Development Framework SPD will provide detailed guidance on the development of the site. This SPD would be a material consideration in any future planning applications for development of the South Caldecotte allocation.
- 2.29** Consultation on an initial draft SPD was carried out in Spring 2018 and a further consultation period was held between May and July 2019 on a revised draft SPD following the adoption of Plan:MK in March 2019.
- 2.30** MKC intend to conduct a Transport Study for south Milton Keynes taking into consideration this site and other proposed growth within the wider area. However, this needs to be conducted in conjunction with East West Rail Company plans for the Marston Vale Line given the implications this will have for future rail line crossings, as well as local access and connectivity requirements. Once an updated version of the SPD is produced, a further consultation period will be undertaken.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) SPD

- 2.31** The HIA SPD is required to enable the implementation of Policy EH6 of Plan:MK. The SPD will provide technical guidance on the preparation and use of Health Impact Assessments. It also identifies sources of data to consider, examples of health impacts that would need to be assessed and how to mitigate against negative health impacts and enhance positive ones.
- 2.32** A draft SPD has been prepared and a Delegated Decision was taken on 24 March 2020 to allow the draft SPD to be published for a public consultation period. Initially it was intended that this consultation period would take place from May 2020, however this has been delayed due to the onset of Covid-19 and the impact this has had on MKC being able to fulfil the consultation in line with its adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and National regulations in relation to consulting on SPD's.
- 2.33** Following updated guidance from the Government in May 2020 in relation to carrying out consultations on planning documents during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, MKC are in the process of updating its SCI. Following this update, it will allow for the consultation on the draft SPD to take place. It is therefore likely that adoption of the updated SPD will take place in early 2021 instead of late 2020 as initially intended.

Biodiversity Accounting SPD

- 2.34** The SPD is designed to provide guidance on the application of Policy NE3 (Biodiversity and Geological Enhancement), specifically providing a step-by-step guide for working with protected and priority species and habitats which are likely to be impacted upon by their proposed developments. The SPD details the MKC's requirements for applicants to build nature conservation features into developments, ensuring that a measurable net-gain to the districts biodiversity is achieved in accordance with Plan:MK and national planning policies.
- 2.35** A draft version of the SPD has been produced and has been through internal engagement with key stakeholders. The next step is for the draft SPD to be published for a public consultation period. As with some of the above SPDs, the programme for consultation has been delayed due to the onset of Covid-19 and the impact this has had on MKC's ability to carry out public consultation and engagement. Following the forthcoming update to the SCI, the draft SPD will be subject to a Delegated Decision seeking permission for public consultation to take place. It is therefore anticipated that public consultation will take place later in 2020.

Sustainable Construction SPD

- 2.36** The SPD will help to ensure that MKC meets Plan:MK policy objectives with regards to sustainable construction. In particular, it aims to provide clear guidance as to how the requirements set out in policy SC1 (Sustainable Construction) can be met. It provides examples of innovative or novel approaches that may be taken to achieve the requirements and provides more detail of how calculations will be made. It aims to provide greater certainty and a consistency of approach to dealing with planning applications and their implementation.
- 2.37** A draft version of the SPD has been produced and the next step is for the draft to be published for a public consultation period. As with some of the above SPDs, the programme for consultation has been delayed due to the onset of Covid-19 and the impact this has had on MKC's ability to carry out public consultation and engagement. Following the forthcoming update to the SCI, the draft SPD will be subject to a Delegated Decision seeking permission for public consultation to take place. It is therefore anticipated that public consultation will take place later in 2020.

South East Milton Keynes Development Framework SPD

- 2.38** The SPD provides guidance on how the allocation of south-East Milton Keynes (Policy SD11 and other relevant policies) within Plan:MK should be planned and developed. The SPD will be an important material consideration when determining relevant planning applications.
- 2.39** Work was commenced in 2018 on the preparation of this SPD including the formation of a local stakeholder group through which a number of meetings and workshops were held in the Summer of 2019.
- 2.40** MKC intend to conduct a Transport Study for south Milton Keynes taking into consideration this site and other proposed growth within the wider area. However, this needs to be conducted in conjunction with East West Rail Company plans for the Marston Vale Line given the implications this will have for future rail line crossings, as well as local access and connectivity requirements. The outcomes of this work will need to be taken into consideration in preparing the SPD; work on the SPD will continue to be progressed over the next 12 months.

Milton Keynes East Development Framework SPD

- 2.41** Between August and September 2019, MKC held a consultation on a Draft Milton Keynes East SPD. Following the completion of consultation, all responses received were considered by MKC and necessary amendments were made to the SPD.

- 2.42** A final version of the SPD was then taken to Cabinet for adoption on 13 January 2020. Cabinet made the decision to adopt the SPD subject to certain changes/requests to review certain elements of the SPD which were discussed during the Cabinet meeting with the decision sheet for the meeting recording them.
- 2.43** The decision to adopt the SPD was then called in by a number of parties and a mediation meeting was held with the Chair of Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee and those who had called the decision in to discuss their concerns and reasons for call in. Whilst this meeting resolved certain matters, it was still necessary for the item to be taken forward to full Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee which met on 12 February 2020 to discuss the call in.
- 2.44** The Committee recommended that the matter be referred back to Cabinet to reconsider the SPD taking into account a number of recommended changes and additions. On the 10 March 2020, the SPD was then adopted by Cabinet.
- 2.45** The SPD provides guidance on how the allocation of Milton Keynes East (Policy SD12 and other relevant policies) within Plan:MK should be planned and developed. The SPD will be an important material consideration when determining relevant planning applications.

Parking Standards SPD

- 2.46** External consultants have been appointed to assist with the production of this SPD, however the onset of Covid-19 has had a major impact on the ability to carry out the necessary investigative work. This is partly as a result of lockdown and social distancing measures implemented by Government in response to Covid-19, but also because the ongoing situation has resulted in changes to travel behaviour and parking patterns and therefore any investigative work carried out at this stage would be likely to provide a false view of parking requirements in different areas of Milton Keynes. This work is therefore currently on hold.

Urban Design Framework for Central Bletchley SPD

- 2.47** The SPD will inform potential developers of land use planning and transport opportunities and constraints within Central Bletchley. The guidance will highlight and introduce design principles which should be addressed in the submission of a planning application for proposed development.
- 2.48** An initial preparation programme for this work envisioned a likely adoption in mid-2021. However, preparation of the SPD is linked to progress made on reviewing the Parking

Standards SPD and potentially the Neighbourhood Plan for the area. As outlined below the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Neighbourhood plan is still at a very early stage and as outlined above the ability to carry out the Parking Standards SPD work has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. As such it is likely this will have a knock-on effect on the timescales for completion of this SPD as well.

Progress on Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.49** Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were introduced by the Localism Act in 2011. They are community-led documents, prepared by Town and Parish Councils (or Neighbourhood Forums where applicable) which set out the vision and planning policies for the use and development of land in particular neighbourhoods. They must be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan. Once 'made' (adopted), a NDP forms part of the Development Plan.
- 2.50** The LDS does not include timescales for the preparation of new NDPs as these are led by Town and Parish Councils on behalf of their local communities; the timescales for their production or review are therefore set by the relevant Town or Parish Council. The following does however provide an update on neighbourhood plans that have progressed through statutory elements of the preparation process which requires the involvement of MKC during 2019/20. As at the 31 March 2020 there were 18 made NDPs within the Borough of Milton Keynes.
- 2.51** **Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council:** In February 2020 applied to MKC to designate a Neighbourhood Plan Area covering the entire parish area of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford except for the Lakes Estate, which has its own made neighbourhood plan. As the application did not cover the entire parish area a consultation was required. Following consultation, a Neighbourhood Planning Officer decision was taken on 1 May 2020 to approve the neighbourhood area.
- 2.52** **Stantonbury Neighbourhood Plan:** In March 2019, MKC appointed an examiner to conduct an examination of the NDP for the parish of Stantonbury. No hearing was required for the examination and the examiner published his report in June 2019. Following consideration of the examiner's report, the Parish Council and MKC did not agree with some of the examiners recommendations in relation to deletion of certain policies within the proposed plan.
- 2.53** The Parish Council instead proposed to retain these policies with modifications to address the issues raised by the examiner. This proposal was consulted on between November 2019 and January 2020. Following this consultation, it was deemed that a further examination was necessary so as to examine the proposed modified policies.

- 2.54** Following receipt of the examiner's report into this second examination MKC took the decision that the plan, as modified, should proceed to a referendum. The referendum was due to take place on 7 May 2020, however due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the referendum has had to be postponed and a new date will be announced in due course.
- 2.55 Hanslope Neighbourhood Plan:** In March 2019 MKC appointed an examiner to conduct an examination of the NDP for the parish of Hanslope. No hearing was required for the examination and in June 2019, MKC received the examiner's report and subsequently accepted all of the examiner's recommendations. The plan then proceeded to referendum on the 26 September 2019. Following a successful referendum, the Hanslope NDP was formally made part of the Development Plan at the meeting of Full Council on 23 October 2019.
- 2.56 Lavendon Neighbourhood Plan:** In August 2019 MKC appointed an examiner to conduct an examination of the NDP for the parish of Lavendon. No hearing was required for the examination and in October 2019, MKC received the examiner's report and subsequently accepted all of the examiner's recommendations. The plan then proceeded to referendum on the 23 January 2020. Following a successful referendum, the Lavendon NDP was formally made part of the Development Plan at the meeting of Full Council on 18 March 2020.
- 2.57 Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council:** In December 2019 applied to MKC to designate a Neighbourhood Plan Area covering the entire parish area of Wolverton and Greenleys. As the area specified in the application encompassed the entire Parish area, publication of the area application is not required and as such a Neighbourhood Planning Officer decision was taken on 8 January 2020 to approve the neighbourhood area.
- 2.58 North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan:** In March 2019 MKC appointed an examiner to conduct an examination of the NDP for the parish of North Crawley. No hearing was required for the examination and in July 2019, MKC received the examiner's report and subsequently accepted all of the examiner's recommendations. The plan then proceeded to referendum on the 26 September 2019. The plan was however voted against at referendum.
- 2.59 Ravenstone Neighbourhood Plan:** Following receipt of the Examiners report into the Ravenstone NDP in January 2019, MKC considered and accepted all of the Examiner's recommendations, apart from one minor non-material change. The plan then proceeded to referendum on the 2 May 2019. Following a successful referendum, the Ravenstone NDP was formally made part of the Development Plan at the meeting of Full Council on 20 June 2019.

Development Management

Planning Applications

- 2.60** For a plot to be built on or altered, a planning application is submitted to MKC. These applications are monitored and split into three categories;
- Major – 10 or more dwellings/ over 10,000m²
 - Minor – Under 10 dwellings / less than 10,000m²
 - Other – all other applications
- 2.61** For an application to be validated it must contain all documents within MKC's validation list; this can be found at <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations/547>. Once validated an application can be assessed for determination. During the financial year 2019/20 MKC received 2920 planning applications of which 2757 were valid applications; 233 Applications were withdrawn, 348 refused and 1848 permitted (note that some applications from the previous year will have been permitted and applications will carry over to the following year so these figures may not add up). These applications range from brand new housing and offices, householder alterations and advertising consents to listed building consents and tree preservation orders.
- 2.62** Table 2.2 shows the number of applications received, validated and withdrawn from 2016 up to 2019. From 2016 to 2018 there was a steady decline in applications received by MKC; however, 2019 saw an uplift of applications. The number of applications that were validated has steadily decreased over the time period. This would suggest that a more robust procedure has been put in place to make sure that applications are properly submitted with all the relevant information needed, leading to more applications being returned. There is a sharp increase in the number of withdrawn applications in 2019/20, this is most likely due to MKC's updated approach to reducing the number of applications which are permitted an extension of time.

Table 2.2 Number of applications received, validated and withdrawn in financial years 2016-17 to 2019-2020.

	Applications Received	Applications Validated	Applications Withdrawn
2016/17	3254	3108	171
2017/18	2904	2826	129
2018/19	2727	2597	178
2019/20	2920	2757	233

- 2.63** All applications have a time limit in which they should be determined:
- Major – 13 weeks
 - Minor – 8 weeks

- Other – 8 weeks

2.64 Table 2.3 shows the number of applications granted and refused planning permission from 2016-2019. After peaking in 2017 the number of applications permitted has declined steadily. The number of applications refused has slowly increased from a low in 2017. There is a big jump in the number of refusals from 2018/19 (207) to 2019/2020 (348); this could relate to the adoption of Plan:MK in March 2019 and reflect its policies working well to reduce non-policy compliant development, or it could also be as a result of MKC's approach to extensions of time.

Table 2.3 Number of applications granted and refused 2016-2020.		
	Applications Granted Planning Permission	Applications Refused Planning permission
2016-17	1671	263
2017-18	2090	177
2018-19	1984	207
2019-2020	1848	348

2.65 Any application determined outside of this time is deemed to be out of time; however, an extension of time can be sought if there are issues that can be resolved. Not all applications are counted towards the statistics collected for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Table 2.4 show the number of applications determined that are counted in Government Statistics. The Government target for determination of applications is 60% of majors and 70% of minors to be determined on time. Of the 1580 determined applications only 40 were determined out of time, meaning that MKC approved 92.5% of applications in time; this is over the threshold expected by Government.

Table 2.4 Total Number of applications determined on time and out of time in 2019 from applications counted in Government statistics.					
	Total Determined	On Time		Out of Time	
		No.	%	No.	%
Major	99	89	90	8	8
Minor	330	249	75.5	10	3
Other	1151	1122	97.5	22	2

Planning Obligation/S106 Payments

2.66 Under national planning regulations MKC can require a developer to contribute towards providing infrastructure or taking other steps to offset the impact of a development; these are called Planning Obligations. These obligations are contained in legally binding agreements, often referred to as Section 106 or S106 Agreements (after the relevant section in the *1990 Town and Country Planning Act*). The agreement is usually between

MKC and the developer; however, a developer can make a 'unilateral undertaking' to obligate themselves to deliver something.

- 2.67** Planning obligations may involve a developer making a financial contribution to delivering infrastructure or a service. Alternatively, there may be an obligation on the developer to deliver something themselves (like a play area on a site, or a certain amount of affordable housing). Planning obligations help to mitigate the impact of new development.
- 2.68** Table 2.5 explains how funds obtained from S106 contributions were distributed during the 2019/20 monitoring year.

Table 2.5: Distribution of S106 contributions 2019/20		
	Amount Paid (£)	% of Total
Bio-diversity Offsetting	41,065.22	0.5
Carbon Offsetting	424,755.16	5.5
Car Parks	123,428.47	1.5
Community Investment	615,314.50	8
Education	3,444,512.28	43
Emergency Services	21,110.76	0.3
Health & Social Care	700,800.92	9
Heritage	51,027.72	0.6
Highways	149,083.23	2
Inward Investment & Skills	324,536.32	4
Parks & Recreation	1,097,779.76	14
Public Art	557,154.38	7
Public Transport	249,098.61	3.5
Voluntary Sector	88,361.12	1.1
TOTAL	8,037,025.47	100

House Prices

- 2.69** Milton Keynes is in a prime area for development, being only 40 minutes by train from London it is a fantastic area for people to commute from. As with most areas, house prices in Milton Keynes peaked in 2018 and have since dipped slightly through 2019. The average house price for properties with a Milton Keynes postcode in June 2019 was £281,387 compared to an average price of £280,047 in England and Wales³. This means that Milton Keynes is ever so slightly above average with regards to pricing and is a much sort after area of the country to live in.

3

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housepricestatisticsforsmallareas/yearendingjune2019>

Population

- 3.1** As Figure 3.1 shows, the population of Milton Keynes Borough has continued to increase since the designation of the New Town in 1967 and is now over four times its original size at the time of designation. It was projected by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) that in 2015 the population of Milton Keynes was approximately 261,750. In 2018 the population was estimated to be approximately 268,607, with the projected population of the Borough for 2020 being 287,450. Recent estimates project the Borough's population to be around 312,700 by 2031 according to the Milton Keynes Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)⁴.
- 3.2** Milton Keynes has a very high population growth rate. The population grew by 36,100 people between 2001 and 2011 to 248,821. This was a 17% increase, the 7th fastest of all local authorities in England. The high population growth in MK is forecast to continue, see Figure 3.1.
- 3.3** The latest analysis (2018-based, published 2019) estimated the population at 268,807, which is a further growth of 8% since 2011. The wider Milton Keynes postcode area community, which reflects the catchment of the Milton Keynes University Hospital trust, has a population of 549,000.

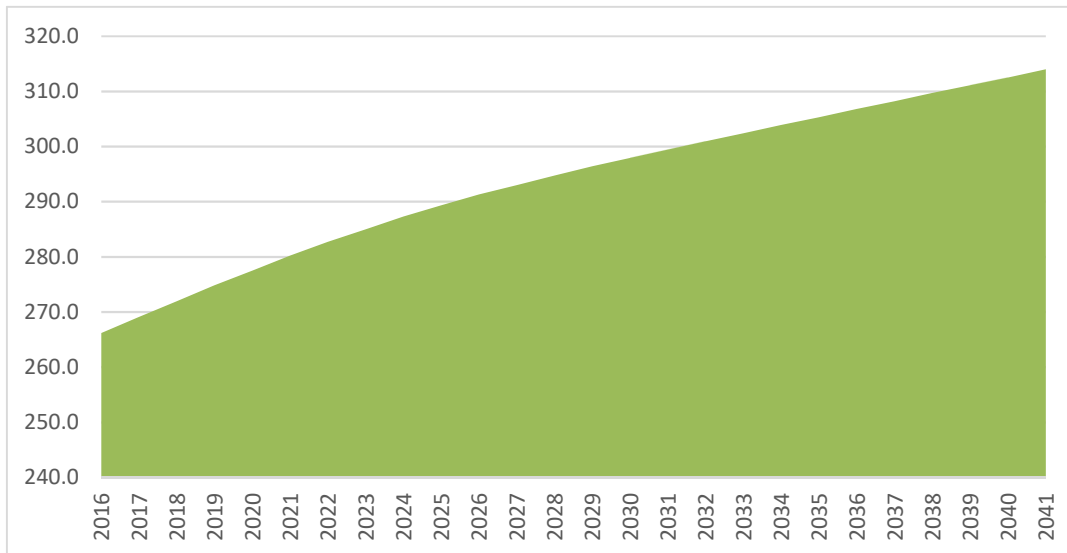


Figure 3.1: Population Projection for Milton Keynes 2016-2040⁵.

⁴ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/draft-strategic-housing-market-assessment-november-2016>

⁵ www.ons.gov.uk

3.4 The Milton Keynes population age profile is slightly younger than England as a whole. In 2018, 23.1% of the Milton Keynes population were aged under 16 compared with 19.2% in England as demonstrated by tables 3.1-3.2 below. Further, 63.1% of the Milton Keynes population are aged 16-64 compared with 62.9% in England and a smaller proportion of 13.8% of the Milton Keynes population are aged 65+ compared with 18.2% in England.

3.5 However, the proportion of older people is growing. The population of those aged 65+ is projected to be 16.2% in 2026 and 18% by 2031, with the proportion of those aged 80+ also raising by more than 2%. Similarly, the Milton Keynes SHMA⁴ found that the percentage of the total population of Milton Keynes that are over 65 will increase from 13% to 18% during the 2016-2031 period.

Table 3.1: Number of Males and Females in the Borough of Milton Keynes in 2018⁵.

Age	Males	Females	All
0 to 4	9,666	9,382	19,048
5 to 9	10,863	10,372	21,235
10 to 14	9,493	9,087	18,580
15 to 19	7,611	6,995	14,606
20 to 24	6,818	6,115	12,933
25 to 29	7,855	8,304	16,159
30 to 34	9,701	10,441	20,142
35 to 39	11,049	11,357	22,406
40 to 44	10,394	9,911	20,305
45 to 49	9,520	9,474	18,994
50 to 54	8,826	9,026	17,852
55 to 59	7,742	8,008	15,750
60 to 64	6,617	6,948	13,565
65 to 69	5,778	6,341	12,119
70 to 74	4,685	5,185	9,870
75 to 79	2,911	3,463	6,374
80 to 84	1,810	2,549	4,359
85 to 89	1,027	1,659	2,686
90+	490	1,134	1,624
Total	132,856	135,751	268,607

Table 3.2: Population in England by Age Group in 2018⁵.

Age	Population in England
0 to 4	3,346,727
5 to 9	3,523,866
10 to 14	3,274,119
15 to 19	3,096,575
20 to 24	3,512,654
25 to 29	3,815,924
30 to 34	3,787,597
35 to 39	3,717,483
40 to 44	3,390,584
45 to 49	3,799,242
50 to 54	3,915,451
55 to 59	3,573,329
60 to 64	3,044,374
65 to 69	2,822,593
70 to 74	2,724,800
75 to 79	1,863,126
80 to 84	1,403,756
85 to 89	865,702
90+	499,276
Total	55,977,178

3.6 The population in older age groups is projected to increase substantially during the 2016-2031 period, with around half of the overall population growth projected to be in the 65 or over group (22,300 over 65s out of a 47,200 person 15-year growth). Also, of note is that the over 75 population is projected to double (increasing from 14,100 to 28,266 persons, representing a 100% increase) over the 15-year period 2016-31. This is particularly important when establishing the types of housing required and the need for housing specifically for older people. Whilst most of these older people will already live in the area and many will not

move from their current homes; those that do move home are likely to be looking for suitable housing.

Ethnicity

- 3.7** In 2011, 26.1% of the population in Milton Keynes were from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group compared with 20.2% in England. BAME residents constituted 13.2% of the MK population in 2001. The Annual Population Survey⁶ estimates the proportion of BAME residents in MK in 2019 as between 23.7% and 37.6%. On this basis, the proportion of the population made up of BAME groups has risen since 2011. This finding is supported by the School Census 2019⁷ where the proportion of BAME children in Milton Keynes schools is 36%.
- 3.8** MKC Community Language Service recorded that during the period from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020, the top ten language requests were for: Urdu, Arabic, Kurdish Sorani, Tigrinya, Polish, Romanian, Tamil, Bengali, Lithuanian, Sudanese Arabic. This indicates that there is a very diverse mix of ethnicities living within Milton Keynes.
- 3.9** Further to this, in August 2019 The Campaign Company undertook a piece of research titled '*Cohesion ATLAS interim findings – Milton Keynes*'. These findings showed that Milton Keynes ranks 16, with a 25.7% non-white British population level, as of 2019. The study also found that the diversity of the non-white British population is 95.8%. The largest origin groups within Milton Keynes according to ATLAS were Hindu Indian, Other Muslim, Ghanaian, Polish, Nigerian, Pakistani, Non-Polish EU8 (Czech or Slovak, Hungarian, Baltic States, or former Yugoslavian), Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi and Chinese. It should be noted that there are possible limitations to the findings in this data, as it was procured through analysing names globally, and using name recognition to then identify ethnocultural 'origins'. The findings use 2011 data as a comparator to map change, with the ATLAS in question looking at where 'origins' groups live.

Migration

- 3.10** Data from the ONS shows that in 2011 18.5% of the population in Milton Keynes were born outside of the UK⁸. This is significantly higher than the average for England as a whole (13.8%). Between 2001 and 2011, the number of Milton Keynes residents born outside of the UK more than doubled from 20,500 (9.9%) of the population to 46,100 (18.5%). 6,200 residents in Milton Keynes were born in EU accession countries, accounting for 2.5% of the population compared with 2.0% in England as a whole.

⁶ www.ons.gov.uk

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-area-migration-indicators-uk-2018>

3.11 Estimates of the present proportion of the population of Milton Keynes born outside of the UK is over 52,000, which is between 19%-22.5% of the population. However, in 2018 47% of all live births in Milton Keynes were to parents where one or both were born outside of the UK.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

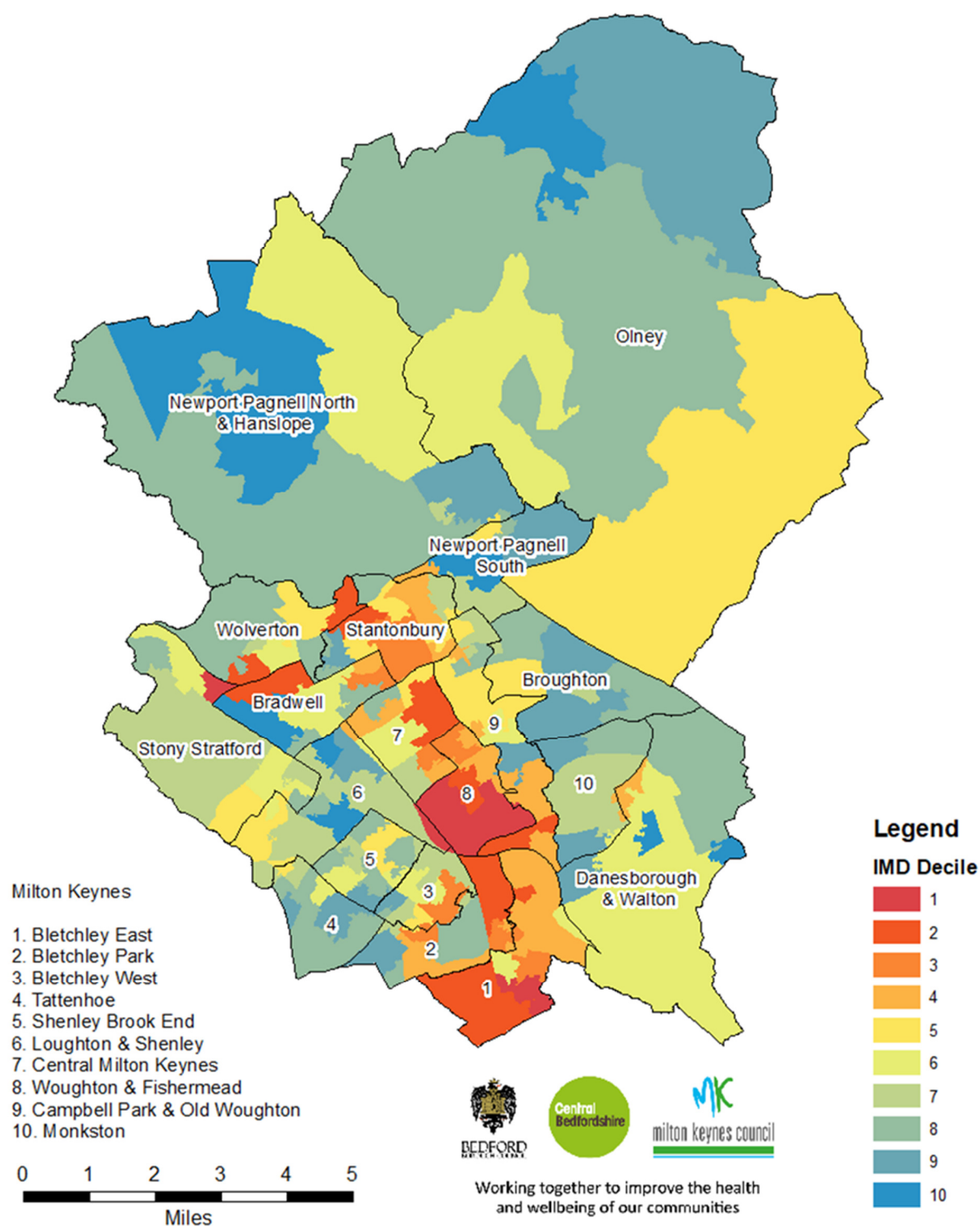


Figure 3.2: Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile by LSOA (2019) in Milton Keynes

- 3.12** The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is updated every three years, with the current data being from 2019⁹. The IMD is the Government’s measure of deprivation in an area. It combines a number of indicators which cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. These small areas are called Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) and these can be combined to create larger borough, region and nation-wide figures. There are 152 LSOAs in Milton Keynes; each of these can be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. Figure 3.2 outlines IMD decile for each LSO within Milton Keynes.
- 3.13** Milton Keynes was ranked 172 out of 317 local authority districts in England in the 2019 figures, with 1 being the most deprived. This compares to the 2010 rank of 211 and a 2015 rank of 181. It should be noted that between the 2015 and 2019 data sets the highest rank changed from 326, to 317, however overall levels of deprivation within the Borough of Milton Keynes are not improving. Authorities ranked closely to Milton Keynes include Mendip (170), Swindon (171) and Wandsworth (173). Neighbouring authorities such as Aylesbury Vale ranked 277, Central Bedfordshire ranked 264 and Bedford ranked 156.
- 3.14** Table 3.3 shows that of the 152 LSOAs in Milton Keynes there are 8 which are within the 10% most deprived in England. This compares to 9 in 2015 and 7 in 2010. Overall there are 36 LSOAs within the most deprived 30%, five more than the 2015 Index. There are 13 LSOAs within the least deprived 10% in England, four less than in 2010, but one more than 2015. Deprivation within the borough has been increasing in part due to higher rents with access to service and affordable rents having been an issue

Table 3.3: Number of MK LSOAs falling within the 30% most deprived and 30% least deprived deciles 2010 – 2019¹⁰.

	LSOAs within the Most Deprived			LSOAs within the Least Deprived		
Percentage	2010	2015	2019	2010	2015	2019
0-10%	7	9	8	17	12	13
10-20%	11	11	19	34	19	20
20-30%	6	11	9	21	27	27
Total	24	31	36	72	58	60

- 3.15** The 2019 IMD statistics also highlight which areas had higher proportions of children aged 0 to 15 living in income-deprived families. The map on the left in Figure 3.3 highlights those areas that are among the 10% most deprived areas for child poverty in the country; within Milton Keynes there are seven of these areas, most of which are located close to the Hospital.

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

3.16 When access to services and affordability of housing are also considered, the true nature of inequality, including health inequality is understood. The '*Access to Housing and Services Domain*', which is mapped on the right side of Figure 3.3, measures the financial accessibility of housing and location of services. 18% of the Milton Keynes Borough is in the most deprived 10% of the country. In the South East region, only Slough has a higher average level of deprivation on this domain. However, Slough does not have the statistical combination with Child Poverty, having no areas in the most deprived 10% on the IDACI.

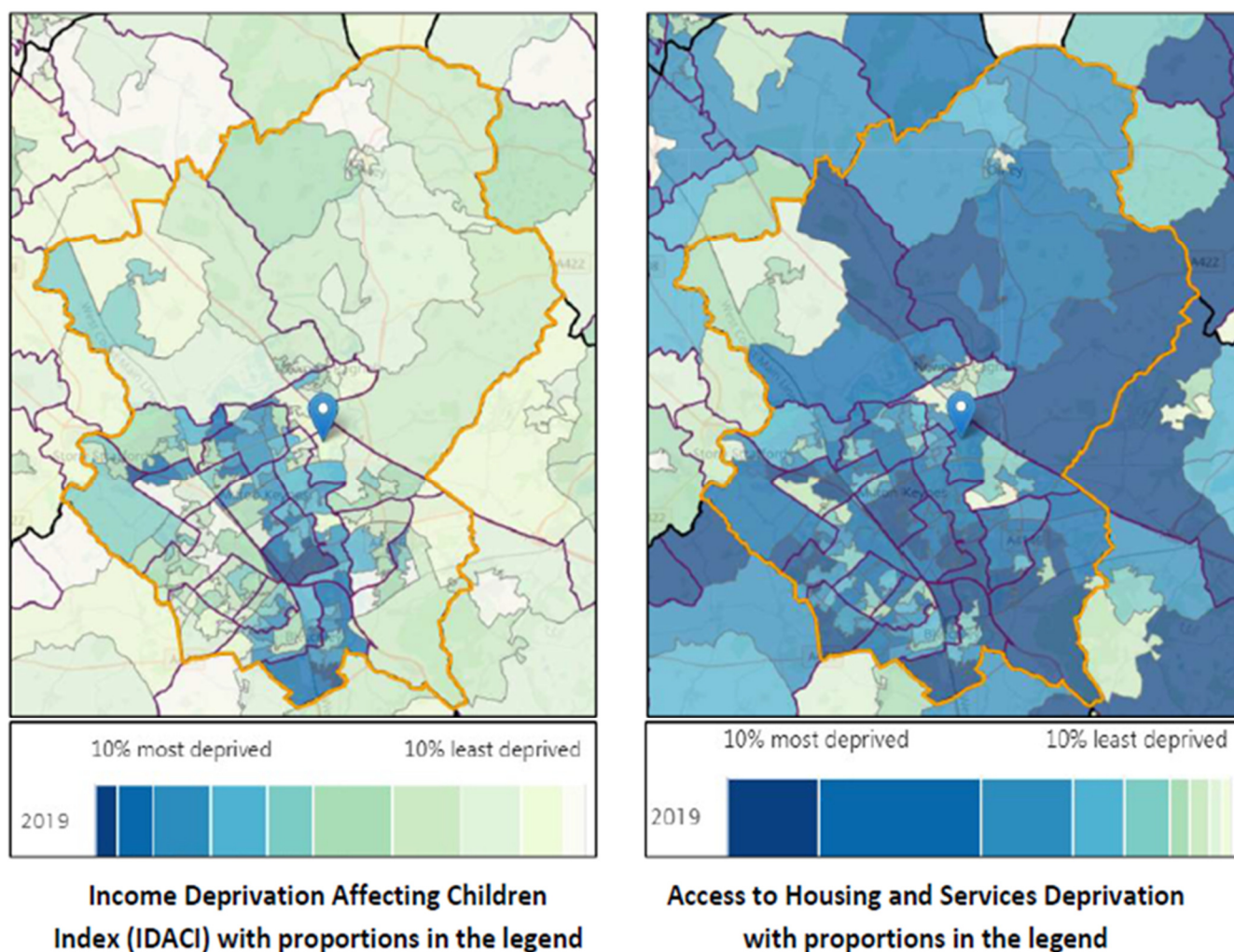


Figure 3.3: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) and Access to Housing and Services Deprivation in MK, 2019¹¹

3.17 Additionally, in Milton Keynes more than 75% of all children in poverty are in households where only one person or less are working (children in non-working household is estimated at 4,900). This creates a 'perfect storm for child poverty', making Milton Keynes almost unique in the mix of these three aspects of poverty.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-indices-of-deprivation>

3.18 Plan:MK Monitoring Framework objective 10 aims to *‘reduce health inequalities and deprivation and improve house quality and access to services for all’*. One of the targets of the objective is to seek *‘improvement in Index of Multiple Deprivation in targeted estates’*. MKC have an ongoing programme of regeneration relating to specific estates and areas of the Borough. Further information on the breakdown of IMD in Milton Keynes including an outline of the 10 least and most deprived LSOAs within the borough and details on progress of the regeneration programme can be found in Chapter 5 (regeneration).

Public Health and Life Expectancy

3.19 Table 3.4 shows the key findings of wider determinants of health in Milton Keynes. It is observed that healthy life expectancy is improving but low in rank, and 2-3 years lower than the best 5%. Furthermore, life expectancy equality at birth means that men and women living in the most deprived areas can expect to live 7.5 years less than those in the least deprived.

3.20 Assets and risk factors of note include:

- 5.8% of deaths in adults over 30 are estimated to be due to poor air quality.
- The numbers of people in fuel poverty is lower than the regional and national; Milton Keynes in 2017 had 7,288 people living in fuel poverty changes, compared to Buckinghamshire with 17,150, Central Bedfordshire with 9,314 and Bedford with 7,495.
- 72 more deaths at all ages are estimated to have occurred during the winter months than in the non-winter months.
- 23% of 4-5-year olds are overweight which is above both the regional and national rate.
- Nearly two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese.
- The number of adults using outdoor space for exercise and health reasons has fallen.
- Two-thirds of the adults surveyed regarded themselves as physically active.

3.21 As the above outlines, there are a number of factors that outline ongoing issues with regards to obesity, both in adults and children within the Borough and also a poor level of those participating in regular active exercise.

3.22 Both of these issues were recognised during the preparation of Plan:MK and as such the plan sought to implement policies that seek, as far as it is possible for the planning system to impact on these matters, to improve this situation. This included setting objectives and targets in relation to the number of people participating in active sport and recreation, collaborating with colleagues in public health on an annual basis to review obesity levels in children, and for the first time, applying a new policy in relation to hot food takeaways and their proximity to schools. The following sub-sections review these areas individually.

KPI Indicator	MK Baseline	Latest data	Trend	Comparison to other similar LA	Best 5%
Healthy life expectancy - Male (years)	64.1	2015-17		No comparator mean/ RAG Rating (61.7-66.9)	68.3
Healthy life expectancy - Female (years)	65.3	2015-17		No comparator mean/ RAG Rating (61.6-67.5)	69.1
Life expectancy inequality at birth (Male) (years)	7.5	2015-17		- (5.2-11.4)	5.1
Life expectancy inequality at birth (Female) (years)	7.4	2015-17		- (3.2-10.2)	3.1
Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (%)	5.8	2017		5.1 (3.8- 6.5)	3.7
Fuel Poverty	7.7	2016		10.3 (7.2- 13.5)	7.7
Excess winter deaths (3 years, all ages) %	23	Aug '14 - Jul '17		22.1 (14.7 - 27.7)	15.1
Utilisation of outdoor space/exercise/health reason (%)	13.5	2015-16		(13.2- 21.4)	24.9
Children with excess weight Year Reception (including obese) (%)	22.8	2017-18		No comparator mean/ RAG Rating (18.8-25.8)	17.7
Adults classified as overweight or obese (%)	64.8	2017-18		63.6 (55.2-67.9)	49.6
Percentage of physically active adults (%)	67.1	2017-18		66.8 (59.6-72.3)	73.8

Table 3.4: Health and Life Expectancy Key Performance Indicators in Milton Keynes¹².

	Significantly better than LA comparators or above national target
	Not compared to LA comparators
	Significantly worse than LA comparators or below national target
	Not compared to LA comparators

¹² <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/wider-determinants/>

Hot Food Takeaways – Policy EH8

- 3.23** Through Plan:MK, MKC introduced Policy EH8 (Hot Food Takeaways) which is designed to manage the food options in proximity to schools and reduce the opportunities for pupils to have access to foods which contribute to high rates of child obesity, so as to form part of an attempt to address the prevalence of overweight and obesity in children within the Borough. The policy therefore seeks to restrict the development of hot food takeaways in close proximity to primary or secondary schools, with applications for hot food takeaways (Class A5) only being permitted if they are located more than 400 metres from the main school entrance (based on the most logical walking distance).
- 3.24** As outlined in the targets for Strategic Objectives 14 and 16 of the Plan:MK monitoring framework, the Development Plan Team will liaise with MKC Public Health and Education colleagues to review, within three years, the impact restricting hot food takeaways from schools has had on children's wellbeing. As this is a newly implemented policy it will take some time before the effects, if any, of introducing it can be recognised. However, the Development Plans Team have sought to review the implementation of the policy in its first year by monitoring its use in assessing relevant applications.
- 3.25** During the monitoring year 2019/20 MKC assessed 11 applications which related to the development of a hot food takeaway, the majority of which related to the change of use of an existing unit. Of these 11 applications only one was for a development which fell within 400 metres of the front gate of a school.
- 3.26** Application 19/03144/FUL at 58 Tanfield Lane, Broughton, was an application for the change of use of a convenience store to a hot food takeaway. The site was located less than 400m walking distance from the Broughton Fields Primary School and so assessed strictly against Policy EH8, the proposal was unacceptable. The application was refused on a number of grounds, but Policy EH8 was not used as a reason for refusal. As the site was located within a local centre, where hot food takeaways (a main town centre use) are supported in principle by policy ER10 of Plan:MK, this application raised a competing issue which required balanced consideration against Policy EH8. This issue will need to be continuously reviewed in relation to the implementation of Policy EH8 and competing policy objectives and, Development Plans officers will be reviewing these applications in more detail to ensure Policy EH8 is being suitably considered and implemented when required.
- 3.27** A further application which merits review was 19/02295/FUL at land at The Corner of Monks Way, Breckland. This application was for the redevelopment of an existing car park to provide a drive-thru Costa café and a drive-thru McDonalds restaurant. In this instance the distance from the main entrance of Stantonbury International School, by the most logical walking route, was around 650m. However, to the rear of the school there is a secondary access which is arguably used as regularly as the main school entrance for pupils accessing the school and, this access point is situated within 300m of the application site which is easily accessible via an underpath.

Due to the wording of policy EH8, the second school entrance could not be taken into account in assessing the proximity to the school and, as such, the proposal accorded with policy EH8. This does however raise a potential issue with how effective Policy EH8 can actually be in achieving its objectives.

- 3.28** These two cases have highlighted that there may be a need to reconsider the way that Policy EH8 is worded in the forthcoming review of Plan:MK, as cases such as these may impact on delivering the objectives of the policy. The Development Plans Team alongside Public Health and Education colleagues will however continue to monitor the Policy's implementation and its effects.

Sport and Physical Activity Participation and Opportunity

- 3.29** One of the targets of Strategic Objective 16 within the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework is to *'achieve a 1% increase, year in year, up to 2031 in the number of adults participating in moderately intensive sport and active recreation'*. Sport England's 'Active Lives Survey'¹³ provides a picture of how adults engage in sport and physical activity, based on a small sample. For Milton Keynes the latest available figures, which are for the 2018/19 period are outlined in Table 3.5 alongside the 2017/18 data and the 2015/16 data, which provides a baseline for the start of the Plan:MK period. The measures are based on the percentage of the population which are 'active' (those reaching the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) guidelines of 150+ minutes of activity per week), 'Fairly Active' (those participating in 30-149 minutes of activity per week), and 'Inactive' (those participating in less than 30 minutes of activity per week).

Table 3.5: Sport and Physical Activity Levels (Adults aged 16+) in Milton Keynes			
	% of Population 'Active'	% of Population 'Fairly Active'	% of Population 'Inactive'
2015/16	62.8	11.4	25.7
2017/18	66.8	12.1	21
2018/19	65.3	13.4	21.3

- 3.30** As Table 3.5 outlines, whilst the percentage of population who are 'inactive' or 'fairly active' has improved, albeit only a slight improvement, between 2017/18 and 2018/19, the percentage of the population who are considered 'active' and thus reaching the CMO guidelines has actually fallen by 1.3% over the same period.
- 3.31** When considered against the baseline data of 2015/16, there has been an increase of 2.5% in those who are 'active' in the three years monitored since the Plan:MK base date, a 2% increase in those who are 'fairly active' and a decrease of 4.4% in those who are 'inactive'. These represent positive improvements over the Plan:MK period and suggest that currently MKC are on course to achieve the target set out in Strategic Objective 16 of Plan:MK.

¹³ <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>

- 3.32** A further target of Strategic Objective 16 is to have ‘100% of children and young people participating in high quality physical education’ by the end of 2031. Sport England’s ‘Active Lives, Children and Young People Survey’¹⁴, which was newly established in 2017/18 and completed across all local schools, summarises the sport and physical activity levels of 5 to 16-year olds and provides data with which to monitor against this target.

Table 3.6: Sport and Physical Activity Levels (Children and Young People in School Years 1-11) in Milton Keynes			
	% of Population ‘Active’	% of Population ‘Fairly Active’	% of Population ‘Less Active’
2017/18	46.2	21.9	32
2018/19	46.9	27.5	25.6

- 3.33** Table 3.6 outlines the data for the academic years 2018/19 and 2017/18; as 2017/18 was the first year the survey was undertaken, this is the best data available to use as a base date for which to monitor against. The measures are based on the percentage of the children and young people population which are ‘Active’ (those reaching the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) guidelines of an average of 60 minutes or more a day), ‘Fairly Active’ (those participating in an average of 30-60 minutes a day), and ‘Less Active’ (those participating in an average of less than 30 minutes per day).
- 3.34** As Table 3.6 outlines, since the first survey results in 2017/18, over the 2018/19 period the active population of children and young people has remained relatively the same. However, positively, the levels of ‘Less Active’ children has reduced by 6.4%, showing more are working towards the recommended levels.

MKC Initiatives and the MK Sport and Active Communities Strategy

- 3.35** In 2014 MKC adopted the MK Sport and Active Communities Strategy which is based on the ethos of partnership and collaboration between many different organisations delivering sport and physical activity in Milton Keynes. The Strategy enables the delivery of sport and leisure services across Milton Keynes and ensures that there is a network of facilities in place to cater for the needs of the current and expected population.
- 3.36** Through developing and implementing programmes, partnerships and opportunities to be physically active, the aims of Plan:MK to reduce the inactive population of Milton Keynes can be worked towards, therefore contributing to the social and individual wellbeing, and mental and physical health of the people of Milton Keynes, and improving the communities in which people live.
- 3.37** It is noted that participation through Sports Development Initiatives and Programmes directly delivered by MKC and local schools has been maintained during 2019/20, with figures as follows:
- School Swimming and Youth programmes – 29,000 visits

¹⁴ <https://www.sportengland.org/news/active-lives-children-and-young-people-survey-academic-year-201819-report-published>

- Adult Activity Programmes (Walking for Health, Ping, Exercise Referral programmes) - 69,000 visits
- Volunteers – 140 volunteers supporting programmes
- Coach Education Courses for Swimming and Health Walks – x 9

3.38 In addition, over 3.8m visits have also been seen across the MKC portfolio of externally managed community and leisure facilities.

3.39 Furthermore, over the 2019/20 financial year period, two major programmes have been won and established in Milton Keynes, including, the year-long city-wide European City of Sport 2020 Award, and UEFA Women’s Euro 2021 tournament, of which 4 games, including a semi-final, will be hosted in MK. Both programmes will provide excellent platforms to develop awareness, partnerships, participation (specifically in areas of high health inequalities in MK), investment and gender equality in sport and physical activity across MK.

Crime Rates

3.40 Strategic Objective 14 within the Monitoring Framework of Plan:MK seeks to ensure that new developments create safe, healthy and sustainable built environments. One data set which can be reviewed and provide some form of assessment of the success of policies in Plan:MK (in particular those in relation to design) is that of crime data within the Borough.

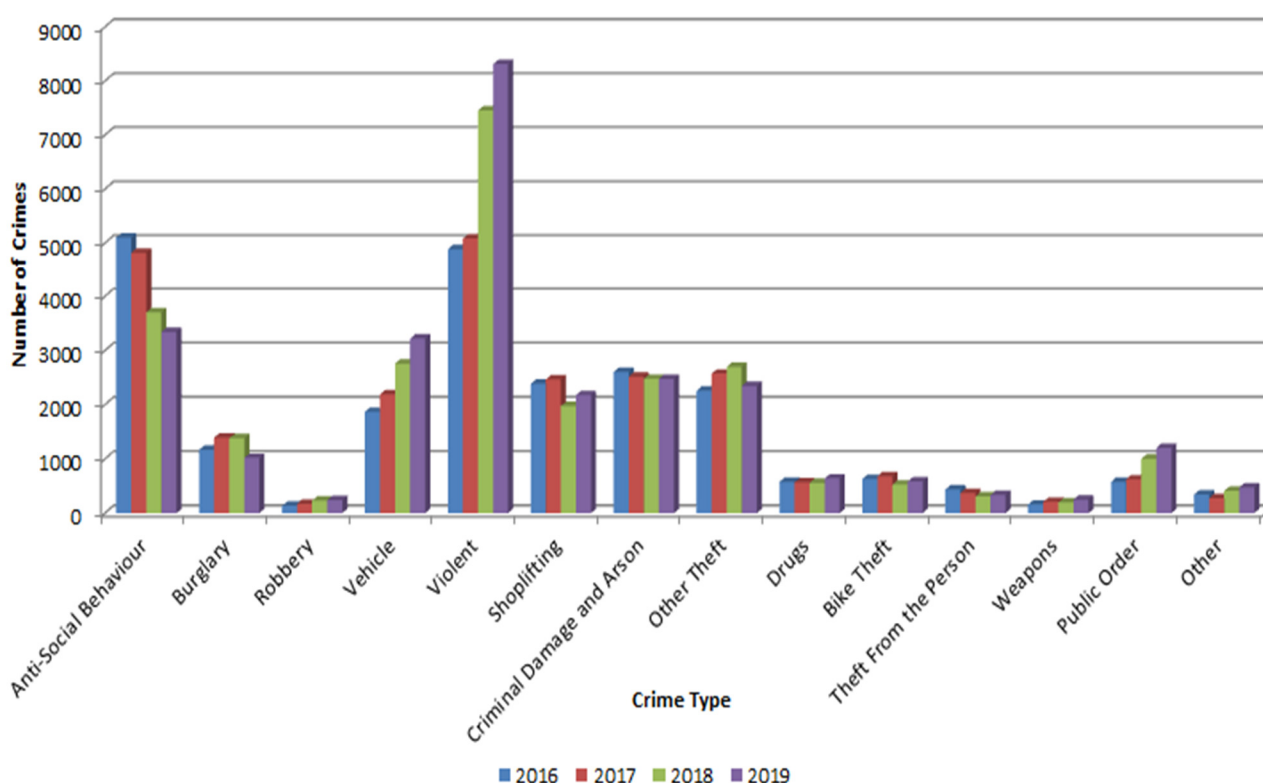


Figure 3.4: Recorded Crimes in Milton Keynes by year 2016 – 2019¹⁵.

¹⁵ <https://ukcrimestats.com/Constituency/65953> <https://ukcrimestats.com/Constituency/66076>

3.41 Figure 3.4 outlines a variety of crime rate data from each year of the Plan:MK period to-date (2016 to 2020). A number of trends can be picked out from the data:

- The total number of crimes between Jan 2016 and Dec 2019 rose from 23,133 to 26,624 per annum.
- Crimes relating to anti-social behaviour are at a four-year low, dropping from 5101 cases in 2016 to 3344 in 2019.
- Burglaries, whilst seeing an increase during the 2016-17 period have also decreased to 1018 reported cases in 2019.
- Increases are being seen in public order offenses, rising from 579 cases in 2016 to 1205 by 2019.
- Increases are being seen in vehicular theft, with cases increasing from 1868 in 2016 to 3220 in 2019.
- Cases involving violent crimes have seen a significant increase rising from 4,885 in 2016 to 8313 in 2019.

3.42 The majority of this data is showing a general increasing trend in the amount of crime within the Borough over the Plan:MK period to-date. Whilst there is not a direct relationship between planning policy and crime, the ability for planning policy to aid a positive response towards reducing crime rates through for example, the form, layout and design of new developments, as well as continued support for local social and community infrastructure, which can encourage greater levels of community cohesion are well documented. With the policies of Plan:MK having only been in place for a year, since its adoption in March 2019, it is difficult to monitor the nature of its impacts on crime rates at this time. Further monitoring during the Plan:MK period is therefore required to understand if the policies are having a positive impact and what more MKC may be able to do through planning and other services to improve against the current situation.

Policy Context

- 6.1** As outlined in its monitoring framework, Plan:MK has a strategic objective (number 2) to deliver a total of 26,500 net new dwellings between 2016 and 2031. Furthermore, the plan sets targets; to deliver, on average 1,767 dwellings per annum; to ensure a five-year supply of deliverable housing land is maintained throughout the plan period; and, to meet the Government's three-year rolling housing delivery targets, as required under the Housing Delivery Test (HDT). Policies DS1 (Settlement Hierarchy) and DS2 (Housing Strategy) of Plan:MK provide the policy context and outline the development strategy to deliver against these objectives and targets.
- 6.2** Furthermore, in relation to housing, as outlined under Strategic Objective 11 of Plan:MK, MKC seeks to plan for and facilitate the delivery of a mix of housing to meet the needs of all sections of the community. This includes targets around the delivery of affordable housing, the delivery of a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes and the delivery of housing for those who require specialist housing provision, for which Policies HN1 through to HN10 of Plan:MK seek to facilitate the delivery of. The targets for delivering Strategic Objective 11 also includes the provision of sufficient pitches to meet the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities and Travelling Showpeople within the Borough, for which policies HN11 and HN12 seek to enable.
- 6.3** MKC has a duty to monitor and report on all developments of new housing in the Borough, collating information on the number of starts and completions on sites and the total number of homes under construction. Affordable housing provision is also monitored along with house types (e.g. number of bedrooms) and tenure split; this is particularly important as, working jointly with the housing team at MKC, the planning team strive to assist in supplying housing which meets the needs of the Milton Keynes community.
- 6.4** These figures are all monitored quarterly and reported on MKC's website¹⁶, and through analysing this data we can assess the performance of Plan:MK's housing related policies in achieving the objectives and targets of the plan.
- 6.5** The following chapter will outline the housing statistics for the financial year 2019-2020 and will report on progress towards meeting national requirements and performance against Plan:MK policies.

Overall Housing Delivery and Performance 2019/20

- 6.6** This section provides a more in-depth look at the MKC's recent performance in terms of delivery against the housing requirements of Plan:MK and reviews trends over the past decade.

¹⁶ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/statistics/housing-statistics>

2019/20 Housing Delivery Monitoring

- 6.7** A summary of the accumulated data relating to C3 use residential dwellings, for 2019/20 is presented below in Table 4.1. This covers both market sale and affordable dwellings combined.

Table 4.1: 2019/20 Annual Monitoring Status.	
Total No. of Completions	2,090
Total No. of Losses	14
Total Net Completions	2,076
Total No. of Starts	2,603
Completions achieved against annual requirement (1,766 dwellings)	117.6%
Total No. of Units Under Construction as at 1 April 2020	2,279

- 6.8** As shown in Table 4.1, MKC delivered in excess of its annual housing requirement of 1,766 dwellings, as set out in Plan:MK, by approximately 17.6%, thus meeting one of its targets under Strategic Objective 2. This is the second year running that MKC has now met and exceeded its housing requirement, something that was not achieved at all during the Core Strategy (2013) period. Furthermore, this is the first time since 2007/08 that MKC has exceeded 2,000 completions in one year.
- 6.9** In delivering significantly above the annualised housing requirement in 2019/20, this has also contributed to delivering against the overall shortfall of completions for the plan period to-date which existed at the 1 April 2019. The shortfall which stood at 772 dwellings at 1 April 2019 has now reduced to 463 dwellings as of 1 April 2020. MKC has thus made positive progress towards delivering its minimum requirement of 26,500 over the plan period; another target of Strategic Objective 2.
- 6.10** As of 1 April 2020, there were also 2,279 units currently under construction; this is the highest number of units under construction at the start of a monitoring year since 1 April 2008 and also provides enough units to deliver in excess of 100% of the completions to meet the housing requirement for 2020/21. Furthermore, 2019/20 was only the second year (2007/08 being the only other year) since the closure of the Development Corporation whereby the number of units under construction remained above 2000 for every quarter monitored. This was not even achieved in the later years of the Development Corporation.
- 6.11** Finally, the number of units started in 2019/20 (2,603) was the highest number of starts recorded in any year on MKC's current records, which date back to 1989, before the closure of the Development Corporation in 1992. It is also the first time since 2006/07 where annual starts of 2,000 units or more were recorded in consecutive years.

Comparison with Longer-Term Trends

6.12 Table 4.2 outlines the total completions, starts and units under construction for the Borough since 2010/11. Rows 1, 3 and 4 demonstrate a clearly improving delivery position since the start of the Plan:MK period (2016/17). The number of units under construction for each Plan:MK year is higher than in every preceding year since 2010/11; the number of actual starts is higher in three of the Plan:MK years (2016/17, 2018/19 and 2019/20) than in every preceding year since 2010/11; and actual completions have consistently increased for every year of Plan:MK.

Table 4.2: Longer Term Housing Delivery and Comparison between Actual Completions and Units under Construction from the Preceding year										
	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
1) Actual Completions	1306	1586	1315	1001	1440	1202	1247	1528	1781	2,090
2) % Difference in Annual Completions and units U/C in preceding year		20.6%	24.3%	2.5%	59.2%	16.2%	0.8%	-7.3%	11.5%	15.9%
3) Under Construction	1315	1058	977	901	1034	1237	1648	1597	1804	2,279
4) Actual Starts	1437	1331	1234	928	1572	1405	1655	1475	2000	2,603

6.13 Row 2 of Table 4.2 outlines the relationship between actual completions (row 1) and the number of units under construction (row 3) at the end of the preceding year, illustrating the difference between the two as a percentage. As row 2 demonstrates, the trend is for actual completions in a year to exceed the number of units under construction at the end of the preceding year. This is the case for all bar one year, 2017/18.

6.14 Taking this trend into account, with the number of units under construction at the end of 2019/20 being 2,279, it would be expected that completions in 2020/21 would therefore exceed this number. The average of the percentage difference between completions and the number of units under construction at the end of the preceding year between 2010/11 and 2019/20 is 16%. If this were applied to the number of units currently under construction as of 1 April 2020, this would provide a projected completions figure for 2020/21 of 2,643, a further improvement in annual delivery. These expectations may however have to be tempered by the potential impacts related to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic at the start of the 2020/21 monitoring year.

6.15 Since the start of the Plan:MK period (2016/17) it is clear that the number of completions, starts and units under construction is far more positive than in previous years of the decade and is consistently increasing, with 2019/20 showing the highest figures across all three measures for at least the last decade and the number of units currently under construction creating a position whereby further improvements in completions would have been expected in 2020/21.

- 6.16** This trend is further evidenced when the number of units with detailed planning permission at the start of each year is analysed. As Table 4.3 shows, the Plan:MK years (emphasised in bold) show consistent year upon year increases, with 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 each setting new high figures for the largest number of units with detailed planning permission within MKC's current records.

Table 4.3: Number of Units with Detailed Planning Permission at the start of each Monitoring Year	
Year	Number of units with REM permission at the start of year
2009/10	6057
2010/11	5181
2011/12	3941
2012/13	3321
2013/14	2928
2014/15	2677
2015/16	3017
2016/17	3707
2017/18	4789
2018/19	6634
2019/20	7347
2020/21	8926

- 6.17** The number of units with detailed planning permission is therefore being retained at a high level despite the increasing number of completions recorded; this suggests that the increase in development activity since the adoption of Plan:MK is not just building to a short-lived peak, but rather a position of higher delivery which can be maintained over a longer period of time. This provides further confidence that sufficient land supply is available and continuing to progress through the planning system for delivery rates to continue increasing and be maintained at a higher rate in the forthcoming years.
- 6.18** If a review of a longer series of data is also carried out, further trends can also be observed that outline the positive trajectory since the adoption of Plan:MK and suggest continued higher rates of delivery are achievable. Figure 4.1 outlines annual starts and completions from 1989/90 through to 2019/20.
- 6.19** The first observation to be made is that rapid change in the amount of development activity has occurred previously in Milton Keynes, with the period from 2003/04 to 2006/07 showing a dramatic increase in activity over a short period of time, which subsequently resulted in the highest completions recorded to-date this century. A slightly smaller peak can also be observed in the early 1990's as well. This demonstrates that in principle a rapid increase in development activity and subsequent completions is possible and has been seen in Milton Keynes in recent times. Furthermore, the current trend since the start of Plan:MK correlates with that seen in the most recent peak in development, albeit the rise is slightly more gradual at this time.

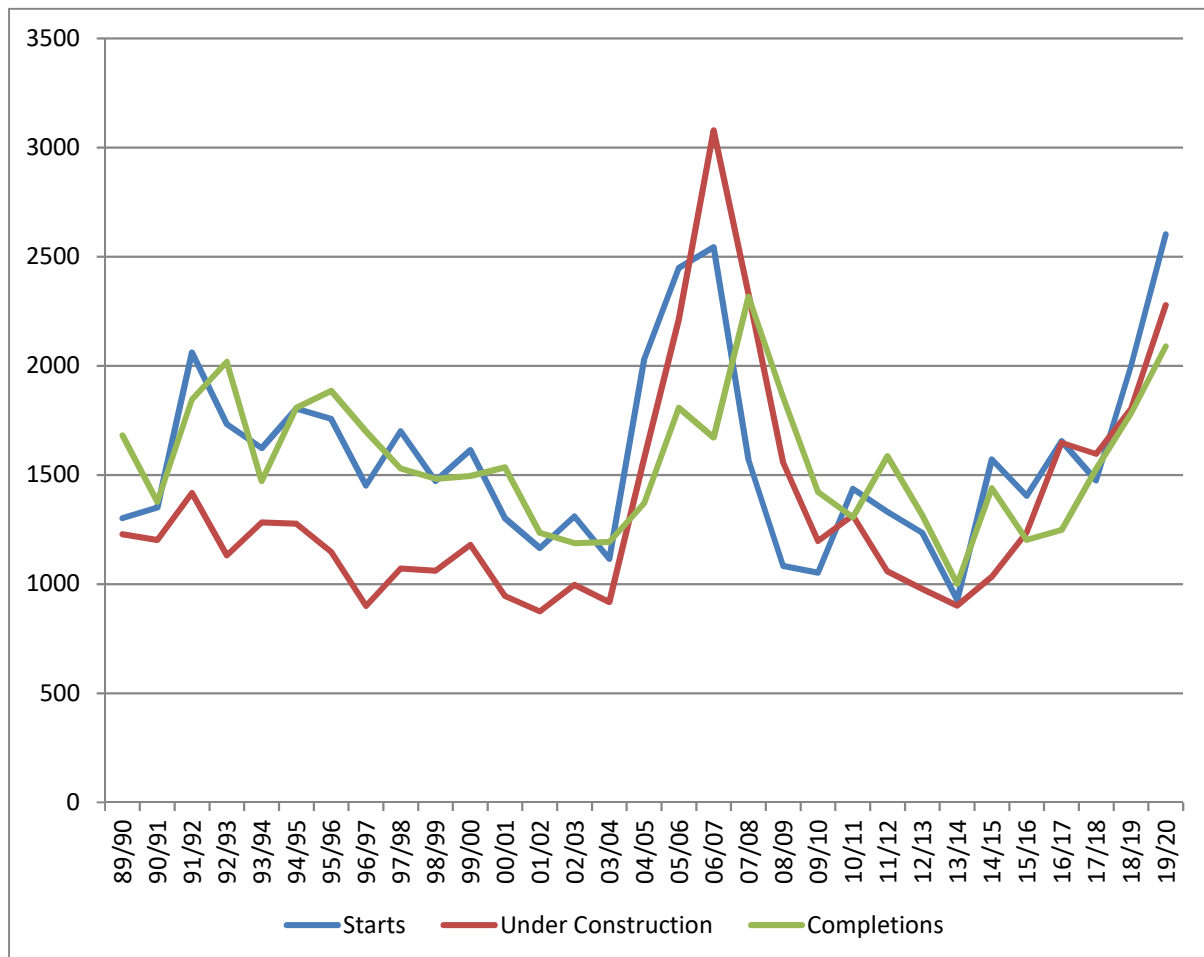


Figure 4.1: Recorded Starts and Completions: 1989/90 – 2019/20.

- 6.20** The second observation is that the data for completions, starts and units under construction for the past 3-5 years are showing a steady increase, since a low in 2013/14. Whilst not demonstrating quite the same sudden increase observed in the early 2000's, the data is clearly showing progress towards another peak in delivery.
- 6.21** Finally, it is possible that the previous peak in development activity could have been partially the result of a large development of apartment blocks, which would explain the sudden nature of the increase in starts and subsequent lag time to the peak in completions a couple of years later. The nature of the current increasing trend shows however a more continuous rise over time, rather than a sudden burst in activity, with completions now following a similar rate of increase to starts and units under construction, rather than there being an observable lag-time. This would suggest that this increase is not reliant on one large development, but a steadily improving supply of land which is now being delivered. This is consistent with the current land supply which demonstrates good rates of delivery from four strategic urban extensions (Western Expansion Areas 10 & 11, Eastern Expansion Area and the Strategic Land Allocation), which is now being supplemented by other small to medium sized sites. This also suggests a far more sustainable increase in delivery than that seen in previous years, which will provide increased delivery over a longer period of time.

- 6.22** Furthermore, with a number of large apartment schemes also now projected to be delivered in the forthcoming years, particularly within Central Milton Keynes, it may well be that the rapid increases in activity seen in the period 2003/04 to 2008/09 could be replicated again, albeit occurring during a period of time when a higher rate of delivery is already occurring.
- 6.23** The above outlines a clearly improving housing delivery position within Milton Keynes which has been increasing year by year since 2013/14 and particularly since the start of the Plan:MK period.
- 6.24** Development activity in recent years is showing the highest rates of completions, starts, units under construction and units with detailed planning permission for over a decade, and current monitoring data at the end of 2019/20 suggests this can continue to increase. Furthermore, when comparing current data against longer-term trends alongside available site-specific evidence and the range of housing supply currently delivering, it would suggest a much more sustainable increase in development activity which will result in a higher level of delivery over a longer period of time.
- 6.25** During the early months of 2020/21 the Country has been severely hit by the onset of the Covid-19 global pandemic. MKC recognises that Covid-19 may have an impact upon the wider housing market and housing delivery, albeit at this stage, the impacts are not clear. The above analysis has all been undertaken based on a situation without Covid-19 and as such there is potential that some of the projections and discussion around future delivery may be affected. This should not however take away from the positive delivery position MKC is in as of the end of 2019/20, creating an environment whereby higher levels of delivery were highly likely to continue. Whilst this may be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, this was unforeseen and is something that MKC, nor the development industry, can have any control over and, as of the end of 2019/20, monitoring data shows that the MKC is successfully working towards meeting Strategic Objective 2 of Plan:MK and as such no immediate actions or contingencies are required.

Housing Delivery Test (HDT)

- 6.26** The HDT is a Government annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of the relevant plan-making authorities. The HDT is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant strategic policies for the area, over a rolling three-year period.
- 6.27** The HDT results are published annually in November by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the NPPF outlines a range of planning policy consequences for authorities who do not achieve set percentage results each year.
- 6.28** The first HDT results, for the year 2018, were published in February 2019 and MKC achieved a result of 85%. As a result, MKC were required to prepare a HDT Action Plan.
- 6.29** During 2018 MKC became a pilot authority, working with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) and MHCLG to develop the approach to data analysis and Action Plans. In October 2018 MKC

published its Housing Delivery Action Plan, ahead of its formal HDT result, and became one of the first authorities in the Country to produce such an action plan.

- 6.30** In February 2020, MHCLG published the 2019 results of the HDT; MKC achieved a result of 93.8%. The increase in result provides further evidence of MKCs improving housing delivery position as outlined previously in this chapter, but as the result remained below 95%, MKC is required to review its HDT Action Plan and publish an updated version. Work on the review is ongoing and will be published in due course.
- 6.31** As the HDT uses data from the previous year, and MKC has already monitored its housing completions for 2019/20, it is possible to carry out a HDT assessment, based on the requirements set out in the 'HDT measurement rule book' (July 2018) so as to project the result for the year 2020. This is set out in Table 4.4 and outlines a continued improvement from the 2019 result with MKC achieving 106.5%. This result would not bring with it any policy consequences and MKC would no longer be required to produce a HDT action plan. This would result in MKC meeting another of its targets for delivering Strategic Objective 2 of Plan:MK.

Table 4.4 Project Housing Delivery Test Measurement Results 2020.			
Year	Homes Required	Homes Delivered	HDT 2020 Measurement
2017/18	1,482	1,485	
2018/19	1,767	1,781	
2019/20	1,767	2,076	
Total	5,016	5,342	106.5%

Housing Tenure and Mix

- 6.32** This section looks at the split of all housing delivered during 2019/20 by housing tenure, both in terms of housing for developer sale/private ownership and affordable housing provision, and also in terms of mix of housing type provided, so as to assess how policies HN1 (Housing Mix and Density) and HN2 (Affordable Housing) are performing in terms of meeting the requirements and targets set out in Strategic Objective 11.

Developer Sale/Market Housing

Table 4.5: Number of completions for dwellings marketed as developer sale for financial year 2019-2020.									
Quarter	1BF	2BF	3BF	1BH	2BH	3BH	4BH	5+BH	Total Completions
1	66	87	3	1	35	109	169	44	514
2	21	20	0	0	0	49	64	11	165
3	68	103	3	6	40	175	210	30	635
4	70	91	0	2	8	78	103	17	369
Totals	225	301	6	9	83	411	546	102	1683

- 6.33** Table 4.5 shows the housing completions for dwellings built for developer sale, broken down by quarter and house type. 2019/20 was a very good year for housing completions for developer sale, finishing on a high with 1683 total completions by the end of Quarter 4.
- 6.34** In terms of housing mix, of the dwellings built for developer sale, 57% of completions were for three and four bed homes (compared with 82% as recommended in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)), 31% of completions were for one and two bed flats (compared with 2% as recommended in the SHMA), 5% two bed houses (compared with 11% as recommended in the SHMA) and the remaining 6% were five bed houses and above (which is in line with the SHMA recommendation).
- 6.35** As outlined, there are some discrepancies in terms of delivering against the mix of market housing as recommended by the SHMA, which forms the most recent needs assessment for the Borough, with particular focus on the amount of provision of flats. There are however a number of factors that need to be considered in reviewing this data. Firstly, the SHMA provides only a snapshot in time and as such the needs outlined in it may not be the same as are required now, this is why Policy HN1 does not prescribe the mix outlined in the SHMA, but rather outlines a number of criteria which must be considered when assessing the proposed housing mix of residential development proposals (including latest evidence of needs, the nature of the proposal and the location and existing character of the area).
- 6.36** Secondly, it must be noted that the majority of housing currently being delivered gained permission prior to the adoption of Plan:MK and as such the applications were assessed and approved against different policies. In light of this, analysis of completions alone, at this stage does not provide a full picture of how Plan:MK's policies are performing in this regard. A review of other data sources, such as applications permitted since Plan:MK's adoption (outlined later in this section) will assist in our assessment, but even this can be skewed, due to a number of these being REM approvals for which housing mix was approved under the Outline permission, which was assessed against policies pre-dating Plan:MK.
- 6.37** Therefore, to truly be able to assess the performance of Plan:MK's policies in terms of delivering the right mix of housing to meet the needs of the Borough, monitoring over a longer period of time will be required and continuous updates on the evidence for housing need and market demand will be required. This also applies in terms of the mix and tenure of affordable housing provision, as is covered in the following sections.

Affordable Housing

- 6.38** In total, there were 407 housing completions in 2019-2020 which fall under the NPPF definition of being affordable. This accounts for 19.5% of the total housing completions within the Borough for the year. Plan:MK sets a target of 8,200 affordable dwellings to be delivered over the plan period and whilst there is not an annualised requirement for MKC to deliver, this works out at approximately 547 affordable units for each year of the plan period, or 31% of the total annual

housing requirement of 1,767 units. This is reflected in Plan:MK policy HN2 which requires all developments over 11 dwellings to deliver 31% affordable housing.

- 6.39** For 2019/20 the number of affordable dwellings delivered is therefore below both the total number of affordable units expected (if the requirement were annualised) and below 31% of the total number of units delivered¹⁷. Table 4.6 outlines the number of affordable units delivered annually since the base date of Plan:MK (1 April 2016) and, whilst this outlines that the number of units delivered in any one year has not achieved the amount that would be expected (if the requirement were annualised), the annual total of affordable provision has risen for every year of Plan:MK. With a further 460 affordable units also currently under construction as of 1 April 2020, this bodes well for a further increase in provision in 2020/21.

Table 4.6: Affordable Housing Provision 2016-2020		
Year	No. of Affordable Units delivered	No. affordable units as a % of Total Housing Completions
2016/17	251	20.1%
2017/18	363	23.7%
2018/19	387	21.7%
2019/20	407	19.5%

- 6.40** MKC recognised the underperformance in terms of provision of affordable dwellings and has put in place a number of proactive measures to try and increase the supply. Plan:MK allocates enough land to deliver well in excess of its total housing requirement; a key reason for doing this was to ensure that there would be sufficient delivery during the Plan:MK period to deliver the full 8,200 affordable units required. With a large percentage of sites allocated through Plan:MK still to go through the planning process and be delivered, this should assist in increasing the number of affordable units delivered as we progress through the Plan:MK period.
- 6.41** Furthermore, MKC have committed to a programme of affordable housing delivery on Council owned sites, with an initial target of delivering an extra 500 affordable units by 2022 and further long-term targets being set, this will also be assisted by the ongoing regeneration proposals of the Lakes Estate, Fullers Slade and any future estate proposals which are progressed. Milton Keynes Development Partnership are also committed to delivering an increased 36% of affordable housing on all of their sites, again with the aim of increasing delivery of affordable housing during the Plan:MK period.
- 6.42** Therefore, whilst the total number of affordable units delivered to-date in the first four years of Plan:MK is below that expected to enable delivery of the total 8,200 required units, there are signs that delivery of affordable units is improving and actions are in place to try and encourage further delivery in the forthcoming years. It is however essential that future monitoring reports continue

¹⁷ Please note that the 31% affordable requirement is for individual developments of 11 dwellings and over, this means that not all developments are subject to policy HN2 and therefore the number of affordable dwellings completed in a year as a percentage of the total units delivered is likely to be less than 31%. Furthermore, other developments, such as those that fall under current permitted development rights for change of use from office to residential use are also not required to provide affordable housing.

to assess annual completions of affordable dwellings and that delivery continues to improve if Plan:MK is to deliver against its affordable housing targets as set out in Strategic Objective 11.

- 6.43** In terms of the mix of affordable housing delivered, both by tenure and dwelling size, Figure 4.2 shows the breakdown of affordable units completed for the 2019/20 monitoring year. With regards to tenure, 50% of dwellings delivered were shared ownership properties, 27% affordable rent and 13% social rent; there are also 39 plots that have an unknown sub-tenure, this is because the developer has not given the sub-tenure of the property at the point of monitoring.

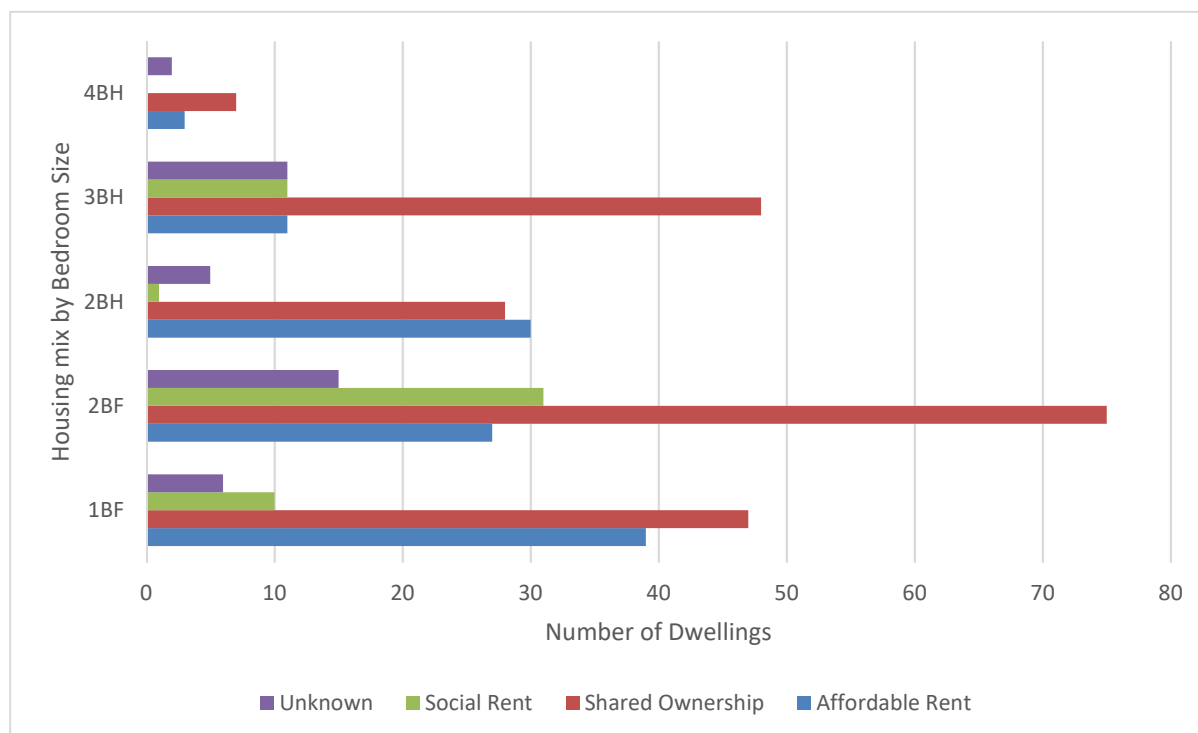


Figure 4.2: Affordable Housing Completions by Bedroom Size 2019/20

- 6.44** With regards to mix, of the 407 completed dwellings, 61% were flats (compared with 19% as recommended by the SHMA), 15.7% were two bed houses (compared with 33% as recommended by the SHMA), 20% were three bed houses (compared with 38% as recommended by the SHMA) and 3% were four bed houses (compared with 9% as recommended by the SHMA).
- 6.45** Whilst this outlines that, similarly to market housing, the mix of units delivered is not in line with the recommended mix outlined in the SHMA, particularly in relation to the proportion of flats being delivered, the same factors, as discussed in paragraphs 4.35 and 4.36 must be taken into account.
- 6.46** This is particularly the case with regards to the fact that all the units that were delivered in 2019/20 were permitted prior to the adoption of Plan:MK and as such were not guided by the policies outlined within it. As Table 4.7 outlines, the mix of affordable units permitted in 2019/20, since the adoption of Plan:MK in March 2019, shows an improvement towards delivering the mix recommended by the SHMA with increases in the number of affordable two, three and four bed houses and a reduction in the number of flats; albeit flats still remain at a high percentage. This is a positive step, especially considering MKC is still in a period of overlap between plans and as such,

reserved matters applications approved during 2019/20, against outline permissions granted before March 2019, will already have housing mix fixed against previous policies/assessments of need and as such will still cause some skew.

6.47 Furthermore, it is important to again note that the mix outlined in the SHMA is not prescriptive, it instead forms part of the evidence which should be used to assess the housing mix of a proposed scheme. It should also be noted that the recommended mix outlined in the SHMA covers all dwellings to be delivered within the plan period and, due to the nature of different schemes being permitted and delivered at different times during the plan period, it is impossible for the mix of units being permitted or delivered in each year to always resemble a mix that is recommended for the entire plan period.

6.48 Joint work between the Development Plans Team and the Housing Team is ongoing to improve our knowledge and understanding of the existing mix of housing and current needs for affordable housing across the Borough, and also to ensure a more collaborative approach in delivering the right amount and type of affordable housing to meet the current needs. The impact of this work will be monitored and reviewed through future monitoring reports to ensure that housing being delivered reflects, wherever possible, the changing housing needs of the Borough.

Table 4.7: Number of affordable plots permitted by sub-tenure in 2019-2020.¹⁸

	1 Bed Flat	2 Bed Flat	3 Bed Flat	1 Bed House	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	Total	Total %	% of Total Applications (4247)
Shared Ownership	26	64	0	0	55	77	8	230	27	5.5
Affordable Rent	108	153	1	4	113	78	24	481	56.5	11.3
Social Rent	7	16	0	0	9	1	12	45	5.2	1
Unknown	20	56	0	0	0	14	6	96	11.3	2
TOTAL	161	289	1	4	177	170	50	852	100	19.8

6.49 There are encouraging signs that policy HN2 is having a positive impact on the number of affordable houses coming onto the market and being made available to housing associations and MKC. However, as Table 4.7 outlines, there is still work to be done to ensure that the total amount of affordable housing provision is increased so as to deliver the full 8,200 units required over the plan period. Additionally, more also needs to be done to secure the right tenure and mix of affordable housing to meet the current needs of the Borough, this is particularly the case with regards to units being provided for social and affordable rent. As outlined above, this is an area that MKC is committed to working on and future monitoring reports will enable us to review the impact of implementing the policies within Plan:MK and the further work MKC's housing and planning teams are undertaking.

¹⁸ There are a number of unknown tenures; this is down to a lack of information from developers at the time of application. A collaboration between the housing team and monitoring team for planning is currently implementing means to improve information gathering and recording of the data for affordable housing, this will eliminate the unknown tenures once put in place.

Overall Housing Mix

6.50 Compliance with policy HN1 requires a good mix of all size of dwelling, and that developers must avoid building too many of the same type in the same development. Figure 4.3 shows the total housing mix for the year 2019/20 across all tenures. There were 693 flats built compared with 1282 Houses this means that for every flat built, two houses were completed. 32.5% of completions were four or more bed houses which is equal to the number of one, two and three bed houses complete.

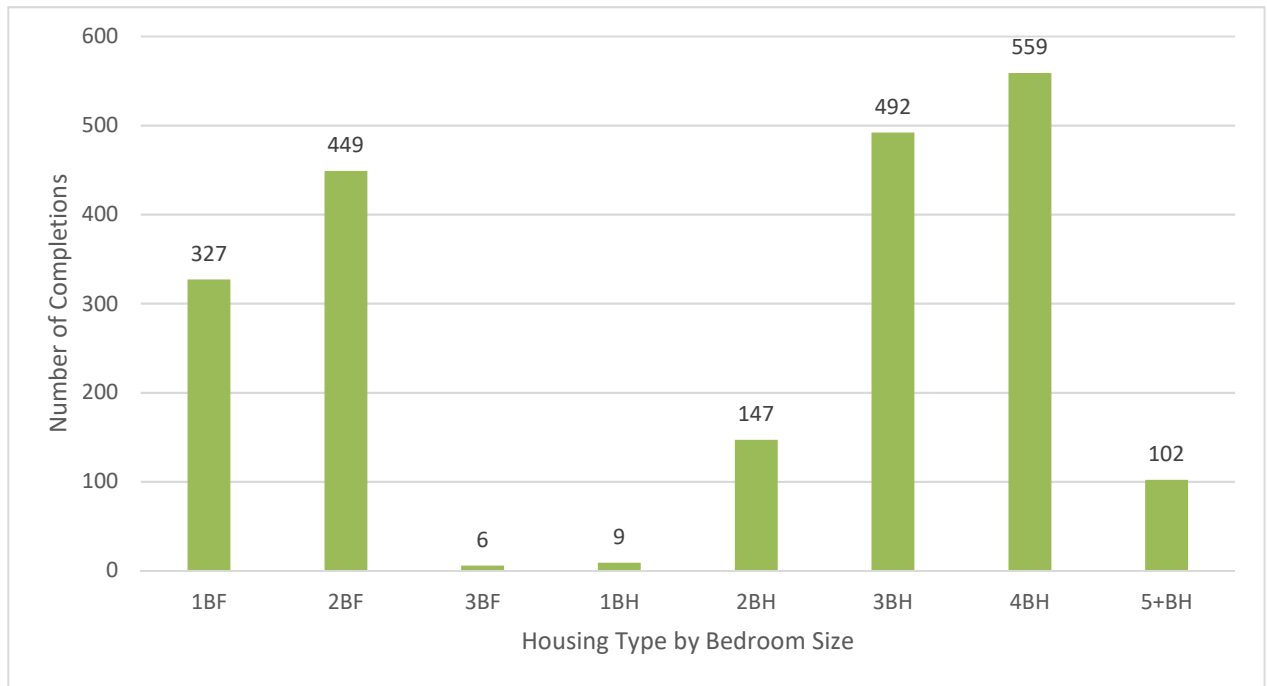


Figure 4.3: The Number of Completions by Bedroom Size 2019/20

6.51 Figure 4.4 compares housing types completed from April 2017 up to March 2020. 2019 saw the most total completions in all types except for houses with five or more bedrooms, which has slightly declined. 32% of properties built were houses with four or more bedrooms and 31% of completions were one, two and three bed houses. This shows an improvement in the overall housing mix with regards to smaller houses due to the increase in totals in 2019/20. There is a slight increase in the number of flats that were completed but this is minimal.

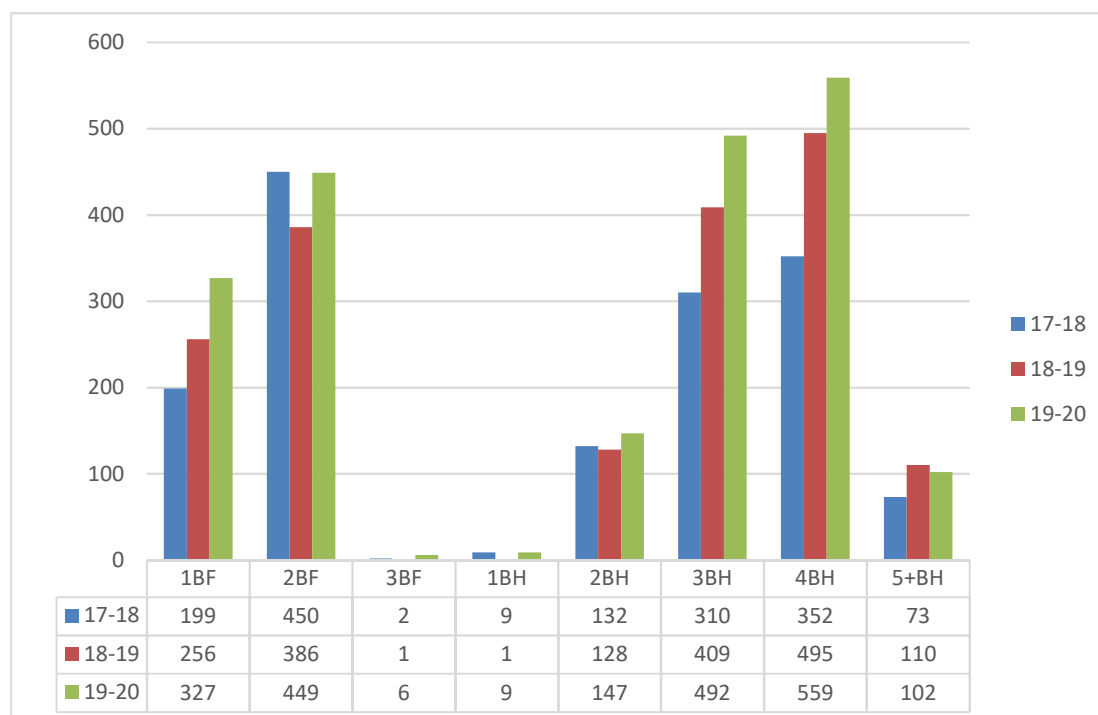


Figure 4.4: Comparison of Housing Mix by Bedroom Size for years 2017/18 – 2019/20

6.52 There has been some concern about the slight shift to building housing of four or more bedrooms. Since the adoption of Plan:MK MKC has monitored permitted developments to see if Policy HN1 is being adhered to. Table 4.8 shows the total housing mix for applications permitted since 1st April 2019, there is a marked shift from the larger dwellings of 4 or more beds (24%) to three bed and smaller (31.5%). This suggests that policy HN1 is working well and that officers are using the policy to assess applications. Given Plan:MK has only been adopted for one year though, this will need to be kept under review.

Table 4.8: Housing Mix breakdown of applications permitted since the adoption of Plan:MK on 20 March 2019¹⁹.

Quarter	1BF	2BF	3+BF	1BH	2BH	3BH	4BH	5+BH	Totals
1	16	51	0	2	17	119	44	10	259
2	689	451	8	1	65	237	250	42	1743
3	111	197	7	28	184	426	395	26	1374
4	45	80	0	4	69	163	201	18	580
Unknown									206
Totals	861	779	15	35	335	945	890	96	4162

6.53 A comparison can also be made between the types of houses built. Figure 4.5 shows the comparison between the number of detached, semi-detached, terrace and flats that have been built between April 2018 and March 2020. There is very little difference between the 2018/19 and 2019/20 data. There are more flats being built and less terrace properties, but the shift is minimal. This would suggest that a good mix of house types are being delivered.

¹⁹ Note: The unknown tenure is for an outline application where no housing mix data is available. Figures for developer sale and affordable housing have been combined.

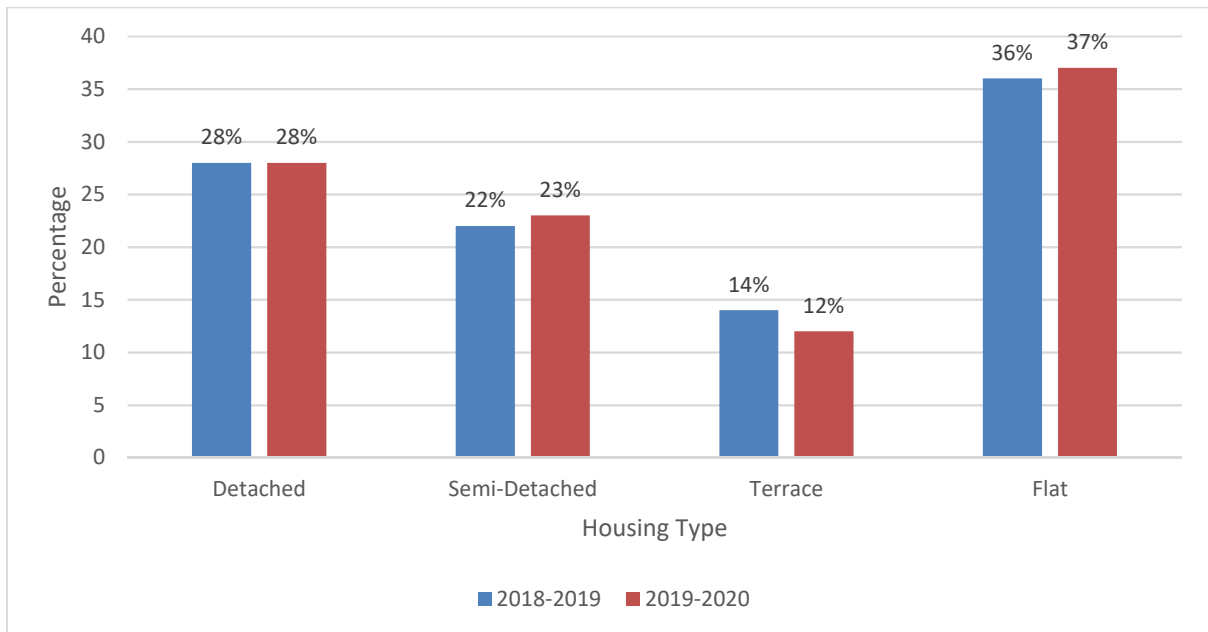


Figure 4.5: Comparison of Housing Types by Percentage for years 2018/19 – 2019/20

- 6.54** Plan:MK, through policies HN3 and HN4, also seeks to deliver dwellings which meet the needs of those who require supported and specialist housing and also to ensure new dwellings meet standards in relation to amenity, accessibility and adaptability. For example, as a minimum all housing is required to meet Nationally Described Space Standards and further targets are set for certain percentages of new homes to meet Parts M4(2) and M4(3) of Building Regulations.
- 6.55** Since the adoption of Plan:MK, submitted planning applications are starting to give more detail in relation to these elements of new developments. The monitoring team, in conjunction with the Housing Team, are putting in place new protocols which will require developers to submit this data on a plot by plot basis, enabling officers to easily review applications and also record and monitor delivery of these two policies. Future monitoring reports will therefore incorporate more information with regards to compliance against policies HN3 and HN4 and the targets set out within Strategic Objective 11 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework.

Brownfield vs. Greenfield Completions

- 6.56** All applications for development are either a brownfield site or a greenfield site depending on the condition of the area for development. A site is classed as brownfield if there has been previous development, and greenfield if the application is for the first development of the site. The NPPF seeks to promote the use of brownfield land by encouraging development strategies to make as much use of previously developed land as possible and for planning policies and decisions to give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land. MKC is also required to maintain a brownfield register which provides up-to-date and consistent information on sites that they consider to be appropriate for residential development.
- 6.57** Due to the nature of Milton Keynes' growth as a New Town the large majority of its development has been, and is, focused on greenfield land and, to-date there has been limited opportunities for the development of brownfield sites aside from redevelopment sites contained within the existing

older towns that form part of the Borough of Milton Keynes, such as Newport Pagnell, Bletchley and Wolverton.

6.58 As such, Plan:MK does not set any targets or objectives which relate to brownfield development, however in line with national policy, MKC supports the redevelopment of brownfield land and indeed a number of sites within the current housing supply are brownfield. Furthermore, with the New Town elements of Milton Keynes now reaching a more mature age, it is likely that in the future opportunities for redevelopment of brownfield sites will become more prevalent, indeed this is already being seen more often on sites within Central Milton Keynes (for example the 119 units delivered on brownfield sites in quarter 4 of 2019/20 (as outlined in Figure 4.6) were all from the development of a new apartment block on a previously developed employment site located within Central Milton Keynes).

6.59 Figure 4.6 compares the completions of both greenfield and brownfield sites in 2019. 82% of completions are for greenfield sites, this is due to the number of new estates that are under construction now. Brooklands, Whitehouse, Fairfields and Newton Leys were all designated greenfield sites and have now been joined by Eagle Farm, Glebe Farm and Eaton Leys. These are sites that are producing thousands of houses over their construction lifetime and are a big contributor to housing figures for Milton Keynes. There are also several large rural sites that are classified as greenfield, these are situated in Olney, Sherrington, Hanslope and Lavendon.

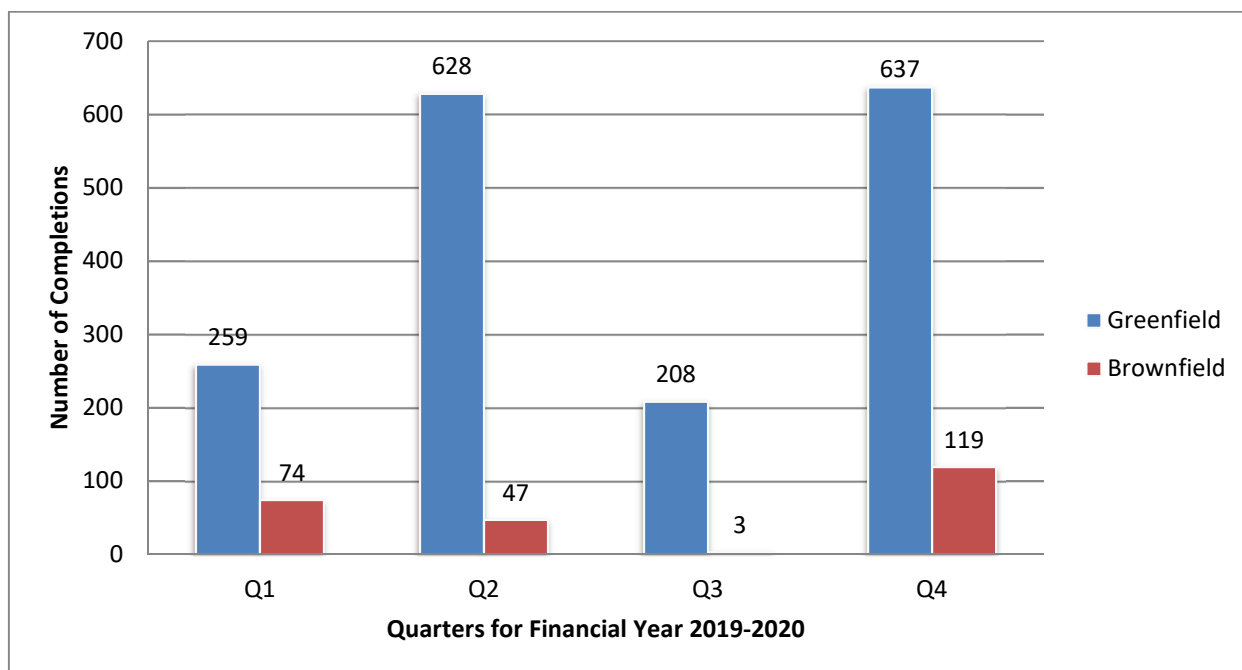


Figure 4.6: Comparisons of Completions on Greenfield and Brownfield Sites by quarter 2019/20

6.60 Figure 4.7 tracks completions from April 2017 to March 2020; completions on brownfield sites were at a relatively consistent level up to 2019/20 where there appears to be the beginning of a rising trend; this is because of several prior notification applications to turn office blocks into residential properties that are now beginning to complete; again these are predominantly located within Central Milton Keynes. Greenfield sites show a more volatile trend with some major spikes in construction, especially for the last financial year.

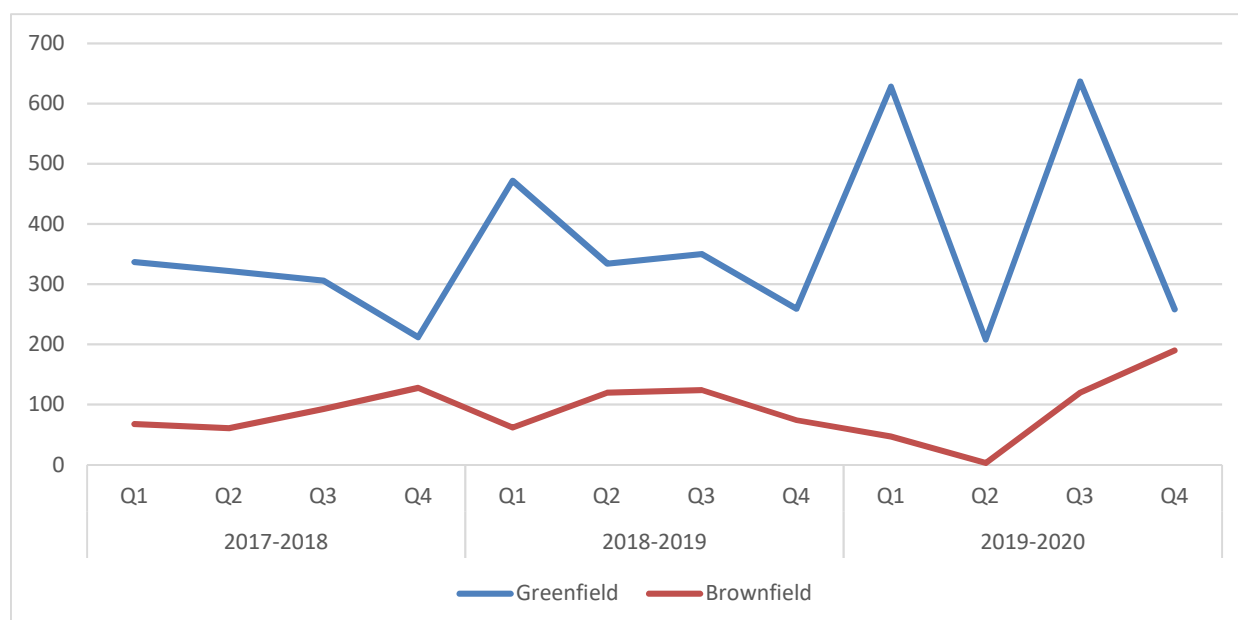


Figure 4.7: Comparison of Completions on Greenfield and Brownfield Sites from April 2017 to March 2020

Self and Custom Build Properties

- 6.61** Self and custom build properties can make a vital contribution to local housing need, this is recognised by policy HN5 of Plan:MK which aims to support people who would like to build their own home. MKC, as required to do so by the *Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015*, operates a self and custom build register for people who are interested in building their own home; at the present time it is free to express your interest at being on the list. In October 2019 MKC (as part of the new GDPR regulations) asked all persons whether they wish to remain on the self-build register, of the 401 persons registered at that time, 184 wished to remain as interested parties when plots become available. Of the 184 on the list 146 have an existing address in Milton Keynes.
- 6.62** On the 31 October 2016, new rules came into place which amended the *Self and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015* and implemented Chapter 2 of the *Housing and Planning Act 2016* which places a duty on MKC to give suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand (as recorded on the authority's self-build register) for self and custom build plots within the local authority area over a set base period of time.
- 6.63** The first base period of time as set out in the *Housing and Planning Act 2016* is the 6-month period between 31 March 2016 (when MKC established its self-build register) and 31 October 2016 (the day before Section 10 of the *Housing and Planning Act 2016* came into force). As outlined in the *Self build and Custom housebuilding (time for compliance & fees) Regulations 2016*, MKC had a period of three years from the end of the base date, up until 31 October 2019 (which falls within the 2019/20 monitoring period) to grant permission for enough plots to meet this need.
- 6.64** Between 31 March 2016 and 31 October 2016 (the first base period), MKC had a total of 41 entries that had been accepted on its self-build register; when carrying out the review of entries on the

register in October 2019 as outlined above in paragraph 4.61, this was reduced to 13 entries from the first base period who wished to remain on the register.

- 6.65** As outlined in Table 4.9, within the three-year period within which MKC had to permit enough plots of land to meet this need, a total of 69 plots were granted permission for projects which MKC have confirmed²⁰ are for self or custom build developments. This is more than enough permissions for MKC to meet its duty under the *Housing and Planning Act 2016*.

Table 4.9: Number of plots permissioned for self or custom-build projects.		
Year	Number of single house permissions granted	Number of plots permitted on developments that are self or custom-build projects
Oct 2016 - Oct 2017	71	11
Oct 2017 – Oct 2018	93	42
Oct 2018 – Oct 2019	54	16

- 6.66** MKC have tried to assist in the promotion of self and custom build developments where possible. This includes Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) having provided land for 15 serviced plots at the Atterbury Development in Broughton which were granted outline permission in August 2018 and should be available for purchase and development from 2023 onwards; these plots will be advertised to registered parties when more details are available. Furthermore, In November 2019 privately owned plots with outline permission became available for custom build projects on Wolverton Road next to Oakridge Park. MKC were made aware of this and the advertisement for the opportunity was sent to all people registered on the database.
- 6.67** Plan:MK policy HN5 also seeks to aid delivery of self and custom build plots further by requiring all strategic allocations to provide one hectare of the site for serviced dwelling plots for sale to custom builders. It is hoped that this will enable a continuous supply of plots throughout the Plan:MK period and enable MKC to deliver against the evidenced demand as it is required to do so. MKC therefore remains committed to helping those that wish to build their own home and will look favourably on self and custom-build developments that create low-cost or affordable housing.

Loss of Residential Properties

- 6.68** Policy HN9 aims to protect the overall housing supply and stop any losses to the Borough's stock. It also looks to safeguard single story dwellings for those with impaired mobility or specific needs. Losses are monitored and published quarterly on MKC's website²¹ in the 'Completions by Settlement' spreadsheet. Table 4.10 outlines the losses of property in 2018 and 2019 and shows

²⁰ Note: It is possible that some of the single dwellings outlined in Table 4.9 given permission were self-build projects. However, at the time of publication no confirmation has been received from some agents/applicants if this is the case; therefore, the number of plots permitted for self or custom-build developments may be higher than that reported here. MKC are in the process of setting up a better monitoring process for self-build projects so as fully accurate figures can be reported for the 20/21 Annual Monitoring Report.

²¹ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/statistics/housing-statistics>

that for both years the net gain in properties has always been greater than the loss, therefore demonstrating the positive impact of Policy HN9.

Table 4.10: Losses of property in 2018 and 2019.			
Description of Loss	Month/Year	Losses	Net Gain
2018			
Erection of replacement dwelling, White Lodge, Newport Pagnell	31/03/2018	1	0
Extension of existing dwelling and to form 2 new dwellings, 12 Union Street, Newport Pagnell.	31/03/2018	1	+1
Replacement of existing dwelling with new dwelling, 71 High Street, Stoke Goldington	31/03/2018	1	0
Subdivision of 1 house into 1 flat and 1 house, 25 Little Linford Lane, Little Linford.	30/06/2018	1	+1
Conversion of existing dwelling into 3 flats, 12 Cawarden, Stantonbury.	30/06/2018	1	+2
Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 bungalows, 55 Vandyke Close, Woburn Sands.	30/09/2018	1	+1
Demolition of existing and erection of replacement dwelling, Park Farm House, Tyringham.	30/09/2018	1	0
Change of use from residential to school, Broughton Manor Prep, Broughton.	30/09/2018	1	0
TOTAL LOSSES/NET GAIN	2018	8	+5
2019			
Demolition of 4 dwellings and erection of 9 new dwellings, Oakhill Farm, Oakhill	30/06/2019	4	+5
Subdivision of 1 bungalow into 2 bungalows, 61 Drayton Road, Bletchley	30/06/2019	1	+1
Conversion of existing house into 2 flats	31/12/2019	1	+1
Conversion of existing flat into 2 flats	31/12/2019	1	+1
Demolition of 3 houses	31/12/2019	3	0
Change of use of bungalow into care home	31/12/2019	1	0
Demolition of fire damaged house	31/12/2019	1	0
Subdivision of 1 dwelling into 2 dwelling, 15 Williams Close, Woolstone.	31/12/2019	1	+1
TOTAL LOSSES/NET GAINS	2019	13	+9

Gypsies and Travellers

6.69 There are currently 18 pitches for the use of gypsies and travellers in Milton Keynes, these are placed at Calverton Lane (12 pitches) and Willen Road (6 pitches). Policy HN11 identifies the need for a further 19 pitches during the Plan:MK period and allocates sufficient land to deliver this need, including; 4 additional pitches at the existing site at Calverton Lane; 8 new pitches at Newton Leys and a further 7 pitches at the development proposed in South East Milton Keynes. None of these additional pitches have been delivered to-date.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

- 6.70** A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property where rooms are rented out to people not related to each other and some facilities may be shared. There are currently 788 dwellings in Milton Keynes that are classed as HMO; of these 386 are licenced properties (106 HMO licences issued in the last financial year) and 351 were not licensable meaning that less than 5 people live there. MKC served 31 notices to landlords last year and there are 57 properties awaiting inspection.
- 6.71** HMO applications are not currently monitored by the planning department (the information above coming from the licencing department) however, applications submitted from April 2020 will be monitored and reported on in future monitoring reports.

Prior Notifications

- 6.72** The *Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended)* allows, subject to specific land designations and prior notification to the local planning authority, the change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage to a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) from a Class B1a (office) use. These developments can be anything from small one office to one dwelling conversions, to large office block conversions.
- 6.73** MKC were notified of nine prior notification schemes last year, which are outlined in Table 4.11. MKC have a number of concerns with developments that are delivered through this means: there is no means of assessing them based on the suitability of their location and as such a number are located in areas which are not ideally suitable for residential use; they do not have to comply with minimum living space standards (37m²), giving rise to poorly converted very small apartments; they do not have to provide affordable housing and as such do nothing to assist in meeting the affordable housing needs of the Borough; they do not need to provide a mix of housing size thus leading to an abundance of properties which do not match the requirements of the Borough, as can be evidenced by the overwhelming large number of one bed flats approved for development in 2019/20 as outlined in Table 4.11; and, as they do not need to provide planning obligations they provide no assistance with the delivery of infrastructure and service needs to assist the local area within which they are located.
- 6.74** Given the significant rise in notifications for conversion that MKC have seen over the last few years a decision has been taken to seek the implementation of an Article 4 direction to stop conversions in Central Milton Keynes, in order to safeguard offices for future use and protect the quality and standards of homes delivered in Milton Keynes.

Table 4.11: Applications for prior notifications received in financial year 2019-2020.

Planning Reference	Settlement	Address	Number of dwellings proposed
19/00762/PANB1C	Wolverton	37 Cambridge Street	1x 1BF
19/01432/PANB1C	CMK	Station House, Elder Gate	200 x 1BF
19/01407/PANB1C	Newport Pagnell	7 Station Road	1x 4BH
19/01309/PANB1C	Oldbrook	Omega Mansions	10 x 1BF
19/01631/PANB1C	Bow Brickhill	Glebe Farm, Watling Street	1x 3BH
19/01836/PANB1C	Wolverton Mill	Walker Avenue	8x 1BF
19/01968/PANB1C	Bletchley	Cable House, Buckingham Road	78x 1BF 34x 2BF Total 112
20/00027/PANB1C	Newport Pagnell	1 Station Road	2x 2BF
20/00247/PANB1C	Newport Pagnell	9 Station Road	1x 3BH

Five Year Housing Land Supply

- 6.75** All Local Planning Authorities (LPA) are required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 73) to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing.
- 6.76** This is more commonly referred to as the Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS), and MKC's ability to demonstrate a 5YHLS, or not, has implications as to whether the policies of the Development Plan (in this case, Plan:MK) can be awarded full weight for the purposes of decision making. Where an LPA cannot demonstrate a deliverable 5YHLS, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied in relation to proposals for residential development.
- 6.77** Ensuring a 5-year supply of deliverable housing land is also one of the targets associated with Strategic Objective 2 of Plan:MK: "To deliver land for a minimum of 26,500 net new homes within the Borough between 2016 and 2031, principally within and adjacent to the city", as outlined in Appendix F "Monitoring Framework" of Plan:MK.
- 6.78** MKC's housing land supply and ability to demonstrate a 5YHLS was tested in detail during the examination into Plan:MK during the summer of 2018, and the Inspector concluded that, at the date of adoption of Plan:MK, MKC could demonstrate a 5YHLS.
- 6.79** Since then, MKC has carried out its annual housing land supply assessment for the period dating from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2024; an assessment which updates the 5YHLS position as outlined in Plan:MK, and which was carried out in accordance with the NPPF (2019)²². This 2019 5YHLS assessment provides the most recently published 5YHLS position for MKC and concluded that MKC

²² Plan:MK was examined under the 2012 NPPF, as per the transitional arrangements set out in the 2018 NPPF.

could demonstrate a deliverable housing land supply of 6.41 years. The full assessment report and details of how MKC prepares its annual 5YHLS position can be viewed on the MKC website²³.

5YHLS Related Appeals

6.80 During 2019/20 MKC has been subject to a number of Section 78 planning appeals whereby the appellants have sought to challenge the MKC's ability to demonstrate a deliverable 5YHLS. All four appeals related to applications for residential development located within the open countryside for which MKC had refused planning permission. Two of the appeals were heard via informal hearings and two were heard via full planning inquiries; the details of the four appeals and their outcomes are outlined in Table 4.12. At all four appeals, MKC relied upon the 5YHLS position outlined in its 2019 Assessment; 6.41 years.

Table 4.12: 5YHLS Related Appeals heard in 2019/20.
Hearings:
<p><u>Land off Castlethorpe Road, Hanslope; and, 2) Malt Mill Farm, Hanslope</u> (these two appeals were heard at a joint hearing).</p> <p><u>References:</u> 1) 18/01625/OUT and appeal reference: APP/Y0435/W/18/3214365; and 2) 18/00724/FUL and appeal reference: APP/Y0435/W/18/3214564.</p> <p><u>Date of Hearing:</u> 9 - 10 July 2019</p> <p><u>Decision:</u> The Inspector concluded that MKC could not demonstrate a 5YHLS and allowed the appeal, thus granting both proposals planning permission (Decision date: 26 September 2019).</p> <p><u>Further Information:</u> Following receipt of this decision, for a number of reasons, MKC sought to challenge the Inspector's decision and filed a challenge pursuant to section 288 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. MKC was not however granted permission for this challenge to be heard and the decisions stands.</p>
<p><u>The Globe, Hanslope</u></p> <p><u>References:</u> 18/01968/FUL and appeal reference: APP/Y0435/W/19/3220584.</p> <p><u>Date of Hearing:</u> 31 July 2019</p> <p><u>Decision:</u> The Inspector concluded that MKC could demonstrate a 5YHLS position in the region of 6.4 years and dismissed the appeal (Decision date: 5 September 2019)</p>
Inquiries:
<p><u>Land to the East of Newport Road and West and East of Cranfield Road, Woburn Sands</u></p> <p><u>References:</u> 16/00672/OUT and appeal reference: APP/Y0435/W/17/3169314.</p> <p><u>Date of Hearing:</u> 14-17 and 21-24 January 2019</p> <p><u>Decision:</u> The Secretary of State agreed with the Inspectors conclusions that MKC could demonstrate a 5YHLS position of around 5.5 to 5.9 years and dismissed the appeal (Decision date: 25 June 2020)</p>

²³ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/five-year-housing-land-supply-annual-monitoring-report>

Further Information: This is the second appeal into this application; the first, which took place in 2017 was called in for decision by the SoS. Despite the Inspector concluding that the appeal should be allowed, the Secretary of State did not agree with the Inspector's conclusions and dismissed the appeal. This SoS decision was subsequently challenged in the high court and was overturned, leading to this second inquiry.

Rectory Farm, Bow Brickhill

References: 18/01372/FUL and appeal reference: APP/Y0435/W/19/3234204.

Date of Hearing: 25-28 February 2019

Decision: The Inspector concluded that MKC could demonstrate a 5YHLS position of around 5.9 years and dismissed the appeal (Decision date: 27 April 2020)

Impact of Appeal Decisions

- 6.81** Whilst the appeal decision into Land off Castlethorpe Road and Malt Mill Farm, Hanslope, concluded that MKC could not demonstrate a 5YHLS, the Council, for a number of reasons, felt that greater weight should be afforded to the decision of the Inspector of the appeal at the Globe, Hanslope. As such, MKC continued to maintain a 5YHLS position of 6.41 years for the purposes of decision making and appeals for the rest of 2019/20.
- 6.82** The most recent appeal decisions, that of 'Rectory Farm, Bow Brickhill', and 'Land to the East of Newport Road and West and East of Cranfield Road, Woburn Sands', whilst both determining the MKC could demonstrate a 5YHLS, felt that the position should be one of between 5.5 to 5.9 years. This was predominantly due to the Inspectors reaching different conclusions to MKC on the deliverability of a number of specific sites which they subsequently felt should be removed from the five-year supply.
- 6.83** As both these decisions was received after the end of 2019/20, MKC have not sought to release an updated 5YHLS position solely in response to these appeal decisions. Instead, the conclusions of the Inspector will be taken into consideration whilst preparing the updated 2020 5YHLS assessment, as outlined below.

Housing Delivery Performance and 2020 5YHLS Assessment

- 6.84** As outlined in the housing delivery section, MKC has exceeded its housing requirement of 1,767 dwellings for the second year running and furthermore for the year 2019/20 exceeded the number of dwellings which were projected to be completed for the year in the 2019 5YHLS assessment.
- 6.85** MKC is currently in the process of preparing its 2020 Annual Housing Land Supply update and 5YHLS position to cover the five-year period between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2025. This position will take account of updated evidence, including progress towards delivery of each individual site within MKC's housing supply, the conclusions of recent appeal decisions, and any government guidance linked to the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, where appropriate.

6.86 The preparation of this assessment will incorporate consultation/engagement with landowners and developers with site interests within the Borough and with representatives of the wider development industry. Once completed, this will be published on MKC's website²⁴.

Brownfield Register

6.87 A brownfield register is a list of land that could be suitable for redevelopment, it is a nationally recognised list that has its origins in the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2017 (Reg 4). A developer can access the list to find land to build houses/flats on that may otherwise be overlooked. A brownfield register is split into two parts, part one is the list of sites and part two is any sites that have permission in principle (PIP). The Brownfield Register for Milton Keynes can be found on MKC's website²⁵. There are currently 49 sites on the brownfield register for the borough of Milton Keynes; of these there are 19 with no permissions. The list is updated in December every year and published at the above website. At this point in time MKC does not operate a part two of the brownfield register therefore all sites would have to be permissioned through the standard application process.

²⁴ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/five-year-housing-land-supply-annual-monitoring-report>

²⁵ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/brownfield-register-of-land>

Policy Context

- 5.1** Regeneration is identified as a key focus within Plan: MK (2019) and the relevant parts of the plan to regeneration are as follows. Strategic Objective 8 of the plan is ‘support the continued regeneration of Wolverton and Bletchley as town centres within the main urban area (ideally with specialisations or Unique Selling Points (USPs))’. Also, Strategic Objective 10 is ‘to aim to reduce health inequalities and deprivation and improve housing quality and access to services for all’.
- 5.2** In terms of the plan policies, Policy SD16 specifically sets out the principles for development within the Central Bletchley Prospectus Area. Policies DS1, DS2, DS4, HN1 and SC1 partially relate to regeneration programmes and/or projects. Policies DS1 & DS2 note how regeneration schemes may contribute to housing stock provided over the plan period. Policy HN1 sets out the range of net housing densities that development within the Central Bletchley Prospectus Area should achieve. Policy DS4 notes how MKC will prepare a Central Bletchley Prospectus, to help inform people about development opportunities within the town. Policy SC1 supports the retrofitting of existing buildings and its supporting text notes the opportunities for retrofitting to be a key part of MKC’s Regeneration Strategy.

Health and Social Indicators

- 5.3** As noted, strategic objective 10 aims to reduce health inequalities and deprivation, improve housing qualities and increase access to services. Regeneration has a key role to play in these actions, whether it is through making local environments more pleasant to reside in, retrofitting energy inefficient existing housing stock and/or increasing the health and amenity services provision for residents. In 2019 in Milton Keynes, as Public Health England note, life expectancy was 7.3 (8.0 in 2018) years lower for men and 6.9 (8.3 in 2018) years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Milton Keynes than in the least deprived areas²⁶. As the data indicates, the gap between life expectancies for men and women living in different areas in the Borough has got smaller between 2018 and 2019. However, the life expectancy for men overall in MK is lower than the UK average. There is no data available for 2019 with respect to women’s life expectancy. However, at 83 years, female life expectancy over the 2016-18 period has increased relative to previous years. Thus, there were some positive change in life expectancies in 2019; however, life expectancies in the borough can improve. To what extent the changes in statistics here are attributable to planning policies alone is difficult to determine, given the range of variables which affect public health.

²⁶ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e06000042.html?area-name=miltonkeynes>

5.4 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England as discussed in Chapter 3 – Social.

5.5 Tables 5.1 and 5.2 list the 10 least and most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the borough. Table 5.3 notes how many LSOAs fall into each IMD category. What it shows is that the majority of LSOAs have an IMD between 6 and 10 (less deprived). However, 36.84% of LSOAs have an IMD between 1 and 5. Based on this data, it can be concluded that the basis for Strategic Objectives 8 and 10 in Plan:MK are still relevant and action is required to reduce deprivation in the borough. The following paragraphs document MKC’s work towards this aim. Further monitoring of IMD statistics will take place in future Annual Monitoring Periods as the scheduled regeneration schemes in the borough progress.

Table 5.1: Ten most deprived areas in the Borough of Milton Keynes ²⁷ .			
LSOA Code (2011)	Area Name	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile (1 = most deprived, 10 = least deprived)	IMD Rank (National)
E01016742	South of Water Eaton, Lakes Estate	1	628
E01016844	Bleak Hall, Redmoor and southern Parts of Beanhill and Eaglestone West	1	651
E01016842	Netherfield and east part of Beanhill	1	1,211
E01016845	North of Netherfield, North of Beanhill & Southern part of Eaglestone	1	1,595
E01016843	South of Netherfield and Tinkers Bridge	1	1,703
E01016811	East, north and south of Fullers Slade	1	2,496
E01016847	West part of Eaglestone West and Leadenhall	1	2,941
E01016744	East part of Water Hall/Lakes Estate	1	3,158
E01016810	East/North of Kiln Farm and Hodge Lea	2	3,304
E01016839	South and East of Greenleys and South of Wolverton	2	3,877

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Table 5.2: Ten least deprived areas in the Borough of Milton Keynes²⁸.

LSOA Code (2011)	Area Name	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile (1 = most deprived, 10 = least deprived)	IMD Rank (National)
E01016798	Western edge of Olney & countryside area to north of Olney	10	32,338
E01016826	Old Farm Park	10	32,320
E01016796	North-Central Olney	10	31,175
E01016761	Central and south Hanslope and sections of countryside around Hanslope	10	31,139
E01016767	North Blakelands and Giffard Park	10	30,992
E01016781	Central, south and east of Shenley Church End	10	30,555
E01016816	South & East Kiln Farm and west of Two Mile Ash	10	30,340
E01016776	North Great Holm	10	30,338
E01016792	South Newport Pagnell, adjacent to M1 and A422	10	29,896
E01016736	South Woburn Sands	10	29,607

Table 5.3: Number of LSOAs in Milton Keynes with different IMD values²⁹.

IMD value	No. of LSOAs in MK
1	8
2	10
3	10
4	15
5	13
6	17
7	22
8	29
9	18
10	10

Council Regeneration Programmes

5.6 During 2019, work took place on drafting a new Regeneration and Estate Renewal Strategy for the borough, to replace the current Regeneration strategy (adopted in 2015). The strategy builds on lessons learned from progress on schemes to regenerate the Lakes Estate and Fullers Slade. As

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

noted in the Cabinet report for Item 10 at the Cabinet Meeting on the 13 January 2020, MKC needs to address a perceived lack of transparency and trust in its approach to regeneration. The draft Strategy sets out the strategic priorities for community led regeneration and estate renewal under four themes: Housing, Communities, Health and Wellbeing, and Better Job. A three-month period of public consultation on the draft Strategy started on the 27 January 2020.

- 5.7** Taking this into account, there has been progress towards meeting Strategic Objective 10 of Plan:MK (2019). In addition, although little regeneration work has commenced on the ground yet, there has been work behind the scenes on two of these projects: Fullers Slade and the Lakes Estate. Work on projects to renew Beanhill, Coffee Hall, Netherfield, Bradville and Tinkers Bridge have not yet progressed at this point. As the following sub-sections in this chapter indicate, although limited renewal/regeneration work has taken place physically (i.e. on the ground) at this stage, regeneration projects are underway in the borough. It is recognised that these projects do take time to deliver. Therefore, the above IMD and life expectancy statistics will serve as a benchmark for analysis in future AMRs of progress on the indicators in Section 10 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework.

Bletchley

- 5.8** In relation to Strategic Objective 8 and Policy DS4 of Plan: MK, the Central Bletchley Prospectus (CBP) was approved for publication at a Delegated Decisions meeting on the 16 December 2019. The CBP has a promotional purpose and is designed to highlight and generate interest in significant renewal opportunities. It is not a formal planning document and does not aim to create planning policy; neither is it a masterplan. A commitment to production of a subsequent Supplementary Planning Document to cover the CBP was also approved. Accordingly: creation, approval and publication of the CBP means that Part D of Policy DS4 has been met. As highlighted in the Delegated Decision on 16 December 2019, work can now continue producing an SPD, as well as work towards the goal of securing funding for regeneration in Bletchley from Central Government's Towns Fund.
- 5.9** In terms of this latter work, a Readiness Checklist for the Towns Fund bid was submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the 19 December 2019. Following this, it has been confirmed that MKC shall receive funding for the next phase of the Bid process: putting together a Town Investment Plan by the summer 2020. In summary, there has been progress towards the target (delivering regeneration opportunities) in the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework pertaining to Strategic Objective 8 of Plan:MK and fulfilment of the requirements of Part D in Policy DS4. Although, in 2019 inclusively there was little physical regenerative change in the area.

Wolverton

- 5.10** With regards to the regeneration of Wolverton as a town centre, some progress towards redeveloping the area took place in 2019. Notably, Conservation Area Consent was granted for the demolition of the Agora Centre – a longstanding large covered market and retail space – located in the centre of the town, in anticipation of a redevelopment scheme for the site to come forward in

due course. It is however noted that the Outline permission (reference: 15/02030/OUTEIS) granted for redevelopment of the 'Wolverton Works' site (decision date: 20.12.2017) has not yet progressed to Reserved Matters stage. The works associated with this permission constitute a significant scheme to redevelop the northern part of the town and provide up to 375 residential units, B1/B2/B8 employment floor space, a new food store, a new community facility, open space, landscaping and public realm. Based on this information, it can be considered that progress was made towards meeting the objectives of Strategic Objective 8 of Plan:MK (2019) and section 8 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework, although, as in Bletchley, little physical change has taken place.

Lakes Estate

- 5.11** With regards to the ongoing regeneration project in the Lakes Estate, located to the south of the Urban Area of Milton Keynes, work progressed during 2019 in conjunction with a team of architects, consultants, engineers, property marketing consultants, officers, local residents and councillors to develop the details of the plans to demolish and replace Serpentine Court and deliver new community and commercial spaces, as well as the landscaping and transport improvements throughout the Lakes Estate. The resulting regeneration plans and a request for approval to submit a planning application for them was drawn up for consideration by Cabinet on the 13 January 2020. Approval to submit the application was granted by Cabinet and the application was submitted in April 2020. As noted above, when using 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation data, the Lakes Estate features the most deprived LSOA area in the borough. It is therefore positive that the regeneration plans for the area are moving forward and progress is being made towards meeting Strategic Objective 10 of Plan:MK.

Fullers Slade

- 5.12** In a ballot held over the 29 and 30 of November 2019, a majority of residents in the Fullers Slade estate voted that the area should undergo a process of regeneration involving new homes, refurbishment works and estate wide improvements. The exact details of the scope of new homes, including council homes, is yet to be confirmed, with planning applications for these new homes to be submitted following further discussions with residents about how they wish the area to be redeveloped. Monitoring of this project shall continue to allow further appraisal in next years' Annual Monitoring Report.

Council Housing Delivery Programme

- 5.13** Policy DS1 (Settlement Hierarchy) of Plan:MK allows for new housing to come from selective infill, brownfield and regeneration opportunities. Starting during the 2018/2019 financial year MKC has been building council houses in the MK Urban Area. During 2018/2019 there were 18 completions and during 2019/20 there were 10 completions. It is currently indicated that during the 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 financial years, 73, 166 and 65 houses will be delivered respectively. Further monitoring of this programme over the next three years will provide further data about its status.

Economy

- 6.1** Milton Keynes is home to over 14,000 business enterprises covering an array of sectors. The City's highly developed business; financial professional service cluster includes more than 400 head office and financial services companies, with a specialist workforce of more than 22,000 people. With more than 45 million people living within 4.5 hours of Milton Keynes a logistics and distribution hub has arisen with more than 70 companies employing 9,600 workers, or 6% of the City's total workforce³⁰.
- 6.2** The development of the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc is becoming increasingly important, especially given the infrastructure and housing investment planned for the area. In addition, Milton Keynes lies along the West Coast Mainline between London and Scotland, providing connections to many of the UK's key economic centres, including London and Birmingham. With connections to the M1, west-coast mainline, coach network and east-west rail links coming in the future, Milton Keynes is best placed to serve business interests and investment.
- 6.3** The Milton Keynes economy (GDP) was worth £13.47 billion in 2017 and £14.33 billion in 2018 (provisional) making it the largest economy in the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc. The value of goods and services produced within the borough in 2018 was an impressive £84,784 per worker, the fourth highest of UK cities. The Irwin Mitchell UK Powerhouse reports consistently rank Milton Keynes as one of the top UK cities for both existing and forecast growth in employment and Gross Value Added (GVA).
- 6.4** Policies ER1-ER18 have been designed to protect employment land and help retail provision. These policies set out how planning applications for employment and retail development will be considered and assessed. The monitoring framework, used to assess a policies efficiency, dictates that applications are monitored on a quarterly basis in order to protect employment sites, this allows any trends in loss of land or employment space to be identified.

Employment Space

- 6.5** Planning use classes are the legal framework which determines what a particular property may be used for by its lawful occupants. In England, these are contained within the text of Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and subsequent amendments. Each type of employment space has a designated use class. These classes state what type of business occupies the site. The categories of use class A are based on the sale of goods (including food and drink) and services, use class B categories are for businesses such as offices, industry and warehousing and distribution. Use class C refers to residential uses including dwelling houses and hotel etc. and use class D is for non-residential institutional uses such as health centres, schools and leisure facilities.

³⁰ <https://www.investmiltonkeynes.co.uk/supporting-businesses/sectors/logistics-distribution-in-mk/>

- 6.6** Table 6.1 shows the change in floor space for employment spaces for the 2018/19 and 2019/2020 financial years. 2019 saw a big increase in the number of office space thanks to the completion of 100 Avebury Boulevard (16/03068/FUL). According to February's issue of All Things Business this development is responsible for kick starting significant rental growth, pushing prime Grade A rents on by nearly 20%³¹. The rise in storage and distribution space in 2019 was due to the development of warehouses in Blakelands (18/02341/FUL), Knowhill (18/00600/FUL) and a large warehouse development in Rooksley (17/01743/FUL). Overall the gain of 24,082m² of employment space is a huge improvement on 2018.

Table 6.1: Floorspace completion data for use class B1-B8 for financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020.

Use Class	Gross Internal Floorspace loss (m ²)	Gross Internal Floorspace Gain (m ²)	Net Internal Floorspace Total +/- (m ²)
2018-2019			
B1a Offices	22,601	20,874	-1727
B1b – Research and Development	0	0	0
B1c – Light Industry	372	0	-372
B2 – General Industry	255	0	-255
B8 – Storage and Distribution	569	7,119	6,550
Total	23,797	27,993	4,196
2019-2020			
B1a – Offices	6,788	25,092	18,304
B1b – Research and Development	0	0	0
B1c – Light Industry	600	4,335	3,735
B2 – General Industry	3,469	6,322	2,853
B8 – Storage and Distribution	31,011	38,465	7,454
Total	41,868	74,214	24,082

- 6.7** Plan:MK identified a shortfall of land for development for warehousing, to combat this an area of land was allocated between the A5 and Brickhill Street (South Caldecott). An outline application (19/01818/OUT) was received in 2019 to build 192,159m² storage and distribution premises, 48,040m² of general industrial space and 999m² of office space. However, this application was refused by the Development Control Committee (DCC) at the beginning of February 2020 with the decision now under appeal.
- 6.8** Future development of office space is guaranteed with the development of Santander's new Digital Hub (19/00841/FUL) next to Milton Keynes Central Railway Station. The development consists of 51,227m² of office space and 2172m² space available for retail and leisure facilities and was permitted for development in December 2019.

³¹ All Things Business February 2020 www.allthingsbusiness.co.uk

6.9 Large multi-nation companies have made Milton Keynes their home and this is actively encouraged but Milton Keynes is also in the top 5 cities for business start-ups. There are many small units in Milton Keynes with 2 developments permitted for more with one under construction. There are 6 new units under construction in Stacey Bushes and permission granted for a development of 85 small units in Linford Wood.

Retail and Leisure Employment Space

6.10 Retail is a big part of Milton Keynes attractiveness with the Centre:MK and Intu marked as a regional shopping destination and the Xscape building the focus of many leisure activities. There are also many smaller shopping areas such as MK:One in Bletchley, the Westcroft and Kingston Local Centres and the high streets of Bletchley, Stony Stratford and Newport Pagnell to name a few, that have a big impact on retail and leisure employment space.

6.11 Table 6.2 shows the gain and loss of retail and leisure space for the borough in 2018 and 2019. Notable developments completed in 2018/19 include the new Primark in Centre:MK (17/01684/FUL) and a new Lidl Store in Wolverton (16/00360/FUL). 2019 saw the completion of new retail developments including a new Lidl in Brooklands (18/00345/FUL) and a new parade of smaller shops at Brooklands Square (16/00125/REM). All in all, 2019 was a much quieter year for retail and leisure development.

Table 6.2: Floorspace completions for use class A1-A5 and D2 for financial year 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Use Class	Gross Internal Floorspace loss (m2)	Gross Internal Floorspace Gain (m2)	Net Internal Floorspace Total +/- (m2)
2018-2019			
A1 – Retail	1,417	7,165	5,748
A2 – Financial and professional services	697	142	-555
A3 – Restaurants and Café	776	1,465	689
A4 – Public Houses, Wine bars and other Drinking Establishments	0	0	0
A5 – Hot Food Take-away	0	140	140
D2 – Assembly and Leisure	0	5,308	5,308
Total	2,890	14,220	11,330
2019-2020			
A1 – Retail	6,207	5,854	-353
A2 – Financial and Professional Services	161	90	-71
A3 – Restaurants and café	1,133	4,802	3669
A4 – Public Houses, Wine Bars and Other Drinking Establishments	1,292	343	-949
A5 – Hot Food Take-away	0	1,919	1,919
D2 – Assembly and Leisure	749	5,947	5,225
Total	9,542	18,955	9,440

- 6.12** Applications are still being made to MKC for retail and leisure purposes, which would suggest that Milton Keynes is a good choice for people to shop, eat and be entertained. Future permitted developments include an extension to the Centre:MK near John Lewis adding 8435m² of retail and leisure facilities over two floors. Outside of the city centre Lidl have been permitted to build a new unit at Blakelands (19/00420/FUL) and Aldi have permission to redevelop the Stantonbury Local Centre (18/01469/FUL) giving more choice to residents in the north of the city.

Schools and other Non-residential institutions

- 6.13** The number of completions for non-residential applications in 2018-19 is high due the number of school developments that were marked as complete. These include the new secondary school on Brooklands (14/02626/MKCOD3), a new primary and secondary school in Kents Hill Park (15/03076/MKCOD3 and 15/02490/MKCOD3) and a new primary school in Shenley Wood (15/02491/MKCOD3) among other school developments. 2019 saw the completion of the school at Eagle Farm (16/03132/MKCOD3) and the new Pure Gym in Bletchley (18/01231/FUL).

Table 6.3: Floorspace completions for use class D1 in financial year 2018/19 and 2019/20.

	Gross Internal Floorspace Loss (m ²)	Gross Internal Floorspace Gained (m ²)	Net Internal Floorspace Total +/- (m ²)
2018/19			
D1 – Non-residential Institutions	2,608	36,835	39,443
2019-2020			
D1 - Non-residential Institutions	513	4,351	3,838

- 6.14** Future developments include new secondary schools at Whitehouse and Glebe Farm, there are also several applications for new clinics such as dentists and chiropractors as well as tuition spaces that have been permitted. A future development of a university in Milton Keynes is in the early stages of plan making. The campus will be a STEM hub with the aim of attracting talented people to the city and in turn the employment to keep them here. The university will be developed over 3 phases which, by completion, will see up to 15,000 students gain higher educational accolades each year.

Hotels, Hospitals and Other Residential Institutions

- 6.15** Over the last few years there has been an increase in the number of hotels in Milton Keynes. Premier Inn have built in the Theatre District and on Avebury Boulevard (18/01015/FUL). There is also a development next to John Lewis of a 14-storey hotel called Hotel Le Tour (17/03053/FUL) which will feature 250 bedrooms, a ground floor bar/café and a rooftop bar and restaurant. MK Primary Care Trust have completed a brand-new cancer care centre at Milton Keynes University Hospital which welcomed its first patients in March 2020. Table 6.4 outlines the completions of hotels and other residential institutions for financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. Applications for residential institutions such as hotels are not received as often as many other types of

applications, so it is good to see that developers feel that Milton Keynes is a place that people like to stay and play and therefore a good investment for the future.

Table 6.4: Floorspace completions for use class C1 and C2 for financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20			
	Gross Internal Floorspace Lost (m ²)	Gross Internal Floorspace Gained (m ²)	Net Internal Floorspace Total +/- (m ²)
2018/19			
C1 - Hotels	0	56	56
C2 – Residential Institutions	1,617	6,488	4,871
Total	1,617	6,544	4,927
2019-2020			
C1 - Hotels	300	1,289	989
C2 – Residential Institution	0	3,216	3,216
Total	300	4,505	4,205

General Employment Statistics for Milton Keynes

6.16 According to data collected by *Nomisweb* (2020) there were 84,000 households in Milton Keynes as of 2018 broken down to 44,500 working households, 28,400 mixed employment households and 9,100 workless households with a job density of 1.17 jobs per person. There was a peak of jobs in 2016 where the total falls in 2017 and looks to be picking up again with growth in the total number of jobs to 2018 (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Total number of jobs in Milton Keynes from 2014-2018. ³²					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Jobs	175,000	189,000	203,000	197,000	198,000
Jobs Density	1.03	1.11	1.19	1.16	1.17

6.17 Table 6.6 shows the different occupations in Milton Keynes and is compared to the South East region and Great Britain as a whole. Milton Keynes has a higher than average number of professional occupations compared to the whole of Great Britain, and fewer skilled trades than both the south east region and Great Britain total percentages. All other occupations have similar numbers when compared.

³² <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Table 6.6: Occupations in Milton Keynes compared to the South East and Great Britain³³

Occupation	Milton Keynes Total	Milton Keynes %	South East %	Great Britain %
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	21,400	12	12.8	12.4
Professional Occupations	38,900	23.2	22.5	20.8
Associate Prof and Tech Occupations	28,300	16	15.7	15
Administration and Secretarial Occupations	16,200	9	9.4	9
Skilled Trades	13,800	7.9	11.6	12
Caring, Leisure and Other Services	13,700	7.8	8.5	8
Sales and Customer Service	13,600	7.8	6.3	6.6
Processing Plant and Machine Operatives	10,300	5.9	5.2	6.5
Elementary Occupations	18,100	10.4	8	9.7
	174,300	100	100	100

6.18 The average wage of workers in Milton Keynes is higher than that of workers in the South East and Great Britain (Table 6.7). In fact, the average weekly wage is 10.2% higher here than it is in the rest of the UK and workers can expect to be paid more than £4000 a year extra.

Table 6.7: Average weekly wage of workers in Milton Keynes compared to South East and Great Britain³⁴.

	Average Weekly Wage	Average Yearly Wage
Milton Keynes	653.4	34,283
South East Region	613.5	31,120
Great Britain	586.5	30,446

6.19 Using figure 6.1 a comparison can be made of the average earnings of men and women. All three areas show that men (on average) earn more than women, with men in Milton Keynes being paid £175 a week more than women. The differences in earnings on an annual basis are even more disjointed with a £10,000 pay gap between the men and women of Milton Keynes³⁵.

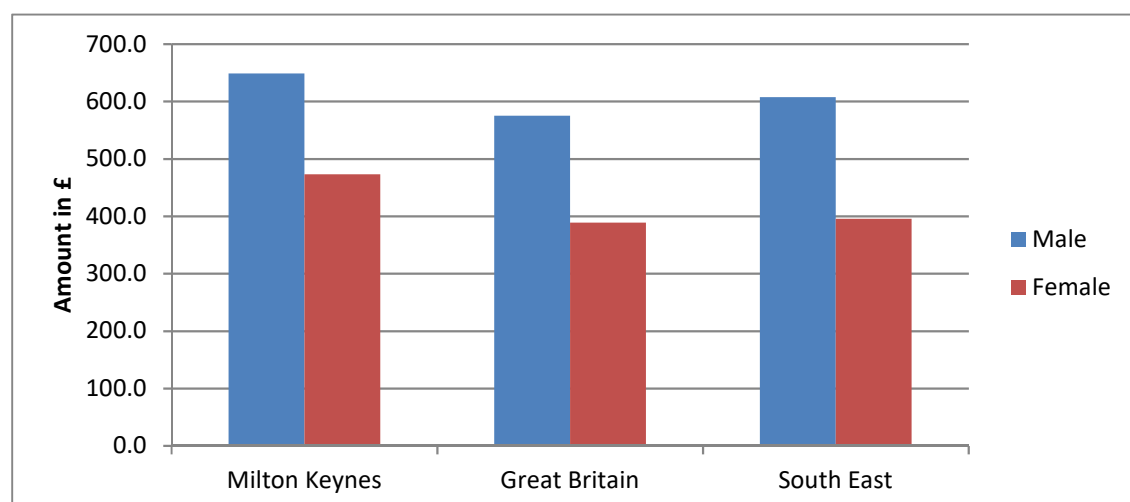


Figure 6.1: Comparison of Average Weekly Wage of Male and Female Workers

³³ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

³⁴ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

³⁵ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Unemployment

6.20 Unemployment in Milton Keynes has seen a significant rise over the last two months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The current unemployment figure as of April 2020 is 4% compared with 2.7% in March 2020 and 1.9% in April 2019. The unemployment rate in Milton Keynes is higher than the national rate of 3.0% but lower than the South East Midlands rate of 5.1%.

6.21 Table 6.8 shows the claimant count for Milton Keynes and surrounding areas. There were 6,730 individuals in Milton Keynes claiming Universal Credit who were also classed as out of work in April 2020 ranking MK 2nd behind Luton. With a Claimant Count rate of 4.0%, Milton Keynes is below the national rate of 5.1% and the SEMLEP rate of 4.1%, but higher than the regional rate of 3.9%.

Table 6.8: Milton Keynes, Comparators and SEMLEP Claimant Count, April 2020³⁶.

Area	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Bedford	3,265	6.3	2,405	4.5	5,670	5.4
Central Bedfordshire	3,270	3.7	2,385	2.7	5,655	3.2
Luton	4,140	6.0	2,810	4.3	6,945	5.1
Milton Keynes	3,795	4.5	2,935	3.5	6,730	4.0
Aylesbury Vale	2,000	3.2	1,505	2.4	3,505	2.8
Kettering	1,850	6.0	1,235	4.0	3,090	5.0
Corby	1,745	7.8	1,185	5.2	2,930	6.5
Daventry	1,035	4.0	905	3.5	1,940	3.8
Northampton	3,950	5.5	2,660	3.8	6,610	4.7
South Northampton	660	2.4	505	1.8	1,165	2.1
East Northamptonshire	1,285	4.6	960	3.4	2,245	4.0
Wellingborough	1,400	5.9	1,000	4.1	2,400	5.0
Reading	2,735	4.9	1,900	3.6	4,635	4.2
Slough	2,700	5.6	2,135	4.6	4,830	5.1
South East Midlands	30,065	4.8	21,655	3.4	51,725	4.1
South East	129,380	4.6	90,530	3.2	219,910	3.9
United Kingdom	1,269,710	6.1	847,650	4.1	2,117,360	5.1

6.22 For a more in-depth look at the available unemployment statistics MKC publishes a report monthly which can be found on MKC's website³⁷. This report highlights the unemployment figures and job availability in Milton Keynes.

6.23 Table 6.9 breaks down the claimant count into wards. In April 2020, there were eight wards within MK with rates above the borough average of 4.0%. Levels of unemployment were highest in the wards of Woughton and Fishermead (6.9%), Bletchley East (6.6%) and Central Milton Keynes (5.2%).

³⁶ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

³⁷ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/business/job-vacancies-and-unemployment-2016-2020>

Table 6.9: Ward Unemployment in Milton Keynes, April 2020³⁸.

Area	Total Claimants	
	Number	Rate
Milton Keynes	6,730	4.0
Bletchley East	595	6.6
Bletchley Park	435	4.9
Bletchley West	340	3.9
Bradwell	360	4.5
Broughton	285	2.7
Campbell Park & Old Woughton	280	3.3
Central Milton Keynes	615	5.2
Danesborough & Walton	220	2.7
Loughton & Shenley	270	2.6
Monkston	270	3.0
Newport Pagnell & Hanslope	180	2.6
Newport Pagnell South	225	3.3
Olney	125	1.9
Shenley Brook End	285	4.3
Stony Stratford	280	4.3
Tattenhoe	220	2.7
Wolverton	475	4.7
Woughton & Fishermead	810	6.9

Future Economy Predictions

6.24 Employment projections for Milton Keynes project that recent growth will continue with employment growth of 20% expected by 2050 (pre-COVID-19 figures). According to the Milton Keynes Local Economy Assessment (2019)³⁹ sector composition is likely to change over the next 20 years, it is predicted that there will be a rise in professional services, health and care (as a result of an aging population) and computer related activities. Milton Keynes may also see a decline in some sectors including manufacturing, finance and telecoms. These predictions are, however, trend based so may not come to fruition, for example, the number of finance related employment is set to decline but MK has recently attracted investment in this sector from Goldman Sacs and Santander, which will boost jobs.

6.25 There are four large projects planned that will boost the economy of MK and have a significant impact on future trajectories:

- MK:U – Significant opportunity to influence the skills base in MK. MKC is working with Cranfield University to develop a new campus in CMK. It is expected that MK:U will focus on courses around technology, including digital, cyber, autonomy, robotics and artificial intelligence.
- Santander Tech Hub – State of the art tech centre to support long term growth. To act as the banks UN digital technology hub, which is expected to be home to over 5000 staff. Permission was granted in September for this project and work has begun onsite.

³⁸ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

³⁹ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/business/local-economic-assessment-2019>

- c. Bletchley Institute of Technology – A consortium led by Milton Keynes College, including partners such as Microsoft and City & Guilds. The institute will offer a range of technology and computing courses for students at historic Bletchley Park. A planning application has been received for this project.
- d. New City Place – A partnership between MKDP and Sterling Property Ventures to provide class-leading office and living space in CMK.

6.26 The policies in Plan:MK are allowing growth of our economic sector whilst safeguarding business that are already established. There are many sites that are still available in central MK for business to move in to or build on for a bespoke business premises. By encouraging major firms to set up in the borough, Milton Keynes can carry on establishing itself as a centre for business and retail. This will bring employment and population to our growing city allowing it to compete with Birmingham and London as a regional powerhouse.

Policy Context

- 7.1** Strategic Objective 1 of Plan:MK (2019) notes how Plan:MK will reflect the recommendations of the MK Futures 2050 Commission Report and the implications of its Six Big Projects, two of which are ‘Enhancing lifelong learning opportunities through the establishment of a new university for Milton Keynes’ and ‘Learning 2050 -providing world class education’. Strategic Objective 6 of Plan:MK (2019) outlines how the plan aims ‘to allocate sufficient land to enable greater economic prosperity by improving the local opportunities for learning and to increase the local level of knowledge and skills through the establishment of a new university for Milton Keynes, and support the development of MK College, the University Campus MK and MK:U, Milton Keynes University Hospital and the creation of world class schools’.
- 7.2** Chapter 9 of Plan:MK (Education and Health) sets out the requirement to increase the provision of early years, primary, secondary and post-16 education facilities across the borough during the Plan period.

Further and Higher Education Provision

- 7.3** Provision of a new university in Central Milton Keynes is a key part of targets for Strategic Objectives 1 and 6 set out in the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework, as well as the MK Futures 2050 programme and is crucial for the city’s long-term economic competitiveness. Policy EH4 of Plan:MK (2019) sets out the principle for the university, stating that:
- “Planning permission will be granted for a new university campus and, if required, the co-location of MK College. This will include student accommodation and ancillary facilities, on site B4 in Central Milton Keynes, as shown on the Policies Map.”
- 7.4** A MKC Delegated Decision on 03 December 2019 approved the release of additional funding (£4.036million) to allow progress to the next major milestone at the end of March 2020 and keep to the timeline for submitting an application for outline planning permission in June 2020. On 12 March 2020 an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion was submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) relating to works to construct the new university. On the 15 April 2020 the LPA issued a response to the Scoping Opinion, stating that “the key environmental issues identified within the Scoping Report and the approach to the EIA is acceptable subject to the comments” raised in the course of assessing the submitted Scoping Report. The Monitoring framework within Plan: MK states the target for admitting new students to the University as 2031.
- 7.5** The December 2019 report highlighted as a key project risk the uncertainty of securing a £100 million government grant and a contingent risk in respect of bank loans. The project has been working positively with government officials to develop a business case for grant funding but the hoped-for commitment was not included in the March 2020 budget. As a consequence, whilst the

MK:U programme continues, it is being refocused around a core set of activities that allow it to continue through to late 2020 when it is hoped a Spending Review commitment of funding for MK:U will be secured. As such, the project to deliver a new university in Milton Keynes by 2023 (and therefore according with Strategic Objectives 1 and 6 of Plan:MK) is on course, although, funding and timeframe issues may result in delays to provision of the university.

Increasing the Capacity of MK's Education System

7.6 Strategic Objective 6 seeks the creation of world class schools and policies EH1, EH2 and EH3 of Plan: MK (2019) reflect the need identified within the plan to secure sufficient early years education, primary and secondary school places, as also noted within the 2019 and 2020 versions of MKC's School Place Planning Forward View document. As identified within Plan: MK (2019), there is a projected shortage of school place provision in a number of areas across the Borough. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show the confirmed and unconfirmed school schemes for new school places as shown in the 2019 and 2020 School Place Planning Forward View documents over the period (2016-2031) of Plan: MK.

Table 7.1: Confirmed upcoming school schemes based on 2019 and 2020 data⁴⁰

School Name	Location	Type	Size	Delivery date
St Mary's Wavendon CE Primary School	Eagle Farm, Wavendon	Expansion and relocation to new site	525 additional primary places	September 2019
St Mary & St Giles C of E School	Stony Stratford and Galley Hill	Expansion	120 (primary) junior places	September 2019
Watling Academy	Western Expansion Area	New school	1800 secondary places	September 2020

Table 7.2: Unconfirmed school schemes (based on 2020 data⁴¹) (these schemes are planned but may be subject to planning permission or the statutory consultation process).

School Name	Location	Type	Size	Delivery Date
Hanslope Primary School	Hanslope	Expansion	210 additional places	September 2021
TBC	Glebe Farm Wavendon	New school	630 primary places	2022
TBC	Tickford Fields, Newport Pagnell	New School	420 primary places	2023 TBC
TBC	Calverton Lane, WEA	New school	630 primary places	2023 TBC

⁴⁰ [MKC School Place Planning: Forward View \(2019 & 2020 versions\).](#)

⁴¹ [MKC School Place Planning: Forward View \(2020\).](#)

TBC	Eaton Leys	New school	210 primary places	2023 TBC
TBC (SE Primary 1)	South East Milton Keynes	New School	630 primary places	2023 TBC
TBC (SE Primary 2)	South East Milton Keynes	New School	630 primary places	2025 TBC
TBC	Gravesend, WEA	New school	630 primary places	2025 TBC
TBC	Glebe Farm Wavendon	New School	900 secondary places	2022
Ousedale School (Olney Campus)	Olney	Expansion	300 secondary places	2025 TBC
TBC	South East Milton Keynes	New school	1050 secondary places	2025 TBC

7.7 In addition, in 2019 work was carried out around Milton Keynes to provide additional facilities for existing students at schools within the Borough. Planning permission was granted in September 2019 for the extension of Fairfields Primary School in order to accommodate secondary level pupils from Watling Academy whilst the above confirmed new Watling Academy campus is built. Other permitted schemes include construction of a new sixth form lobby at The Radcliffe School (Wolverton) (19/01915/FUL) and construction of a new classroom/dining area at Oakgrove School (Oakgrove) (19/00496/FUL). Considering Strategic Objective 6 and Policies EH1-3 of Plan:MK, it is considered that MKC has made progress towards increasing the capacity of MK's Educational System.

Increasing the range of qualifications possessed by MK residents

7.8 Section 6 of the Monitoring Framework in Appendix F of Plan:MK (2019) sets the target of increasing the proportion of the working age population qualified to NVQ2 level, NVQ4 level and above. MKC does not currently gather this information. However, Table 3 shows the range of skills infrastructure in the borough and the broad learning level of each facility.

Table 7.3: Skills infrastructure in Milton Keynes based on 2019 data⁴²

Level	Infrastructure
Primary	107 schools, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Independent schools • 5 Special schools
Secondary	21 schools, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Independent schools • 6 Special schools
Further Education	15 Further education schools and colleges, including Milton Keynes College
Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Campus Milton Keynes (campus of University of Bedfordshire) • Open University HQ
In development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new undergraduate university being developed in conjunction with Cranfield University, with a focus on technology.

⁴² <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/business/local-economic-assessment-2019>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Institute of Digital Technology at Bletchley Park (developed by a consortium led by Milton Keynes College alongside partners including Microsoft, KPMG, McAfee, Evidence Talks, VWFS).
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- 7.9** As evidenced by Table 7.3, the borough features a range of schools providing students with qualifications and education at a range of levels. Although, there are not any detailed statistics about the number of qualifications currently held by the population, including data about the proportion of the working age population qualified to NVQ2 & above and NVQ4 & above as required by Strategic Objective 6 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework. The only reliable dataset covering the whole of the boroughs' population in this topic area is data from the 2011 Census, which, while thorough, is considerably out of date for the purpose of determining 2019 statistics.
- 7.10** Strategic Objective 6 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework also seeks to monitor socio-economic groupings of the working age population. The 2011 Census collected this type of data, however, its relevance to the present day is limited. Gross earnings and GVA per capita statistics are also listed as indicator bundles in the Monitoring Framework, however, these matters are already addressed in chapter 6 (Economy) of this report, so they do not need to be covered again in-depth here. For the purpose of assessing against section 6 of the Monitoring Framework, the data captured in the Economy chapter on these metrics will serve as a benchmark for analysis in future AMRs. Although, briefly, it is noted that Milton Keynes is ranked as one of the top UK cities for existing and forecast growth in employment rates and GVA: a promising outlook. However, analysis in future AMRs will have to be mindful of the potential impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on growth statistics.
- 7.11** Further Census surveys will be carried out in 2021 and so more data on the borough's status in this area will be available soon. Notwithstanding this, research carried out by the Centre for Cities think tank in 2017 Centre for Cities data (2017) found that 37.4% of the working age population has a qualification at NVQ4 or above. It is noted that this data relates to a time prior to adoption of Plan:MK. It clearly therefore cannot allow a direct assessment of the performance of Plan:MK in increasing the range of qualifications held by MK residents. However, the figure can serve as a benchmark for future assessment of this topic when up-to-date data is available.

Development of MK's Knowledge Industries

- 7.12** Strategic Objective 6 of the Monitoring Framework in Appendix F of Plan:MK (2019) sets a target of increasing the proportion of net additional jobs in knowledge-based industries. Plan:MK defines the knowledge-based economy as "intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence. The key component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources". The Monitoring Framework also sets the target of "Development of the Science and Innovation Habitat (SIH)". However, SIH is not currently an active scheme and so MKC will not continue to monitor on the development of the SIH per se. However, the development of and innovation of the scientific sector are clearly important for the Borough's continued growth; MKC

will continue to assess progress in these respects through its monitoring of MK's knowledge industries.

- 7.13** Currently there isn't any data available about the number of jobs within knowledge-based industries in MK. However, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) does provide information about the number of VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises within Local Authority areas by sector, including the 'Information & communication' and 'Professional, scientific and technical' sectors. Table 4 shows that the number of enterprises in MK's 'Information & communication' sector steadily rose between 2016 and 2019, reaching a peak of 2,515 enterprises on the 15 March 2019. The number of enterprises in MK's 'Professional, scientific & technical' sector has been less consistent, dipping from 2,445 in 2017 to 2,355 in 2018, and then rising to 2,385 on the 15 March 2019.
- 7.14** It is however important to note that this latest dataset, because it is from a snapshot pre-dating adoption of Plan:MK, is of limited relevance to an assessment of the performance of Plan:MK. We shall have to wait for additional snapshot data for 2020 to be published (snapshot expected on 13 March 2020 and data release in September/October 2020) before drawing any conclusions about the effectiveness of Plan:MK policies in facilitating growth in the knowledge industry.
- 7.15** Notwithstanding this, there is evidence of ongoing interest and investment in the knowledge industry in the borough. In July 2019, planning permission was granted for the installation of additional liquid nitrogen storage tanks at a research and development facility in Tilbrook, owned by UK Biocentre Ltd, a biomedical research business partnered with the National Health Service. Accordingly, there are indications that MK's knowledge industry is growing, however, further monitoring of this issue over the next monitoring year shall be required before concrete conclusions based on a wide enough dataset can be made.

Table 7.4: The number of VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises within MK by sector⁴³.

Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019 (15.03.2019)
Information & Communication	2,220	2,315	2,390	2,515
Professional, scientific, technical	2,440	2,445	2,355	2,385

- 7.16** In addition, the latest data analysis from the Centre for Cities (CfC) think tank notes that in 2018 18.65% of the jobs in the city are within Knowledge Intensive Business Services. Nationally, this percentage placed Milton Keynes 7th out of 62 cities across the UK for the proportion of jobs in this sector. Further monitoring of this data in next year's AMR will permit further analysis of MK's knowledge economy against the benchmark indicators set out above.

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/ukbusinessactivitysizeandlocation>

Policy Context

- 8.1** Four of the 17 strategic objectives (SO) within Plan: MK (2019) focus on transport matters: numbers 1, 3, 12 and 13.

Strategic Objective 1 states:

‘To reflect the recommendations of the MK Futures 2050 Commission Report, the land use planning implications of the Strategy for 2050 and its Six Big Projects: Making Milton Keynes the hub of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor. Enhancing lifelong learning opportunities through the establishment of a new university for Milton Keynes. Learning 2050 – providing world class education. Smart, Shared, Sustainable Mobility for all. Renaissance: CMK creating an even stronger city centre fit for the 21st century. Milton Keynes: The Creative and Cultured City.’

Strategic Objective 3 states:

‘To reflect the National Infrastructure Commission Interim Report (November 2016) and support development along the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor in accordance with the MKC’s preferred route(3).’

Strategic Objective 12 states:

‘To manage increased travel demands through: Smart, shared, sustainable mobility. Promoting improvements to public transport and supporting the development of the East – West rail link between Oxford and Cambridge, including the Aylesbury Spur. Encouraging an increased number of people to walk and cycle by developing an expanded and improved redway network. Extending the grid road pattern into any major new development areas. Utilising demand management measures to reduce the growth of road congestion, whilst upgrading key traffic routes such as the A421, A422 and the A509.’

Strategic Objective 13 states:

‘To mitigate the Borough’s impact on climate change and reduce carbon dioxide emissions through:

- Locating development away from areas of flood risk and significant biodiversity value.
- Promoting community energy networks and strategic renewable energy developments.
- Reducing waste generation and increasing the amount of material recycled.
- Sustainable transport initiatives.’

- 8.2** Chapter 8 of Plan:MK (Policies CT1 – CT8 and CT10) relates to highways, transport and mobility matters. These policies address a range of issues, including: the sustainability of the transport network, movement and access, walking and cycling, crossovers on red ways, public transport, low emission vehicles, freight, the grid road network and parking provision. Policies SD1 and SD9 (in part) prescribe how these objectives are to be achieved within place-making exercises and strategic urban extensions.
- 8.3** Since the adoption of Plan:MK, feedback has been received on policies CT6 (Low Emission Vehicles) and CT10 (Parking Provision). Policy CT6 (among other criteria) requires all new developments to provide electric vehicle charging points. Clarification has been requested on how to define charging points and how they should be built, as well as confirmation whether the provision of charging point cable ducting alone accords with the policy. These questions will be addressed in the upcoming Sustainable Construction SPD. Policy CT10 requires all new developments to provide varying levels of parking provision, in line with the Milton Keynes Parking Standards SPD 2016, unless mitigating circumstances dictate otherwise.
- 8.4** Clarification has been requested on whether the MKC's parking standards are minimum or maximum standards. Paragraph 2.17 of the MK Parking Standards SPD states that "with the exception of the parking standards for CMK and Campbell Park in the CMK Business Neighbourhood Plan (reproduced in Appendix C), the parking standards show the number of spaces that developments should provide. The CMK Business Neighbourhood Plan standards show the maximum number of spaces that should be provided." In other words, apart from the standards in the CMK Business Neighbourhood Plan, the parking standards are minimum standards.
- 8.5** The Monitoring Framework within Appendix F of the Plan sets out the monitoring arrangements (targets and indicator bundles) needed to measure the effectiveness of these policies in achieving the above stated SOs and policies.

Public Transport

- 8.6** In terms of public bus transport, total bus ridership (passenger journeys on local bus services, as reported by bus operators) between 01 January 2019 and 31 December 2019 (8,998,810 journeys) was up when compared to the period between 01 January 2018 and 31 December 2019 (8,804,689 journeys). However, ridership during the January – December 2019 period was not as high as during the Jan 2017 - Dec 2017 period (9,426,342 journeys).
- 8.7** In addition, despite the overall increase during the 2019 calendar year period compared to the 2018 calendar year period, data shows that total youth ridership on buses has decreased during that time by 24,149 (-/+1,000 due to incomplete December data). It does not appear as if there is a main reason for the decline specific to MK, as local bus patronage has been declining in England (outside of London) over the last few years. As noted by the Passenger Transport Officer, declining bus reliability, increasing fares, lack of commercial marketing and frequent turnover and shortages

of drivers have all played a part in decreased bus ridership. However, it is noted that the historic datasets discussed here relate to a time when Plan:MK was not the adopted local plan. Therefore, limited conclusions can be drawn here about the performance of Plan:MK policies. Next years' Authority Monitoring Report will revisit bus journey statistics to determine progress towards Plan:MK Monitoring Framework targets. However, it is likely that the coronavirus pandemic will negatively impact bus ridership levels during 2020/2021.



Figure 8.1: Photograph of Arriva Bus Service in Milton Keynes. Credit: MKC Public Transport Team.

8.8 Notwithstanding the decrease in bus ridership, services to and from Milton Keynes University Hospital remain frequent with no significant changes. Next year's Authority Monitoring Report will assess what proportion of households can reach a hospital in 30 minutes by public transport, as targeted in sections 12 and 14 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework. The only bus service in MK which has seen frequency improvements is service 1 which runs from Newport Pagnell to CMK via Willen. This has improved access to the following Health Centres:

- Newport Pagnell Medical Centre,
- Newport Pagnell Medical Centre at Willen,
- Neath Hill Health Centre,
- Sovereign Medical Centre in Pennyland.

8.9 In addition, 19 new bus stops were created in 2019, in both existing and new development areas. Moreover, the rollout of the ViaVan on-demand ride-sharing service has continued and has seen a 30% expansion which now includes the Brickhill corridor. This has improved access to the

Blackberry Clinic in Walnut Tree. The map in Appendix A of this report highlights the areas of the borough that are within 400 metres of a bus stop. Statistical analysis of the number of new dwellings within 400 metres of a bus stop has not been possible in this report due to difficulties sourcing the datasets required. However, next year's Monitoring Report will revisit how this target can be measured, allowing a critique of a larger dataset that is more representative of development permitted in accordance with Plan:MK policies.

- 8.10** Taking the above information into account, it is considered that public transport in the borough has been supported in 2019/20, in accordance with Strategic Objectives 12 and 13 of Plan:MK. However, further monitoring of bus ridership shall be required in order to identify whether any revisions need to be made to Policy CT5 (Public Transport) in Plan:MK and whether the targets in section 12 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework are being met. It has not been possible to gather data regarding bus satisfaction and punctuality for this year's report, however, these indicators will be explored in the 2020/2021 Authority Monitoring Report.

Transport Infrastructure

- 8.11** As covered in more detail below from paragraph 8.26, there are a few nationally and regionally significant infrastructure projects which may/will directly affect the borough: East West Rail, the proposed East/West Expressway and the single- to dual-carriageway conversion works on the A421. More specific to Milton Keynes, MKC's Transport Infrastructure Delivery Plan was published in October 2019⁴⁴. The Plan contains a list of interventions needed to support the level of future growth set out within the Plan: MK Vision, such as expanding redway provision in CMK, building a new bus interchange in CMK, and installing new wayfinding signs in the borough. It contains a list of challenges and opportunities, as well as an action plan involving the next steps for taking forward the interventions.
- 8.12** Work during 2019 on Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) led to MKC looking to begin installation of new traffic signals at 5 prioritised junctions in Jan 2020; at the end of March 2020, three of these are complete. However, due to travel restrictions linked to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this work is on hold as of April 2020. Work also progressed on Variable Message Sign (VMS) and CCTV, and Urban Traffic Control (UTC) and traffic management systems, which aim to improve the efficiency and reduce congestion in the transport network; work on these projects is ongoing as of early April 2020. Work on the Super Routes project involved painting ceilings and new lighting installations undertaken on all underpasses on the H6 (Childs Way) and V8 (Marlborough Street) routes. Wayfinding totems were also installed along the H6, whilst work finalising the finger posts that will be rolled out across the H6 is close to completion. In addition, work started on the scheme to install wayfinding totems and finger posts for the V8 route.
- 8.13** Additional crossing points across the V4 (Watling Street) – a new underpass and a signalised at grade crossing – were installed between the WEA and Two Mile Ash and between Fairfields and Fullers Slade to increase pedestrian safety. Work also continued for an ongoing programme to

⁴⁴ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways-and-transport-hub/policy-and-strategy-hub/transport-policy>

upgrade streetlights in the borough to energy efficient LED lights, which saves money on energy and maintenance and provides a clear crisper light targeted where needed.

- 8.14** Other Highways projects included joint-schemes with Passenger Transport officers to: light bus shelters, install dropped kerbs for accessibility and access for bus users, carry out road safety schemes, install collapsible directional street signs on the grid road system and work on a flood defence project installing bunds at Dag Lane in Stoke Goldington. Traffic calming and speed cushion measures were also inserted at a range of locations across the borough, including: Little Linford Lane and Pennycress Way in Newport Pagnell, Livesey Hill and Faraday Drive in Shenley Lodge, Avebury Boulevard and Station Square in CMK, St. Leger Drive in Great Linford, Bekonscot Court and Broadway Avenue in Giffard Park, Dunthorne Way in Grange Farm, Torrington Drive in Brooklands, Countess Way and Tanfield Square in Broughton and various sites in Neath Hill.
- 8.15** Based on this information, it is considered that the improvements to wayfinding and pedestrian infrastructure support the objectives of Strategic Objective 12, as well as Policy CT3 of Plan:MK. The works to VMS, CCTV, UTC and traffic management systems also mark progress towards meeting Strategic Objectives 1, 12 and 13 as well as Policy CT1 of Plan:MK.
- 8.16** Also relevant to this section is the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure within the Borough. Milton Keynes has one of the largest electric vehicle charging point networks in the country. Within Milton Keynes there are a total of 258 public charging devices and a total of 88 public rapid charging devices. With the population of Milton Keynes being 268,607 at the end of 2018 there were 97 charging devices per 100,000 population. When compared with neighbouring Local Authorities, there are an above average number of charging devices in Milton Keynes per 100,000 population, putting it on a par with levels seen in Inner and Outer London boroughs. In 2018, Aylesbury Vale (now part of Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority) for example had 106 total charging devices and 16 total rapid devices, with a population of 199,448, equalling 15 devices per 100,000 population. Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe (all now part of Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority) had similar charging device levels to Aylesbury Vale. In addition, Central Bedfordshire has 38 charging devices and 9 rapid charging devices, with 13 devices per 100,000 population.
- 8.17** As part of MKC's Go Ultra Low City programme, The Electric Vehicle Experience Centre (EVEC) opened in Milton Keynes Shopping Centre in summer 2017 and has welcomed over 60,000 visitors in its first year of operation. It's the UK's first brand neutral showroom for electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) providing education and advice on choosing and using ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs). There are a range of vehicles available to be booked for a 20-minute test drive and for four-day or seven-day loan periods.
- 8.18** Milton Keynes Coachway is the location of the UK's largest electric vehicle charging hub, featuring eight 50 kW POLAR rapid charge points. In February 2019, planning permission was granted for four IONITY 350 kW charge points (which provide ultra-rapid charging); these have been installed adjacent to the hub. The charging hub is in addition to the existing lower powered charge points at the Coachway. Private citizens in Milton Keynes are also starting to think about installing/using their own EV supporting infrastructure, as evidenced by the permission 19/01959/FUL, granted in

September 2019 for the installation of a solar EV charging carport at a private residence. Although, it is noted this is a lone example, so it is not necessarily indicative of a wider trend. However, it also must be acknowledged that installation of solar panels and charging points at existing residences does not necessarily require planning consent; although, MKC is not currently in a position to monitor such retrofitting measures when they occur.

- 8.19** In summary, these EV developments support progress towards meeting Strategic Objectives 12 and 13 in Plan:MK, in terms of managing travel demands through sustainable mobility and also through mitigating the Borough's impact on climate change and reducing carbon dioxide emissions through sustainable transport initiatives. These efforts also set the foundations for mitigating the risk identified in the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework of failing to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport in line with Local Transport Plan objectives.

Use of Private Transport Modes

- 8.20** Due to a lack of comprehensive data on recent private transport usage (stemming from a reliance on 2011 Census data on this topic, as noted in ITP's 2019 MK Mobility and Rapid Transit Study⁴⁵), it is not possible to currently measure the overall modal share of different transport options within the borough, whether it be to and from work, school/university and/or leisure activities. For the same reason, it is not possible to accurately determine current car ownership data. It is therefore not possible to (in this year's monitoring report at least) determine how (in line with the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework) progress is being made towards Strategic Objective 1 - which aims to meet global carbon reduction targets by achieving a transport modal shift – and Strategic Objective 12 – which aims to achieve the Mobility Strategy target for modal share of school journeys. However, MKC looks forward to the results of the 2021 Census which will provide clarity on the modal share of different transport uses in the Borough. In addition, it is noted that this report does not assess traffic congestion levels in the Borough as required by the Monitoring Framework due to lack of data; however, MKC will explore how to capture data on congestion and address this point in next year's report.
- 8.21** Notwithstanding this, MKC has some data on bicycle use and amount of pedestrian travel in the borough. Installation of walking and cycling counters at 10 locations around MK has enabled the recording of pedestrian and cyclist counts during 2019. Figure 8.2 shows the overall count data during 2019.

Table 8.1: Pedestrian and Cyclist Counts in MK, 2019		
Pedestrians	Cyclists	Combined
1,331,017 (64%)*	751,598 (36%)	2,082,615

⁴⁵ <https://www.mkfutures2050.com/evidence-for-the-strategy-for-2050>

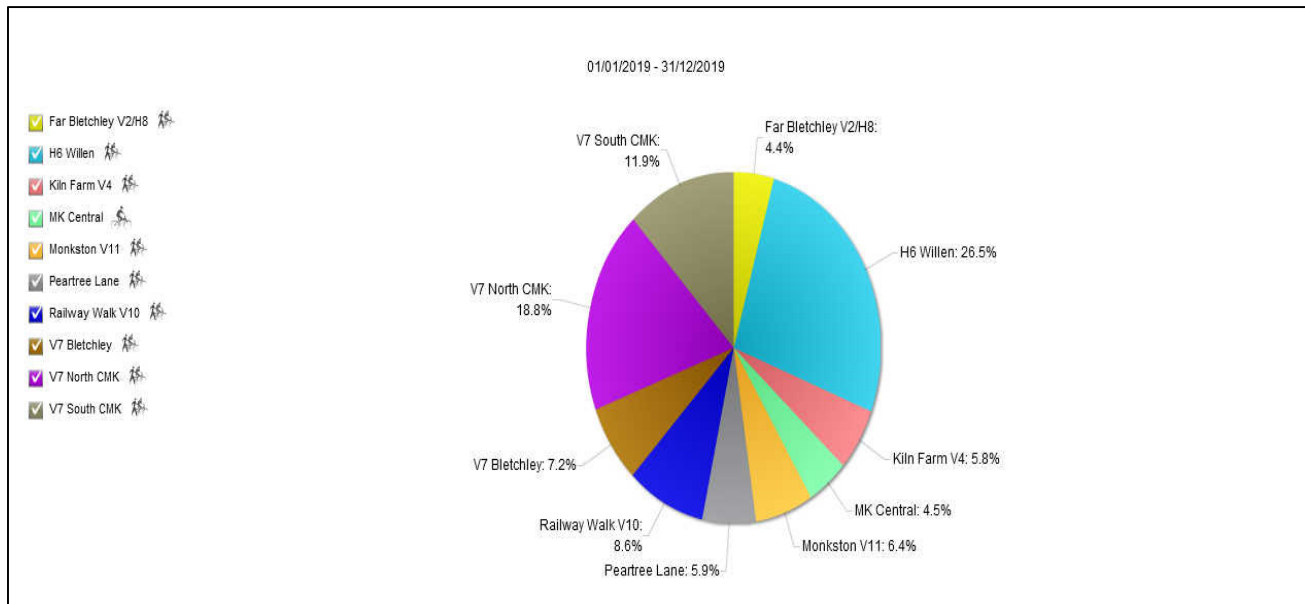


Figure 8.2: Percentage of overall bicycle counts at each counter location during 2019.

- 8.22** Despite differences in total usage, there were parallels between cyclist and pedestrian use pattern trends which generally depended on the seasons: walking and cycling occurrence peaked during the warmer period between March 2019 and October 2019. These trends highlight the challenge of encouraging increased cycling and walking year-round. As figure 8.3 shows, the busiest site in MK over the year was the counter at Willen (situated on the H6). This site is on a redway Super Route that is close to CMK and which runs by a busy leisure area with good redway and Leisure Route links; data for this site highlights the importance of good cross-connectivity for encouraging increased use of the transport network. This point is reinforced by studying the location of the counter which recorded the least amount of walking/cycling: Far Bletchley (91,432 counts). This counter is towards the end of a redway Super Route, at the South East corner of MK, with poor onward connections into Far Bletchley.
- 8.23** Data comparison indicates that, apart from at the Far Bletchley (V2/H8) counter site, cyclist counts were down in Nov/Dec 2019 compared to the same period in 2018. The greatest decrease was 26% at the Kiln Farm (V4) site, where cyclist counts fell from 154 to 114. Due to the small size of the dataset (less than two full calendar years) at present, this decrease in cycle use is not considered reason to re-evaluate Policy CT3 (Walking and Cycling) in Plan:MK. Additionally, given the young age of the dataset, the ability to determine large scale trends is limited. Further analysis of count data will take place in next years' Annual Monitoring Report to assess progress towards a smart, shared and sustainable mobility system in the Borough as targeted in section 12 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework.
- 8.24** Data collated from January, February and March 2020 shows mixed variations in pedestrian and cyclist counts at the counter sites around the borough. Some areas show count increases while others show count decreases. Noticeably however, overall counts between February 2020 and March 2020 were significantly lower than in the respective months in 2019 (see figure 8.3). This decrease is most visible at the CMK V7 North, CMK V7 South and Kiln Farm V4 counter sites. This may reflect fewer workers commuting to/from work due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, as

these sites are in areas of the Milton Keynes urban area with high levels of commercial activity. While counts were lower at the Willen H6, Monkston V11 and Peartree Lane (close to Milton Keynes Hospital) counter sites in February 2020 relative to February 2019, counts at these sites were higher in March 2020 than in March 2019. While the higher count at the Willen H6 site may reflect Willen's status as an area with many open recreation spaces suitable for daily exercise while social distancing, it is not clear why the other sites also experienced higher counts.

Figure 8.4: Pedestrian and Cyclist Counts at counter sites in Milton Keynes City.	
Counting Period	Count Total
November 2018	138597
November 2019	124106
% change	-11.68%
December 2018	126334
December 2019	114022
% change	-10.80%
January 2019	140886
January 2020	133389
% change	-5.3%
February 2019	145060
February 2020	109159
% change	-32.9%
March 2019	164384
March 2020	131758
% change	-24.8%

Air Quality

8.25 Appendix F (the Monitoring Framework) of Plan:MK notes that a key target of Strategic Objective 12 is to have no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in the borough. The borough has one AQMA located in Olney, which encompasses all properties fronting Bridge Street, High Street South and including part of the Market Place. Air quality data from 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 shows that the annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) objective was not exceeded for four years running⁴⁶. Factors affecting year on year changes in NO₂ levels can include the weather, although, improvements in engine technology, particularly introduction of the euro VI engines in HGVs has played a large role. Traffic counts of vehicles passing through Olney have also remained relatively static over this period.

8.26 A cautionary approach to whether to revoke the Olney AQMA has therefore been adopted. Based on provisional data from 2019, the NO₂ Annual Mean Concentration (µg/m³) recorded by the road box automatic monitoring station on High Street South, Olney (in the AQMA) increased slightly from 19.9 in 2018 to 23.9. Although there has been this increase, Environmental Health Officers advise that this is not statistically significant to the point where the cautionary approach to

⁴⁶ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-trading-standards/pollution/local-air-quality-management>

revocation of the AQMA is discontinued. Clarification on the status of the AQMA shall be received following publication of MKC's 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) and consultation with DEFRA, expected in the summer/autumn of 2020. Due to a lack of finalised data and how Air Quality ASRs are written retrospectively, air quality figures for January to March 2020 will not be available until publication of the 2021 Air Quality ASR. Progress is therefore being made towards the target in Strategic Objective 12 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework of having no AQMAs in the Borough.

- 8.27** Moreover, it is noted that failure to meet Local Transport Plan objectives resulting in increased CO2 emissions from transport is a 'risk' outlined in section 13 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework. However, following DEFRA requirements, the Air Quality ASR does not report on CO2 emissions levels in the Borough. Due to the lack of air quality monitoring stations covering the whole borough, it is difficult to monitor CO2 emissions from transport. MKC will explore how this risk can be monitored over the 2020/2021 monitoring period and report on this point in the 2020/2021 AMR. Having said that, monitoring of NO2, PM10, PM25 and SO2 levels will continue to be a proxy for transport use in the Borough as outlined above; next year's AMR and Air Quality ASR will provide further data on levels of these pollutants.

Broadband Connectivity

- 8.28** Contained within Chapter 8 of Plan:MK is Policy CT9 (Digital Communications) which sets out how MKC wishes to see all premises on all new developments served by digital communication services that provide at least super-fast broadband speeds. Aside from the its Development Management function where policy CT9 is used to ensure new developments are digitally connected, MKC has been involved in several projects undertaken to improve broadband coverage in the borough. The first of which is the central government initiated Building Digital UK Broadband Delivery (BDUK) project.
- 8.29** There have been three phases to the BDUK project. Phase 1 carried out work between 2014 and 2016 to extend fibre coverage (providing Superfast broadband) to approximately 97% of premises in the borough. Phase 2 carried out works between 2016 and 2018 to provide coverage to around 98% of the borough. Phase 3 (started in 2019 and ongoing in 2020) will increase coverage to around 99.1% of homes and businesses in Milton Keynes.
- 8.30** Another ongoing project, started in 2018, is involvement in the 'CityFibre: Gigabit City' project. The scheme is a joint venture, worth at least £40 million of investment, between CityFibre and Vodafone to deliver Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP) broadband provision in the borough, with MKC acting as a facilitator of the works over the delivery period. The new FTTP network will serve as an extension to the existing 160km full fibre network. Once finished, almost all homes and businesses in the borough will have FTTP access. Under the City Fibre, BDUK and further Openreach commercial deployments, 71% of premises can now order a full fibre "ultrafast" broadband service.

- 8.31** MKC is also leading the 'MK: 5G Connecting Communities Testbed' project, in conjunction with a consortium of partners including BT, Huawei, Satellite Applications Catapult and The Open University. The project is funded by the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and the Local Growth Fund. It aims to deploy a research and development focused 5G infrastructure network across key sites in MK, with the aim of speeding digital links between people and infrastructure across the borough. These sites include the Stadium, Bletchley and CMK rail stations, the Hospital, university campuses, key junctions on the M1 and a number of rural communities. As these projects are ongoing it is not possible to report on their results. However, their status will be checked within the next AMR.

Nationally and Regionally Significant Infrastructure

- 8.32** It is noted that Strategic Objective 3 of Plan:MK seeks to 'support development along the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor in accordance with MKC's preferred route' for the planned East-West Expressway. It is important to note however that delivery of the Expressway is a matter beyond the control of MKC. The Expressway project is currently paused (June 2020) following the latest Department for Transport Road Investment Strategy (2020-2025) and MKC awaits further updates on next steps.
- 8.33** The East West Rail (EWR) project has progressed in 2019. In terms of work on the 'Western' section, work is ongoing under permitted development rights along parts of the route but with respect to Milton Keynes specifically, MKC transport, planning and highways officers have been working with Network Rail on the delivery of the replacement bridge deck on the Bletchley Viaduct, due to be installed in 2020-2021. Work on design of the Central Section (Bedford to Cambridge) is progressing following selection of a preferred corridor (Route E: Bedford Midland – south of St Neots/Tempsford area – Cambourne – Cambridge). Consultation of the route plans is expected later in 2020. A consultation relating to upgrade works on the Bedford-Bletchley Marston Vale line is due to take place in later 2020, in anticipation of higher levels of line use come the start of EWR services. MKC also started in 2019 ongoing work in relation to consideration of a future online bridge replacement at Bow Brickhill, where the railway level crossing may have to close as part of EWR works.
- 8.34** Proposals to redevelop Bletchley station progressed, with MKC in discussion with Network Rail regarding using in-kind financial contributions to redesign and deliver a new eastern entrance in time for EWR. However, updated passenger projections led to MKC being advised in October that more substantial redevelopment of the station is likely required in order to accommodate EWR. MKC is now awaiting information from Network Rail and EWR Company about what level of redevelopment shall be required, leaving work on the scheme to develop the eastern entrance currently on hold.
- 8.35** In 2019, work progressed on delivery of expanding the section of the A421 between Eagle Farm/Magna Park (on the east side of the city) and Junction 13 of the M1, which is planned to reduce road traffic congestion into MK. As of January 2020, work on the project is ongoing with work expected to be complete in December 2020."

8.36 Considering the above, work is clearly progressing to realise the Borough's place at the centre of the Ox-Cam growth arc, in line with the indicators and actions outlined for Strategic Objectives 1 and 3 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework. MKC is also assisting delivering East West Rail services to Oxford and Aylesbury by 2023/2024 – a target of Strategic Objective 12 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework. However, these are very much ongoing processes and ones that MKC will be able to report further on in next year's Authority Monitoring Report. In addition, given the young age of Plan:MK and lack of monitoring data about development permitted whilst it has been adopted, it is not possible at this stage to make definitive conclusions about whether any of the actions and contingencies (outlined in the Monitoring Framework) related to the Strategic Objectives at the start of this chapter need to be initiated.

Policy Context

- 9.1** Strategic Objective 15 of Plan:MK is “to protect, maintain and enhance the natural, built and historic environment of the Borough, including its linear parks, character and assets of the New City and the towns and villages throughout the Borough, and to protect and maintain the open countryside in the Borough”. Chapter 13 of the Plan addresses ‘Heritage’, setting out how MKC will meet the NPPF’s requirement for a ‘positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment’, whilst Policy HE1 of Plan:MK sets out the circumstances in which developments involving heritage assets will be acceptable. Section 15 in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix F of the Plan identifies the targets, indicator bundles, risks and events to consider when determining whether Strategic Objective 15 is being met.

New Town Heritage Register

- 9.2** Strategic Objective 15 of the Monitoring Framework identifies ‘Complete and Publish a Local List’ as a target for the plan period. The Conservation and Archaeology Team and partners, such as the MK Forum, as well as the general public, have made progress towards this target during 2019, with 225 potential list entries being finalised. As of January/February 2020, work by MKC is progressing on selection of definite list entries. Publication of the first of 50 list entries to be added to the Register is expected by September 2020. This work also contributes to lessening the risk of “Impacts” on the unique features of the New Town as identified in Strategic Objective 15 of the Monitoring Framework.

Heritage at Risk Register

- 9.3** Strategic Objective 15 of the Monitoring Framework identifies ‘Complete and publish a Heritage Risk Register’ as a target for the plan period; this target is complete. The Heritage at Risk Register – for heritage assets at risk of decay and/or total loss - was first produced by the Conservation and Archaeology Team and published in June 2018. Work by the Conservation and Archaeology Team to update the Register took place during 2019, with publication of the updated Register in January 2020. The January 2020 version of the Register lists 38 heritage assets that are at risk.
- 9.4** Each asset is assigned a risk rating, reflecting the varying degrees of risk of further degradation to the asset, ranging from ‘A - immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed’ through to ‘F – repair scheme in progress and (where applicable) end use or user identified; functionally redundant buildings with new use agreed but not yet implemented’. Of these 38 assets, 7 have been marked as ‘to be removed’ from the Register (see table 1 for details), reflecting positive intervention work by the Conservation and Archaeology Team/MKC to ensure that they are no longer at risk. Removal of these assets from the Register is a positive indicator as per the Monitoring Framework.

Table 9.1: Heritage Assets to be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register (as of January 2020).

Asset Name & Location	Designation
Fenny Stratford Mortuary Chapel, Bletchley	Non-Designated Heritage Asset
Bradwell Abbey Pilgrim Chapel	Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument
The Barn, Thirlby Lane, Shenley Church End	Grade II Listed Building, Conservation Area
St Peters Church (Ruin), Stanton Low, Stantonbury	Grade II Listed Building
Tower of Church of St Mary Magdalene, Stony Stratford	Grade II* Listed Building, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Conservation Area
26/28 High Street, Stony Stratford	Grade II Listed Building, Conservation Area
Filgrave Clock Tower, Filgrave	Grade II Listed Building

New Town Heritage Explorers

- 9.5** In relation to the historic built environment in the borough, particularly the Urban Area, MKC and its partner Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre (MKCDC) have secured National Lottery Heritage Fund investment thanks to National Lottery players, for a pioneering *New Town Heritage Explorers* project in Milton Keynes. The project is designed to build on the New Town Heritage Register and support active heritage learning, volunteering, involvement in flagship events and public programme activities. The project has had four key aims: promoting the New Town Heritage Register, raising awareness of the unique design heritage of Milton Keynes, engaging young people in exploration of MK's New Town heritage and inspiring the next generation of civic guardians, supporting the *MK Heritage Open Days* programme and the city's first ever *A Festival of Creative Urban Living (AFCUL)*.
- 9.6** In 2019, a number of events related to the project took place, including: the 10-day MK Heritage Open Days programme, AFCUL in September/October 2019, workshops relating to development of the New Town Heritage Toolkit, a set of instructions for characterising the built environment. Work will continue the project in 2020. The project is being delivered in conjunction and consultation with a range of local organisations and community groups, including: MKCDC, MK Arts and Heritage Alliance, MK Heritage Foundation, MK Forum, Heritage MK, MK Academy, MK Parks Trust, Community Action MK, MK Community Foundation, MK College and Global Outreach Foundation MK.



Figure 9.1: Arts & Heritage Alliance Forum event associated with New Town Heritage Explorers. Credit: Heritage and International Partnerships Officer.

- 9.7** Milton Keynes was designated on 23 January 1967 as the last of the third wave of new towns under the 1946 New Towns Act. As part of Milton Keynes 'Birthday Week' activities, MKC in partnership with MK Archives and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) again hosted the annual UK New Towns Sharing Day, this time at the Grade II Listed Milton Keynes Central Library on the 23 January 2020.
- 9.8** The event was first held on 23 January 2017 as part of Milton Keynes's 50th birthday celebrations and this is the third time the event has been held. The event gives MKC and other invited new towns (with Basildon, Harlow, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City also presenting alongside Milton Keynes) the opportunity to learn about some of the projects, plans and developments that have been happening in 2019 or which are planned for 2020 within New Towns and how heritage and culture are driving growth, regeneration, change or 'new town reinvention' in our respective places. There were also New Town exhibitions and stalls in the Central Library Foyer for delegates and the general public.
- 9.9** This year, MKC partnered with the TCPA who presented their latest work around New Towns and who ran a workshop on identifying shared issues and the potential for a network of UK New Towns.

Notable Developments/Decisions

- 9.10** During 2019 two major developments were completed which involve the Grade II Listed Shopping Building in Central Milton Keynes. The first of which was the construction of a multi-storey car park at the north eastern end of the Shopping Building, next to the John Lewis department store. The

distinctive 'waffle' designs of the wall sections infilling the building frame, colonnades and separation distance from the Shopping Building has resulted in a building which does not read as part of the Shopping Building, while respecting the setting of the listed building through use of similar (but not exact) structural proportions.



Figure 9.2: Shopping Building and new Multi-Storey Car Park and Porte Cochere adjacent. Credit: Simon Peart, MKC Conservation & Archaeology Team

- 9.11** The other major scheme involved extensions and alterations to 116 Silbury Arcade, the former BHS and now Primark unit, to provide additional retail trading floor and associated roof top plant, enclosure and associated works. The design of the development replicates the original 'reflective glass panels within a steel frame' construction of the listed building. Overall, the works have resulted in less than substantial harm to the character and special interest of the listed building, which when accounting for the economic benefits of the development for town centre vitality, is acceptable.



Figure 9.3: Third storey extension to the Shopping Building nearing completion. Credit: Simon Peart, MKC Conservation & Archaeology Team

- 9.12** A further notable development completed during 2019 is the restoration of the Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument Bradwell Abbey Pilgrim Chapel. The chapel is of medieval (14th century) origin and noted as a destination for pilgrims. In the past the building has had leaks in its roof, resulting in both the integrity of the roof and internal wall and vaulted ceiling paintings (which are of national significance) being at risk.



Figure 9.4: Bradwell Abbey Chapel. Credit: Richard Harding, Currie & Brown.

- 9.13** Consequently, it was placed on the Heritage at Risk Register by Historic England. Restoration works to resolve these issues, funded by both MKC and Historic England, were completed in 2019 and as such represent a significant benefit to the upkeep of the borough's historic environment, as well as providing a significant resource for the site tenants MKCDC. MKCDC are key partners for MKC in delivering its heritage public access and its schools and community education programmes on Milton Keynes history and settlements across time.
- 9.14** In terms of notable permissions granted in 2019 relating to heritage assets, proposals to extend the Grade II listed Shopping Building in Central Milton Keynes were granted planning permission and listed building consent. These works involve alterations and extensions to the northern and southern flanks of the Shopping Building either side of the John Lewis store; creating two levels of additional trading floor-space for flexible Use Class A1 and/or A3 and/or A4 and/or D2; with associated plant, servicing and landscape works. The proposal would replicate the exterior detailing of the listed building: the 'reflective glass panels within a steel frame' noted above. Due to the loss of some of the original steel framing along the sides of the building as existing and impact on the openness of a section of Midsummer Arcade, the proposal will result in less than substantial harm to the listed building. However, as allowed by national and local planning policy, the additional trading floor provided by the proposal has benefits for the vitality of the shopping centre which outweigh the harm to the features of the listed building that are of special interest.

New National Heritage Listings

- 9.15** In 2019 six sites throughout the borough were considered for whether they should be added to the National Heritage List for England. One of these – Campbell Park in Central Milton Keynes – is still

under consideration. Three – The Agora Centre in Wolverton, The Point Cinema in Central Milton Keynes and the Bicycle Wall artwork in Stantonbury - were considered by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport based on the Principles of selection for listed buildings. However, the decision was made not to list these sites. Two of the sites that were considered were listed. Wavendon House Landscape was made a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and the New Bradwell War Memorial Clock Tower, Village Green, Newport Road, New Bradwell was listed as a Grade II asset. Based on these new listings and those put forward but not eventually listed, it is evident that the historic built environment continues to be of interest to local communities in Milton Keynes and that effort is being made to both recognise and preserve assets of historic importance within the borough.

Conservation Areas

9.16 Strategic Objective 15 of the Monitoring Framework in Appendix F of Plan:MK (2019) states that a target of the Plan is to 'Complete a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme for Bletchley Conservation Area'. During 2019, restoration work to the roof of Block H at Bletchley Park – home of the National Museum of Computing – was completed. This marked the end of works supported by a £600K (50:50 MKC: Historic England) funding stream linked to the Conservation Area Partnership Scheme for Bletchley Conservation Area (established in 2009). The Monitoring Framework target for this point is therefore met. The scheme provided works to buildings across the Park, in many cases to the vast, failing flat roof areas to both listed and unlisted buildings. Prior to these final works taking place, the roof of Block H was not watertight. The scope of works involved replacing the asbestos roof of block H, to repair and refurbish its cast iron rainwater goods and to replace rainwater goods installed during previous repairs.



Figure 9.5: An image of restoration works underway at grade II listed Block H, Bletchley Park. Credit: Bletchley Park.



Figure 9.6: St Paul's Church Olney. Credit: Martin Ellison, MKC Conservation & Archaeology Team.

9.17 MKC is currently engaged in the process of reviewing its 27 Conservation Areas. During 2019, four Reviews of the Bradwell Village, MK Village, Shenley Church End and Great Linford Conservation Areas were completed. Work started in 2019 on four other Reviews for the Stony Stratford, Willen, Woughton on the Green, and Bletchley Conservation Areas. In March 2020 the Stony Stratford, Willen and Bletchley Conservation Area Reviews were adopted. During 2019, a 'General Information Document' of the Conservation Area Review Programme was also produced for consultation. This document gives an overview of the Conservation Areas within the borough, the Borough of Milton Keynes' development over time, the areas geology and typography, building materials and national planning policy context. In March 2020 this document was adopted.

Archaeology

9.18 2019 was another busy year for fieldwork with 28 projects notified to the Historic Environment Record (HER), full list appended. Projects comprised: 1 historic building record; 16 trial trench evaluations, 2 geophysical surveys; 4 excavations and 5 watching briefs.

9.19 In addition to the Community Dig in Great Linford (see below), highlights included the excavation by Albion Archaeology in advance of sand at gravel extraction at Lathbury. This revealed Iron Age, Romano-British and early Saxon occupation. The early Saxon occupation comprised 12 sunken featured buildings, an unusual late Iron Age inhumation burial was also excavated accompanied by a copper alloy beaded torc and bracelet.



Figure 9.7: Copper alloy beaded torc from Lathbury. Credit: Albion Archaeology.

Community Archaeology

9.20 A community dig was held by The Parks Trust in Great Linford Manor Park between Monday 8th and Saturday 13th April 2019, with seven trenches being dug in front of the Manor House, near the ponds and in the Wilderness garden. Supervised by Cotswold Archaeology with input from MKC's Senior Archaeological Officer, the dig was held as part of the National Lottery funded project to Reveal, Revive and Restore the historic parkland.



Figure 9.8: Community dig at Great Linford. Credit: NA Crank, MKC Conservation and Archaeology Team.

9.21 The trenches were targeted on known features of interest and the results of a preceding programme of geophysical survey. Key findings included:

- a. The full profile of the ha-ha which formerly bisected the eastern end of the park, including a well-preserved drystone retaining wall which survives to a height of just over 1m (photo above);
- b. Between the pavilions and Linford Manor, a robbed-out wall line was encountered, together with an occupation deposit and pit dating to the 12th to 14th century, pre-dating the manor and formal parkland;

- c. Similarly, in the area of the Doric Seat, two walls were encountered, cut by the Doric Seat foundations. It is likely that these features also indicate activity pre-dating the establishment of the manor and park.

9.22 A total of 84 volunteer members of the public participated in the dig. A public Open Day at the end of the week engaged with a variety of visitors to the park, including the presentation of finds and guided site tours.

Outreach

9.23 2019's 13th Milton Keynes Archaeology Day: 'Archaeology in the Community' was another successful and well-attended event. This year's 'hand's on' activity for young people was provided by Cotswold Archaeology and proved very popular. Billed as '3D Techniques in Archaeology' they offered the chance to get hands on with some of the latest 3D scanning and virtual reality equipment and software as well as colouring and mosaic designing for the younger ones.



Figure 9.9: Cotswold Archaeology outreach event. Credit: NA Crank, MKC Conservation and Archaeology Team.

9.24 Another popular aspect of the event is the displays from active local fieldwork groups and societies. This year participants comprised 4 groups: Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society's Active Archaeology Group (Bucks AAG), The Upper Nene Archaeological Society (UNAS), Woughton Heritage Group, and Wing Heritage Group. The extensive displays of the 4 metal detectorists proved as popular as ever and included Archaeology Day regulars since 2008 Mick and Mel from the Magiovinium Metal Detector Club.

9.25 As in previous years the biggest draw of the day was the talks. The afternoon featured 4 half-hour talks on the event theme 'Archaeology in the Community'. 2020's MK Archaeology Day will be held in Milton Keynes Central Library on Saturday 7th November.

- 9.26** In addition to the Archaeology Day, the Senior Archaeological Officer also delivered talks on recent archaeological work in the borough to local societies in Bletchley and Little Woolstone.
- 9.27** In summary, while the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework does not require community archaeology and outreach programmes to take place per se, clearly this work helps raise public awareness of historic environments in the Borough which indirectly may lessen pressures to bring forward development which could harm those environments.

Performance of Plan:MK Policies

- 9.28** The 12 months that have passed since the adoption of Plan:MK allow an initial assessment of the performance/effectiveness of Policy HE1 (Heritage and Development). There have not been any significant challenges to the content or wording of HE1. Although, it is demonstrable that Plan:MK is playing an effective role in protecting against development which would potentially harm the local historic environment. There have been three notable 'appeal dismissed' appeal decisions relating to developments which would affect heritage assets in the borough. These decisions are evident of minimising the risks and according with the actions set out in Section 15 of the Monitoring Framework.
- 9.29** Appeal APP/Y0435/W/18/3219375 relates to a proposal to demolish a community facility – Wilton Hall – in Bletchley. The Hall has a history as a WWII era building used as an Assembly Hall for educational and social purposes by the then Government Code & Cypher School. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) refused planning permission for the development on the basis that the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Bletchley Conservation Area and would harm the setting of the listed buildings at Park Lodge and Bletchley Park House. The Inspector upheld the reasons for refusal put forward by the LPA and dismissed the appeal.
- 9.30** The other two notable appeal decisions (APP/Y0435/W/19/3232481 & APP/Y0435/W/19/3232488) relate to linked planning permission and listed building consent applications for the demolition of single-storey lean-to extension and construction of a family room, rear porch and boot-room as a single storey extension in the back garden of the Grade II listed Ivy Cottage on Willen Road in the Milton Keynes Village Conservation Area. The applications were considered by the MKC's Development Control Panel who, in line with officer's recommendation, decided to refuse the applications on the basis that the proposed extension was unacceptable by reason of its large size, design, flat green roof and choice of external materials. The Inspector agreed with the LPA's reasoning that the contemporary extension would clearly distinguish it from the listed building, and while contemporary additions to heritage assets can be acceptable in principle, in this case the details of the design as outlined above would harm the special interest and setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The LPA's argument that the proposal, being an addition to a private dwelling which provides an adequate level of accommodation, does not accrue any public benefit was also upheld by the Inspector.

Policy Context and Plan:MK Monitoring Framework

- 10.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) states that “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”⁴⁷. The NPPF highlights three interdependent objectives that new developments need to meet in order to be considered sustainable: an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. The environmental objective includes “using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”. Chapter 14 of the NPPF *‘Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change’* sets out the national policy approach to these considerations. This chapter monitors the efforts MKC undertook in the 2019/2020 monitoring period to help achieve these environmental aims.
- 10.2** Strategic Objective 13 in Plan:MK addresses energy and climate considerations and is quoted in full below. Strategic Objective 12 is also relevant in that it aims to manage increased travel demands through developing a smart, shared and sustainable mobility in the borough. However, monitoring of the link between transport and air quality and the installation in the borough of infrastructure supporting uptake of electric vehicles is already covered in chapter 8 (Transport) of this report and so it is not repeated here. In addition, MKC’s progress on reducing waste generation is covered in chapter 13 (Waste) of this report.

Strategic Objective 13: “To mitigate the borough’s impact on climate change and reduce carbon dioxide emissions through:

- Locating development away from areas of flood risk and significant biodiversity value.
- Promoting community energy networks and strategic renewable energy developments.
- Reducing waste generation and increasing the amount of material recycled.
- Sustainable transport initiatives.”

- 10.3** The following policies in Plan:MK set out the detailed requirements that developments need to meet in order help achieve Strategic Objective 13:
- FR1 – Managing Flood Risk
 - FR2 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management
 - FR3 – Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses
 - SC1 – Sustainable Construction
 - SC2 – Community Energy Networks and Large-Scale Renewable Energy Schemes
 - SC3 – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation.

⁴⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- 10.4** Policy WCS3 – Sustainable Design, Construction and Demolition - in the Milton Keynes Waste Development Plan Document (DPD) (2008) also contributes to ensuring new developments support this objective. Both Plans, alongside the Minerals Plan, form the Development Plan for MK and the new policy SC1 of Plan:MK therefore also applies to waste development proposals. As there is considerable overlap between Policy WCS3 and policy SC1 in Plan:MK it will be a matter for consideration as to whether there will be a need for another sustainable construction policy in the next Waste DPD when it is prepared.
- 10.5** MKC is currently writing a Sustainable Construction SPD to provide guidance on how developments can accord with policy SC1 of Plan:MK. Crucially, it will also confirm how the MKC expects developments to meet the requirements of parts K.4., K.5. and K.6. of policy SC1. Collectively, parts K.4. and K.5. require developers to demonstrate that the as-built performance (in terms of indoor air quality, energy use, carbon emissions and overheating risk) of new dwellings matches the as-designed performance for those developments. Ensuring that this takes place is more commonly known as ‘closing the performance gap’. Part K.6. then requires developers to monitor how new dwellings perform against these four metrics over a period of five years and send this monitoring data to MKC. It is currently planned for the Sustainable Construction SPD to be adopted in early 2021.
- 10.6** Policy SC1 itself is rooted in a pioneering attitude which has put Milton Keynes at the forefront of sustainable construction techniques and technologies throughout its 40-plus year history. Examples include: Milton Keynes hosting the Home World and Future World exhibitions in 1981 and 1994 respectively; how Milton Keynes was the first UK city to have kerbside recycling (1989); and, how Milton Keynes is home to the first public electric vehicle charging points, installed in 2010. Part of the innovation in this area included the content of policy D4 in the previous Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005) (and its related Sustainable Construction SPD (2007)) which introduced sustainable construction requirements that pre-empted higher national energy efficiency standards in buildings. For more information on this topic, see paragraphs 17.5 to 17.10 of Plan:MK (2019)⁴⁸.
- 10.7** Since passing the *Climate Emergency/Making Milton Keynes the World’s Greenest City* Resolution in January 2019, MKC has produced two Council-wide, non-planning documents setting out how MKC and the borough can reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change through local action. These are the *MK Sustainability Strategy 2019-2050*⁴⁹, the *Climate Change Task and Finish Group (March 2020) report*⁵⁰. Respectively these contain many objectives and examples of existing

⁴⁸ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/plan-mk>

⁴⁹ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-trading-standards/mk-low-carbon-living/the-2019-2050-sustainability-strategy>

⁵⁰ <https://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=2V5MbG3ICmiIBZlOteCRYyJXuGbemZLYr9jHqoUT9RdEHJcWYWpHQ%3d%3d&rUzwrPp%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWctPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlg%3d%3d=jUgQCaU3L68%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=VJtZQ2BhIrA%3d&uJo vDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJfF55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9QjjOag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJfF55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJfF55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJfF55vVA%3d>

sustainable initiatives in MK, so they will not all be repeated here. However, to add more context to the below discussion, it is worth noting MKC's position is, as set out in the *MK Sustainability Strategy*, that Milton Keynes will strive to be carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050. As noted in the NPPF, these are targets that the planning system can contribute to achieving, which in practice is realised through its control of the quality of new build development and mechanisms for offsetting any carbon emissions associated with that development.

- 10.8** The Plan:MK Monitoring Framework sets out several indicator bundles to be used to monitor progress toward achieving Strategic Objective 13; these will be addressed in turn below. However, it must be said that monitoring progress against some of these indicators is not currently feasible. One of the indicators listed in the Monitoring Framework is 'New dwellings achieving Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) level 4'. MKC does not currently have in place a mechanism by which to assess new development for their compliance with CSH level 4. In addition, policy SC1 does not specify that new development need to achieve CSH level 4. It is considered that, in hindsight, using CSH level 4 as a metric is not feasible. However, it is possible to monitor energy efficiency and carbon emissions reduction measures in new developments through implementation of parts K.1. and K.2. of policy SC1. Parts K.4., K.5. and K.6. also allow us to monitor how developments close the performance gap, as outlined above. As noted below in paragraph 10.6, the MKC will set up a formal way of recording this data for publishing in future AMRs. Also, the MKC does not currently record how successful planning policies are at directing new development away from areas of significant biodiversity value: the MKC will set up a log to record such instances to allow analysis in next year's AMR. More details in relation to biodiversity can be found in chapter 11 of the AMR report.
- 10.9** Moreover, the Monitoring Framework lists National Indicators (NI) 185 'CO₂ reduction from Local Authority Operations', 186 'Per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in the Local Authority Area' and 188 'Planning to adapt to climate change' as indicators of whether strategic objective 13 is being achieved. The NI framework was set up by the New Labour government as a way of keeping tabs on and standardising local authority progress against set targets. However, since NI were made voluntary metrics in 2010, they are no longer used by MKC to monitor performance. Without broad NI reporting mechanisms in place within MKC, it is more difficult to monitor progress against them and as such NI are not addressed in this report. Some data on CO₂ emissions in the borough is available (see Table 10.1), although, its scope is limited to showing high-level data about a reduction in CO₂ emissions between 2010 and 2018. This is positive news, but further monitoring is required to see if this trend continues, thereby achieving a reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2031 in line with Monitoring Framework targets. Going forward, the Planning Service will review how to monitor performance associated with NI 185, 186 and 188 in more depth and report on this in the 2020/2021 AMR.

Table 10.1: CO₂ emissions per capita in Milton Keynes 2010-2018 (measured in kilo-tonnes of CO₂)⁵¹.

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Industry and Commercial Electricity	523.3	459.3	544.0	513.7	420.7	353.2	278.1	246.9	228.3
Industry and Commercial Gas	142.4	118.6	130.8	139.6	124.7	124.1	120.9	131.7	131.9
Industry and Commercial Other Fuels	38.3	33.9	35.7	31.2	34.0	34.7	33.8	35.5	35.0
Agriculture	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.1	5.1
Industry and Commercial Total	708.5	616.3	715.2	689.0	584.0	516.8	437.9	419.2	400.3
Domestic Electricity	216.1	204.0	216.8	200.0	168.8	145.4	118.5	103.1	93.6
Domestic Gas	272.4	228.2	251.2	258.4	218.9	232.8	243.1	233.9	243.3
Domestic Other Fuels	15.5	13.5	13.8	14.3	13.7	14.0	13.7	14.2	14.3
Domestic Total	504.0	445.7	481.7	472.8	401.4	392.1	375.3	351.1	351.3
Road Transport (A roads)	162.9	159.4	162.3	159.6	163.0	171.1	179.3	181.2	171.9
Road Transport (Minor roads)	220.6	216.8	213.8	212.4	218.2	216.3	221.8	211.9	210.7
Transport Other	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8
Transport Total	386.8	379.4	379.2	375.2	384.3	390.4	404.1	396.1	385.4
Grand Total	1,599.2	1,441.4	1,576.1	1,537.0	1,369.7	1,299.4	1,217.3	1,166.4	1,137.0

⁵¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics>

Note, this dataset distinguishes between emissions estimates within the scope of local authorities (excluding large industrial sites, railways and motorways) and estimates including such data. Data in this report excludes emissions outside the MKC's scope.

Renewable Energy/Sustainability Schemes in MK

- 10.10** As noted, policies SC2 and SC3 in Plan:MK focus on developing the capacity to generate renewable energy within the borough, setting out the policy requirements for such projects. While there is a legacy of such projects being developed in the borough, since adoption of Plan:MK in March 2019 there have been no developments assessed against these policies. Past renewable energy projects include the development of a solar farm at Bullshead Farm near Stoke Goldington (see planning reference 13/02504/FUL for details) and installation of a wind turbine at Dovecote Farm in Astwood (see planning reference 12/02611/FUL for details). An older but notable scheme is the *ThamesWey* 6.4 MW Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Energy Station on Avebury Boulevard in Central Milton Keynes, which supplies electricity and heat to The Hub, Vizion and The Pinnacle areas in the city centre⁵². However, despite ongoing development in the area, there have been no recent connections into the ThamesWey CHP.
- 10.11** In addition, since March 2018, Amey has operated the Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park (MKWRP) in Old Wolverton. Designed to reduce the amount of MK waste going to landfill (3% of waste in MK now goes to landfill after the Park opened), the MKWRP produces enough energy to power the equivalent of 11,000 homes⁵³. Also, as noted in the *MK Sustainability Strategy*, MKC has installed photo-voltaic (PV) arrays at Civic Offices and Wolverton Depot. CHP plants have been installed in Putnam House and Lincoln Court which are sheltered housing blocks⁵⁴. Moreover, as noted in chapter 8 (Transport), some residents are developing their own small-scale renewable energy generating measures, such as solar panel carports.
- 10.12** Despite the above, MKC does not currently have a dedicated record for data of three Plan:MK Monitoring Framework Indicator Bundles: a) the percentage of energy in new developments coming from renewable sources, b) the amount of renewable energy provided from strategic energy developments and c) how many new developments feature a community energy network. Therefore, the Planning Service will set up a log to formally record this information so that future AMRs can report on progress toward achieving Strategic Objective 13.
- 10.13** A notable ongoing project MKC, in conjunction with consultants Local Partnerships, are working on is the *Re:fit* programme. To quote the initiative's website⁵⁵, Re:fit is "a procurement initiative for public bodies wishing to implement energy efficiency measures and local energy generation projects on their assets, with support to assist them in the development and delivery of the schemes. These measures improve the energy performance of assets. As a result, carbon emissions can be reduced, substantial guaranteed annual cost savings achieved, and income generated." Initially developed by the Greater London Authority in 2009, to date over 250 organisations have engaged with the programme resulting in over £180 million of works taking place, saving over 52,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year across England and Wales. MKC's involvement with the

⁵² <https://www.thamesweygroup.co.uk/thameswey-group-companies/thameswey-central-milton-keynes-ltd/>

⁵³ <https://wasteservices.amey.co.uk/where-we-work/milton-keynes/>

⁵⁴ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-trading-standards/mk-low-carbon-living/the-2019-2050-sustainability-strategy>

⁵⁵ <https://localpartnerships.org.uk/our-expertise/re-fit/>

programme is relatively young now, however, future AMRs will be able to report on Re:fit supported schemes in the borough.

10.14 Since adoption of Plan:MK, it has been noted that clarity is required on how to interpret Part B of Policy SC2 in Plan:MK. Part B states:

“Proposals for over 100 homes and non-residential developments of over 1,000 sq.m. will be expected to consider the integration of community energy networks in the development. This consideration should form part of development proposals and take into account the site’s characteristics and the existing cooling, heat and power demands on adjacent sites.”

Part B requires of development proposals above the thresholds specified that developers must consider whether community energy networks (CEN) can be integrated into the proposed development. This includes both a new CEN specifically created to serve the new development or an existing CEN in the vicinity of the site. When applying for planning permission, the Sustainability Statement supplied alongside the submission must include details of the steps the developer has gone through to consider whether CEN can be integrated into the site. As in the second sentence of Part B, these details need to include the site’s characteristics and the existing cooling, heat and power demands on adjacent sites. The three points in Part C of SC2 outline the issues which may mean using CEN to provide energy to the site is not justifiable.

Carbon Offset Fund

10.15 The Milton Keynes Carbon Offset Fund (COF) was launched in 2008 to accompany policy mechanisms set out in policy D4 of the old Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005) and continued in policy SC1 of Plan:MK (2019). These mechanisms require developers who cannot design carbon neutrality into new developments to pay a sum of money (£200 per tonne of CO₂ emitted) into the COF to allow developments elsewhere in the borough to offset net carbon emissions from that new development. The first of its kind in the country in 2008, the COF has been administered on behalf of MKC by the National Energy Foundation, based in Milton Keynes. As per policy SC1 of Plan:MK, not all new developments have to pay contributions into the COF if they are not carbon neutral: only those involving construction of 11 or more dwellings or non-residential development of more than 1000 sq. metres.

10.16 Currently there is no data available to report on the incomings and outgoings of the COF. However, carbon offsetting data is currently being gathered and is due to be published from December 2020 in an Infrastructure Funding Statement. This will require further work such as populating MKC’s new monitoring system to generate the reporting and that is still to be completed. Data on Milton Keynes COF should therefore be available for analysis in the 2020/2021 AMR.

10.17 COF contributions have funded many successful initiatives since its inception, including a collaboration with Age UK Milton Keynes advising older people within the borough on reducing energy use and providing them with tools to help them use energy better. The COF has also

enabled over 8,000 households in Milton Keynes to receive measures such as energy efficient CFL lightbulbs and subsidised loft and cavity wall insulation. Another approach, the MK 'boiler cashback' scheme, offered £150 towards the cost of a new boiler, wherever an existing boiler rated at D or below is replaced with a new 'A'-rated one⁵⁶. Looking forward, It is possible that projects associated with the MK *Sustainability Strategy* and the *Climate Change Task and Finish Group report* documents mentioned in paragraph 10.6, as well as schemes associated with Re:fit, will be part- or wholly-funded by planning contributions to the COF; future AMRs will monitor instances where COF contributions have been used in this manner.

10.18 In preparing the Sustainable Construction SPD, MKC has considered best practice methods of calculating COF contributions elsewhere in England, which include multiplying the annual development emissions by the estimated lifetime of the building (usually 30 years). However, the current COF calculation methodology is a factor underpinning the Whole Plan Viability Study which sought to make sure that Plan:MK policies do not place so many restrictions on new developments that they are undeliverable. As such, to change the COF calculation method now could undermine the viability of new development. Therefore, MKC will revisit the COF calculation methodology during the next Local Plan review.

10.19 In summary, the COF is a key mechanism supporting MKC's work to achieve Strategic Objective 13.

Flood and Water Management

10.20 Milton Keynes, since its inception, has been designed with the consideration of potential impacts of new developments on the flood and water management environment. More details on Milton Keynes history and its continued legacy in that field can be found in Paragraphs 11.1 to 11.9 of Plan:MK. Key parts of this strategy have been to design - into areas of new development - sustainable methods of managing surface water run-off and seasonal changes in local river levels, as well as avoiding building in areas with the highest flood risks; these ideas are central to policies FR1 (Managing Flood Risk), FR2 (Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management) and FR3 (Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses).

Statutory Consultees

10.21 The planning guidance: *'Review individual flood risk assessments: standing advice for local planning authorities'* provides guidance on specific flood risk assessments and when to consult the Environment Agency (EA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

10.22 In assessing and delivering developments with these considerations the Planning Service works closely with and consults the LLFA who are a statutory consultee for all major applications. The LLFA is made up of officers within MKC, with additional support provided by officers from Cambridgeshire County Council; it has the task of overseeing surface water management in the borough. In some instances, another statutory consultee, the EA is also consulted on planning applications.

⁵⁶ <http://www.nef.org.uk/about-us/insights/milton-keynes-pioneering-carbon-offset-fund-six-years-on>

10.23 Tables 10.2 and 10.3 give a statistical breakdown of the formal consultation responses received in 2019 from the LLFA and EA respectively. Note that these statistics do not account for informal emails and discussions between the LLFA, EA, the Planning Service and applicants. Nor does the EA data account for consultation responses consisting of ‘No objection’, ‘comments only’ and ‘no comments’, such as those received on application 19/00672/FUL (discussed later).

Table 10.2: Number of Consultation Responses from the LLFA in 2019, including major, minor and other applications. Data source: LLFA.	
Total logged consultations	320, including 46 re-consultations.
Response to initial consultation: Support	43
Response to initial consultation: Unable to support	168
Response to initial consultation: Other – no comments, withdrawn, pre-application.	63
Unknown response	5

Table 10.3: Number of objections/responses advising use of conditions on any decision to grant planning permission from the EA between 01 Jan 2019 and 31 March 2020. Data source: EA.	
Objections	9
Responses advising use of conditions on planning permission	1

10.24 These statistics show that a significant number of applications, when the EA and LLFA are first consulted, are unacceptable with respect to surface water drainage and flood risk considerations. However, feedback from the LLFA shows that of the 46 re-consultations on applications, 41% of those responses involved changing the advice from ‘unable to support’ to ‘support’. This is evidence that engagement between the LLFA, the Planning Service and developers and Plan:MK policies are preventing unacceptable development from being built. Notwithstanding this, the LLFA does not hold data on instances where planning permission may have been granted contrary to LLFA advice. Also, the Planning Service, while it keeps records of when planning permission is either granted or refused, does not currently have in place procedures for recording instances where planning permission may be granted contrary to LLFA/EA advice and the reasons why that might be the case. The Planning Service will review its monitoring processes to put in place such procedures so such information can be published in the 2020/2021 AMR.

Relevant Appeal Decision and the Sequential Test

- 10.25** During the 2019/2020 monitoring period, appeal decision APP/Y0435/W/19/3233875⁵⁷ provided clarity on how Plan:MK policies should be applied to development proposals in flood risk zones. The appeal in question relates to MKC's decision to refuse application 19/00672/FUL which sought planning permission for the erection of two semi-detached dwellings, associated parking, landscaping and works to public realm, on land at 6-10 Caldecote Street, Newport Pagnell. The site is located largely in flood risk zone 3 and partially in flood risk zone 2; these are the two flood zones with the highest risk of flooding (3 having the highest risk). A key matter of contention within the appeal was how to apply the Sequential Test, a mechanism set out in Paragraph 158 of the NPPF and required by local policy FR1 in Plan:MK to steer new development proposed in flood risk zones 2 and 3 to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Paragraph 158 goes on to state that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.
- 10.26** To identify whether reasonably available sites exist involves a search of the local area for sites – in flood risk zone 1 – which can accommodate (in terms of land area) the proposed development and realistically be used for the development i.e. there are no site specific matters (e.g. building for another development has started on the site) which would prevent this development being delivered. A decision also needs to be made about the size of the area in which to conduct the search for sites. The appellant for the appeal argued that since Plan:MK, specifically policy DS1, seeks to direct most new development in the rural area of the borough to the three key settlements – Newport Pagnell, Woburn Sands and Olney – the Sequential Test should only search for sites within these three settlements. However, the Inspector decided that, since policies DS1 and DS2 in Plan:MK do not limit new development in the rural area to the three key settlements, the search for a Sequential Test, when considering a site in the rural area, must search for sites not just in the key settlements but also in villages and rural settlements in the borough. This is a good case evidencing how Plan:MK is working to steer development away from areas of high flood risk, in line with Strategic Objective 13.
- 10.27** In preparation of this report, LLFA officers have highlighted that occasionally confusion among third parties can arise when, although a proposed change of use development does not pass the sequential test, the LLFA and/or EA do not object to that proposal. To clarify, this is due to the difference between remits of the LLFA, the EA and the Local Planning Authority when it comes to flood and water management considerations. It is the remit of the Local Planning Authority to carry out the Sequential Test, as it relates to assessing the principle of building new development in areas of flood risk and whether the proposed use could be built in an area with a lower probability of flooding, whereas the LLFA and EA assess the technical impacts of new development in terms of surface water management and watercourses respectively. It is therefore the responsibility of the planning case officer managing the application to, where relevant, ensure that the Sequential Test has been carried out, even if a response from the LLFA/EA does not raise objections to the development proposal.

⁵⁷ <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3233875>

10.28 MKC does not currently have in place any procedures for recording all instances where permission has been refused due to sites being in area of high flood risk or any instances where permission has been granted despite the site being in an area of high flood risk. However, as noted earlier, MKC does keep a record of all applications received and what the final decision was in each instance. MKC will therefore set up a log in which to record cases like 19/00672/FUL, so that the 2020/2021 AMR can report on progress preventing development in floodplains.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

10.29 As part of the approach in Milton Keynes, as outlined above, to thinking strategically about surface water management, a key requirement of large developments in local policy has been the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS play a large role in the focus on multi-purpose blue-green infrastructure in the borough. However, not all SuDS are as effective as other types of SuDS. The LLFA and the Planning Service adopt an approach which accounts for not only the water volume capacity of a proposed SuDS but its structural quality and how many opportunities for amenity (recreation and visual character) and biodiversity gain it provides for the local area. In most new developments, especially the larger strategic sites, SuDS rate very highly in terms of these four characteristics.

10.30 However, LLFA officers have provided feedback which highlights how in some smaller sites, either due to site size constraints and/or development viability factors, it can be difficult to deliver SuDS that achieve all four of these objectives. For example, some SuDS come in the form of underground plastic crates which store surface water run-off prior to disposal into off-site water management systems. Such systems rarely provide good levels of amenity and biodiversity gain.

10.31 Section 13 of the Plan:MK Monitoring Framework does not contain any listed 'actions and contingencies' for dealing with this specific issue. Although, MKC (encompassing the LLFA and Planning Service) will work to ensure early engagement with developers for sites which will require a SuDS, with the aim of delivering a system that delivers on all four of the above objectives and meets the requirements of policy FR2 in Plan:MK. Notwithstanding this, it must be noted that the primary objective of a SuDS in policy terms is to prevent any amount of surface water run-off from creating flooding events and for the system to be durable. As such, it is accepted that there may be instances where space constraints and finances mean that only SuDS with no amenity and/or biodiversity benefits are deliverable. However, in such cases it will be expected that the case for not providing amenity/biodiversity benefits will be robustly evidenced before any decision to approve the SuDS is made.

Flood and Water Management Projects

10.32 Aside from the flood and water management impacts of the Development Management process, the LLFA has been involved with other projects affecting the management of water and flood risk. These can be split into projects looking at intervening in local areas, projects looking at responding to recent flood events and projects to produce studies on flood and water management in the borough.

- 10.33** In terms of projects involving interventions, there have been no new physical interventions in the 2019/2020 monitoring period. However, work with local parish and town councils to manage flooding and water in their authority areas is ongoing. For example, flood prevention has been a historic concern of residents in Water Eaton and work is progressing to install better erosion and flood protection; a report covering the costs and risks of possible interventions is expected to be produced by the LLFA in August 2020.
- 10.34** The LLFA has reported that there has been no recent progress on the Milton Keynes end of the Bedford to MK Waterway project. Although, work preparing for construction in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire is progressing.
- 10.35** Work on an updated Lakes Capacity Study is progressing with the LLFA leading on the project. Work is also underway within the Planning Service producing brief documents for an updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Integrated Water Management Study to support the upcoming local plan review process. Progress is therefore being made to meet Strategic Objective 13.
- 10.36** As noted in Strategic Objective 1, working with delivery bodies within the Oxford-MK-Cambridge growth corridor/arc is an important action in Plan:MK. MKC continues to engage with other local authorities within the Arc. However, at this stage Milton Keynes LLFA is not actively engaged in any progressing flood and water management projects related to Arc. Following feedback from the LLFA, there are also no projects being led by the EA (affecting the authority area) to report on.

Recent Flood Events

- 10.37** In May 2018, Milton Keynes experienced significant flooding events associated with heavy rainfall which stressed water drainage systems in the borough. The worst affected areas were Newport Pagnell, South Central Milton Keynes and Stoke Goldington. In South Central Milton Keynes (areas including Oldbrook, Coffee Hall, Netherfield, Winterhill and the MK Hospital) the heavy rainfall overwhelmed the capacity of the local drainage network, resulting in surface water flows moving towards low points in the area. The resultant flooding caused internal flooding in over 315 residential properties. In Stoke Goldington, similarly, surface water drainage systems in the village were unable to collect and dispose of surface water and drain land effectively. Excess surface water then flowed overland following natural contours and flow paths to low points around residential properties; reports indicated 35 residential properties were flooded internally. In Newport Pagnell, 15 properties were internally flooded, as a result of the local drainage system being unable to accommodate the high surface water run-off associated with the heavy rainfall.
- 10.38** In line with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, MKC commissioned investigations into the causes of these events (*The Independent Review of Flooding May 2018*). The results of these investigations were published in three reports (one addressing each of the worst affected areas). The three Section 19 reports also provide recommendations for a number of organisations and stakeholders active in Milton Keynes, including residents and community

organisations active in the affected areas, parish/town councils, Anglian Water, the LLFA, the Local Highway Authority and developers and landowners.

10.39 Some of the recommendations also relate to planning processes and are as follows:

- Make sure that, where they are required, SuDS are installed in new developments to manage surface water run-off.
- Encourage the replacement of impermeable off-street parking areas with attenuating permeable paving on new developments and in existing areas where possible through the planning process.
- Make sure that developers implement planning permissions in accordance with the approved plans. For example, if the landscaping design of a new development features contouring to direct excess surface water run-off towards a balancing pond, check that developers have landscaped in accordance with the design.
- At the design stage, ensure that developers mitigate the risks of flooding caused by a new development both on- and off-site and where possible, reduce existing risk of flooding off-site.
- Ensure that existing water drainage systems in the vicinity of the development site are not hindered or overwhelmed as a result of development on surface water flow rates.

These recommendations therefore are actions that the Planning Service can initiate moving forward enable progress toward Strategic Objective 13 of Plan:MK. The 2020/2021 AMR will provide an update on progress implementing these actions.

Water Quality

10.40 The Water Framework Directive (WFD)⁵⁸ is the primary piece of legislation regulating how water quality in the borough is to be managed. The WFD sets out that water management must be approached from the perspective of managing each river basin the same way, rather than allowing each basin to be split up by administrative boundaries, with different approaches within each administrative area. Each basin therefore has a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP): for Milton Keynes the relevant RBMP is the Anglian River Basin District RBMP (2015)⁵⁹; Milton Keynes falls within the 'Ouse Upper and Bedford' section of the Anglian River Basin District. Milton Keynes also has a Water Cycle Study (WCS) (2018)⁶⁰ which underpins the work in the Anglian River Basin District RBMP. The WCS outlines:

"The WCS sets out that one of its overarching drivers is to ensure that growth does not prevent waterbodies within the borough from achieving the standards required of them as set out in the WFD River Basin Management Plan"

⁵⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/407/contents/made>

⁵⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718327/Anglian_RBD_Part_1_river_basin_management_plan.pdf

⁶⁰ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/urban-design-and-landscape-architecture-udla/flood-and-water-management-drainage?chapter=3>

- 10.41** The WCS therefore requires that new development in the borough must not cause a deterioration in the WFD status of a water body and development must not prevent a waterbody from achieving its future target status (usually at least Good status). The RBMP provides information on the 2015 condition, classification and objectives for waterbodies within the river basin, although, it takes a general approach to this – there is no data for specific waterbodies/courses, e.g. the River Ouzel. Rather, data on water quality focuses on each classification of waterbody within the wider basin: rivers, canals, lakes/reservoirs, estuaries/coastal waters and surface fresh-water bodies. Due to the age and ‘general’ nature of the data in the RBMP, the data therein is not repeated here but can be accessed using the link in the footnotes below.
- 10.42** However, the RBMP makes clear that in the Upper Ouse and Bedford catchment area, the main priorities for the 2015-2021 period are preventing negative impacts on habitats and ecological biodiversity resulting from the physical modification of watercourses, invasive non-native plant and animal species and pollution (diffuse and point source). Another objective was to continue the development of the Upper Ouse and Bedford Catchment Partnership⁶¹ by engaging with local communities and partners, identifying project opportunities, securing funding for project work and delivering restoration work. MKC is part of this partnership and recent work in September 2019 involved running a programme aimed at training River Wardens in how to identify aquatic plant species. Work is therefore ongoing to meet the RBMP objectives. It is also important that policy FR3 (Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses) of Plan:MK continues to be implemented in order to ensure new development does not adversely affect waterbodies in the borough.
- 10.43** There is more data on the waterbodies within the borough area, available on the EA’s online Catchment Data Explorer⁶². Milton Keynes falls within the Upper Ouse and Bedford ‘management catchment’, although this itself is split into five separate ‘operational catchments’ and Milton Keynes borough falls within three of these operational catchments: the Great Ouse Upper catchment, the Ouzel and Milton Keynes catchment and the Great Ouse Bedford catchment. However, the Catchment Data Explorer data available on the WFD status of waterbodies in the borough does not progress past 2016 and as such is of limited relevance to monitoring the performance of Plan:MK policies in ensuring that development does not adversely affect waterbodies. This data is however available for viewing online, via the link in the footnotes below.
- 10.44** Lastly, it is noted that managing water quality within the borough is not a matter wholly within the remit of MKC; instead, many different organisations are involved. The types of developments and land uses permitted by the local planning authority and the impacts of those uses on the environment can have an impact in water quality. Conditions placed on planning permissions requiring development occupiers to put in place environmental protections play a role in this respect. However, the EA is responsible for water quality in the major rivers in the borough (Rivers Ouse and Ouzel), the Canal and River Trust is responsible for maintaining water quality in the Grand Union Canal and the Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards regulates a number of small watercourses through the borough. In addition, drinking and general water providers such as

⁶¹ <https://ubocp.org.uk/>

⁶² <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/5>

Anglian Water are responsible for water quality in the systems providing water to homes and businesses. The connections between all these different water systems is recognised and the Planning Service will continue to engage with the respective organisations where relevant to make sure that development coming forward does not contravene the objectives set out in the WCS and RBMP.

10.45 In conclusion, the Planning Service will continue monitoring the EA Catchment Data Explorer to keep up to date with new data added to the record. The 2020/2021 AMR will provide further analysis of this dataset.

Natural Environment and Biodiversity

Policy Context

- 11.1** “Natural environment” refers to: Plants, wild animals and other living organisms, their habitats, and land (except buildings and other structures, air and water the natural systems, cycles and processes through which they interact). Biodiversity is the genetic diversity within species, species diversity within ecosystems, and ecosystem diversity across landscapes.
- 11.2** Development schemes have the potential to impact upon the natural environment both within the boundaries of the development and on adjacent sites and, in certain circumstances, a significant distance away. As part of the development process these impacts need to be assessed and (if found to be negative) avoided, mitigated or as a last resort compensated for (see Figure 11.1).

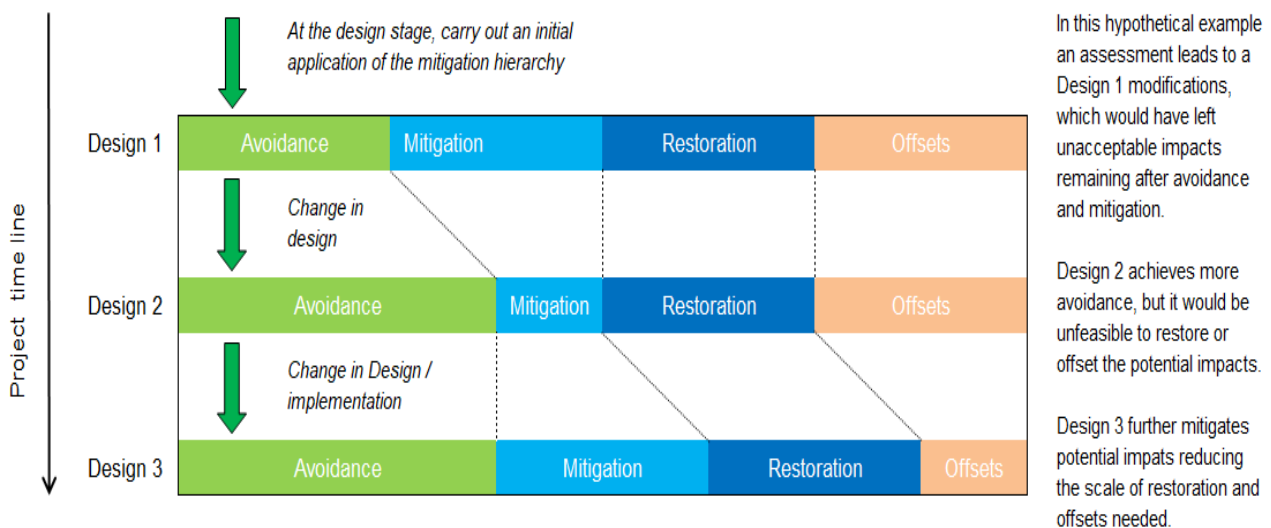


Figure 11.1: Mitigation hierarchy: Successfully Integrating Biodiversity into Development.

- 11.3** The strategic vision of the MKC’s Sustainability Strategy 2019-2050 states that *‘Milton Keynes can be the world’s greenest and most sustainable city, using the opportunities of growth to tackle the challenges of climate change and resource competition to create a more prosperous city for all our people and future generations which is carbon negative by 2050* . One of the priority actions of the Strategy is to achieve the above through encouraging biodiversity.
- 11.4** The Strategy underlines the current global crisis whereby we are noticing the extinction of entire species which are more or less prestigious. We are noticing the reduction of biodiversity on local land and of insects and creatures such as bees, hedgehogs and birds. The Strategy recognises the importance of utilising the green and rural environment of Milton Keynes to increase biodiversity.
- 11.5** Plan:MK’s strategic objectives seek to address the vision by focusing on mitigating the Borough’s impact on climate change and by the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions through locating

development away from areas of flood risk and significant biodiversity value (Strategic Objective 13). Through Strategic Objective 15 Plan:MK seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the important linear parks. Strategic Objective 16 outlines a number of targets and indicators which relate to overall review of change. Amongst others, it addresses the change within wildlife sites, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats, aims for no net loss of biodiversity habitats, reviews the conditions of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the delivery of linear parks extensions.

11.6 Through various policies within Plan:MK, MKC therefore seeks to:

- Protect sites of biodiversity value (Policy NE1)
- Protect priority species and habitats (Policy NE2);
- Enhance biodiversity and geodiversity (Policy NE3);
- Protect, extend and enhance the Green infrastructure for its biodiversity and other values (Policy NE4)
- Conserve and enhance landscape character (Policy NE4); and
- Protect the Borough from unacceptable impact on biodiversity from environmental pollution (Policy NE6).

11.7 Other policies within Plan:MK that set principles for new developments and consider biodiversity net gain through the use of connected green infrastructure include:

- Policy SD1: Place-making principles for development
- Policy CT8: Grid road network

Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

11.8 MKC has been working on drafting a Biodiversity SPD. The SPD, once adopted, will enable the implementation of Policy NE2, NE3 and other policies concerning aspects of biodiversity in Plan:MK. It will provide guidance on biodiversity and nature conservation for applicants concerned with the conservation of biodiversity in their development. It will provide developers with a clear “plain English” guide for working with protected and priority species and habitats which are likely to be impacted upon by their proposed developments.

11.9 The SPD details the MKC’s requirements for applicants to build nature conservation features into developments by protecting and enhancing existing nature conservation features within proposed developments following best practice guidance and mitigation hierarchy. The developers are required to ensure that a measurable net-gain in biodiversity is achieved on site where possible. On occasions where it is not possible to achieve it on site, the SPD details what MK requires a developer to consider when incorporating ecological compensation (including Biodiversity Offsets) within their development scheme.

11.10 In accordance with Policy NE3, MKC requires all development proposals of 5 or more dwellings, or non-residential floorspace in excess of 1,000m², to measure the losses/gains to the biodiversity value occurring to a site through development (Policy NE3). Where habitat is to be lost, its value must first be calculated to ensure any compensatory habitat creation is of greater value. Delivering

biodiversity compensation in a measurable way is essential to demonstrating that a net-gain to biodiversity value is likely to be achieved by a development.

- 11.11** The draft Biodiversity SPD is planned to be taken to Delegated Decision on 8 September 2020 to approve the document for an eight-week consultation period over Autumn/Winter 2020, with adoption of the SPD towards the end of the 2020 or early 2021.

Natural Environment and Biodiversity- Targets and Indicators of Plan:MK

- 11.12** Plan:MK sets out targets and indicators for delivering the strategic objectives relating to the protection of natural environment and biodiversity, related to the appropriate delivery policies.

A - Review of Indicators

Delivery of linear parks extensions

- 11.13** Policy NE4 (Green Infrastructure) aims for the existing network of linear parks and linked parks and green spaces to be extended into the urban extensions along the Ouse and the Ouse Valleys to the north to provide a well-connected network of green infrastructure. The linear parks in Milton Keynes are multi-functional in nature and can incorporate other types of open spaces such as playing fields, play areas, allotments or paddocks. Existing linear parks are described in Policy DS6 of Plan:MK and are identified on the policies maps.

- 11.14** In terms of delivery of the extensions to linear parks, strategic allocations in Plan:MK contain a requirement to deliver specific extensions to the existing network as described below:

- a. Policy SD5 (Eastern Expansion Area): Continuation of the linear park along Broughton Brook, to include any new balancing lakes to serve the new development and with access and links to connect the linear park extension to the existing linear park. The concept Plan of the SPD for the area outlines the boundary of the proposed linear extension which is described in more detail in outline and reserved matters planning applications for the site. Most areas of the Broughton Linear Park are now constructed as per approved plans and are under the control of the Parks Trust. There are still some works to be completed to the Broughton Brook Linear Park near Magna Park.
- b. Policy SD12 (Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension): The creation of a linear park through the site that broadly correlates with the River Ouzel floodplain. The Milton Keynes East Development Framework was adopted by the Cabinet of MKC on 10 March 2020 and it describes the land that has been allocated for proposed linear park/recreational use, incorporating an existing playing field and play area. The Ouzel Valley Linear Park lies to the south of the site and should be extended into the site with future potential to continue into Newport Pagnell. The extension of the park is yet to be developed.

Provision of open spaces within developments

- 11.15** The provision of open spaces in Plan:MK is to be achieved through new developments and especially through strategic site allocations. Assessment of a net gain/loss of the open spaces due

to the new development is considered a valuable indicator. The baseline information on the status of the open spaces in Milton Keynes was the open space assessment which was undertaken as part of evidence base for the Plan:MK⁶³. As part of the review of Plan:MK a new open space assessment will be undertaken which will enable a review of the effectiveness of the policies of the Plan:MK.

11.16 Policies relating to public open spaces are covered under Chapter 14 of Plan:MK. Table 20.1 of Plan:MK contains information on required standards of provision for new public open spaces and recreational facilities in MK. The adopted Neighbourhood Plans also contain policies that aim to protect and improve the existing open spaces within neighbourhood areas.

11.17 A review of the delivery of open spaces through allocated sites within the Borough can be found below:

- a. Land at Eaton Leys: the site will provide multi-functional and well-connected public open space, informal amenity space, children's play space, open space incorporating the setting of the scheduled monument and other areas of archaeological interest. The areas outlined in the outline application 15/01533/OUTEIS have not yet been delivered. It is estimated that the Linear Park extension to Waterhall Park in the Ouse Valley corridor is to be delivered in 2020/21. The Local and neighbouring play areas are likely to be delivered in 2021.
- b. Western Expansion Area: the site will provide open space that includes a land for a burial ground and remembrance garden (about 10ha) and a landscape/open space buffer between the development and The Wealds. The main details of the site were approved under application 06/00123/MKPCO. The details of the Local Park 4 and sports pitch were submitted under 17/02556/DISCON. The first dedicated open space and play park completed was the Whitehouse Park, which opened in October 2016. The Parks Trust maintain this park and will do likewise for the majority of new parks and open spaces in the WEA. Another new park (2.3ha) opened in September 2019 at Lady Margery's Gorse in Whitehouse and opposite Fairfields Primary School on Apollo Avenue at Fairfields.
- c. Land at Newton Leys: the site delivered a landscape and open space buffer, around the southern and eastern boundaries of the waste management site in southern Milton Keynes, in accordance with the outline application (13/00888/OUTEIS). The details of the site were approved through applications for the landscaping proposal (08/01292/REM) and the approval of conditions (12/02548/DISCON) where details were submitted for the Public Open Space Jubilee Walk and Brook. The delivery of the local play areas and allotments at the site should be completed by 2021.
- d. Land South of Milton Keynes, South Caldecotte: a green open space link is to be created on the site, linking into Caldecotte Lake to the north and providing future opportunity to link the park to the south/east. The SPD for the site was consulted upon in 2018 and 2019. Further consultation on revised framework is likely to take place in Autumn 2020.

⁶³ Milton Keynes Open Space Assessment 2017

Green Flag Status of Parks within Milton Keynes

- 11.18** The Green Flag award is a national benchmark which recognises the best parks and green spaces in the Country. Since 2007 MKC has enjoyed continued success in its drive to achieve Green Flag honours in a number of local parks. The awards are reviewed annually.
- 11.19** Chepstow Drive Local Park was first awarded its Green Flag accreditation in 2007, with New Bradwell Park in 2008. Eaglestone Local Park was awarded a Green Flag in July 2009. Leon Recreation Ground achieved Green Flag status in 2011.
- 11.20** The majority of parks in Milton Keynes are managed by The Parks Trust. The Parks Trust have been awarded a Green Flag status for all of the parks, woodlands and lakes across Milton Keynes in 2017 and holds the award for the third continuous year now. It was a first example where a complete network of parks across a whole town or city had been awarded the Green Flag.
- 11.21** MKC will continue to support the Green Flag award committing to increasing the amount of nationally recognised green space available to the residents of Milton Keynes.

Review of Local Sites conservation management

- 11.22** There are 198 National Indicators introduced following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007. Local Authorities are assessed based on those indicators. One of them is national Indicator (NI) 197: Improved Local Biodiversity - proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented.
- 11.23** Local Sites are non-statutory areas designated at local level for their significant nature conservation value. They include both local wildlife sites (designated for significant biodiversity value) and local geological sites (designated for their significant geological value). Those comprise Local Wildlife Sites (known in Milton Keynes as Milton Keynes Wildlife Sites) and Biological Notification Sites (BNS).
- 11.24** Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records (BMERC) hold and maintain wildlife records including information on local sites such as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. There are currently 16 Milton Keynes Wildlife Sites. These are special places recognised for having high wildlife value or containing rare or threatened habitats and species. BNS sites are sites within the Borough which are important at a county wide level and are presently under review and where appropriate will be subsumed into the Local Wildlife sites designation.
- 11.25** There is currently a lack of contemporary data and condition assessments for BNS in Milton Keynes and neighbouring Buckinghamshire which causes problems for the planning process. This project will provide the resources to complete the evaluation of the environmental quality and status of BNS in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. BMERC, MKC and Buckinghamshire Council are working with Local Nature Partnership for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes (NEP) on a project which will review the 549 BNS to determine if their environmental status reaches a Local Wildlife Site status or if their record can be removed from the planning system.

11.26 BMERC datasets once updated will allow monitoring of the change in terms of quality and quantity of the Local Sites in Milton Keynes but also wider Buckinghamshire. For the current AMR the best data available is that of the change in hectareage coverage for all sites of Local Biodiversity significance, as presented in Table 11.1. However, as stated above this data should be treated with caution as the current review of the BNS sites and their re-classification is most likely the cause in the changes observed as opposed to any large-scale loss or gain to sites within the Borough. More information on the quality of sites will be provided in future AMR's.

Table 11.1: Sites of Local Biodiversity Significance (BMERC)		
Type of Site	Area 2010-11 (ha)	Area 2019-20 (ha)
Biological Notification Sites	1447	1162
Local Wildlife Sites	259	925
Local Geological Sites	32	32
MK Railway Corridors	712	712
MK Road Corridors	988	988
MK Wetland Corridors	2648	2649
MK Woodland Corridors	362	362

B - Review of targets

Review of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats

11.27 Priority species and priority habitats are those that have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The Buckingham and Milton Keynes BAP identify those habitats of importance for the County and include plans for their conservation and management⁶⁴. If a proposed development impacts on any of these priority habitats, whether within a locally designated site or not (i.e. non-protected sites), it will be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application (Para 175 NPPF).

11.28 Development proposals in Milton Keynes should maintain and protect biodiversity and should result in a measurable net gain in biodiversity, and if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for then planning permission should be refused (Policy NE3, Para 170 and 174 NPPF).

11.29 To assess the implementation of this policy, we need to obtain and analyse quantitative and qualitative data in relation to how many permitted developments during the monitoring year have successfully achieved biodiversity net gain on site, how many have used a biodiversity offsetting scheme on an alternative site to meet the policy requirements, and whether any schemes used a financial payment to achieve net gain; also reviewing what benefits have been realised through these financial payments. Furthermore, information on proposals which have been refused on

⁶⁴ <https://bucks.mknep.co.uk/projects/forward-to-2020-biodiversity-action/>

biodiversity grounds, and the outcomes of any appeals that relate to these refusals, where relevant, can also provide useful information as to the success of this policy.

- 11.30** Alongside adoption and implementation of the Biodiversity SPD, which will assist in gathering this information, the Planning Department are currently working with the Ecology Team to establish a viable monitoring approach to more easily obtaining and reporting this data in a succinct and reliable manner. It is intended that this will be implemented alongside the SPD and data from the first year of monitoring will be outlined in the 2020/21 Authority Monitoring Report.
- 11.31** The DEFRA MAGIC website⁶⁵ provides authoritative geographic information about the natural environment from across a range of government bodies, including information on Habitats and Species. The data is reviewed periodically but it does not allow for a review of the changes to these habitats and species over a period of time, instead only presenting a snapshot of information for a specific year (based on the database).
- 11.32** The BMERC holds information on over 2.5 million wildlife records of flora and fauna (notable and protected species) in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes plus information about local sites such as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites, Milton Keynes Wildlife Corridors and Road Verge Nature Reserves. They also hold data on NERC Act S41 Habitats of Principal Importance and other important conservation areas such as Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.
- 11.33** Detailed separate analysis of protected species in Milton Keynes will not be provided due to the sensitive nature of such data. The environmental information is reviewed as part of planning applications and MKC has a duty to consider the conservation of biodiversity when determining a planning application. The presence of a protected species is a material consideration.
- 11.34** Policy NE2 stipulates that developments posing a risk to protected species must demonstrate that a negative impact will be avoided. A good example is protection of Great Crested Newts (GCN). The District Licence Scheme provides a mechanism to satisfy the requirements of the policy NE2 with regards to GCN.
- 11.35** The District Licence scheme is run by NatureSpace in collaboration with other partners that includes MKC as an LPA. Developers become authorised under a licence held by MKC, with the NatureSpace Partnership acting as our administration and delivery body for the scheme.
- 11.36** Within Milton Keynes there are currently 15 developments authorised and acting under the District Licence, ranging from householder developments and infrastructure works to large scale major residential and employment sites. A further 30 development projects in the borough are at various stages of registering interest with the scheme and seeking authorisation. To date, 70 development projects within the borough have enquired with NatureSpace. Across the South Midlands region of the scheme, there have been 49 development projects authorised and over 300 enquiries into the use of the District Licence.

⁶⁵ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

11.37 The Newt Conservation Partnership has been delivering habitat compensation and monitoring for the District Licence Scheme for the two years since the project launched in February 2018. Milton Keynes has benefitted from the creation of seven new ponds at three sites, with two more due to be constructed imminently. In addition, two further sites are being screened for viability and if suitable will have ponds created during 2020.

Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

11.38 One of the targets of Strategic Objective 16 is that there should be no worsening of condition of SSSIs. There are currently three SSSI sites (wholly or partially) in the District which can be found in the Local Plan. These sites are considered to be of national importance for nature conservation and are protected from damaging activities.

11.39 Natural England's objective is to achieve 'favourable condition' status for all SSSIs. As of 10 June 2020, the status of the sites in Milton Keynes is as follow:

- a. Howe Park Wood and Oxley Mead, which are wholly situated within Milton Keynes, are both in a favourable condition.
- b. Yardley Chase SSSI, which is partly situated within Milton Keynes, with the rest in Northamptonshire, is in an Unfavourable Recovering condition.

- 12.1** As a Unitary Authority, MKC is the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) for the Borough area and as such is responsible for land use planning matters for minerals related development.
- 12.2** In July 2017, MKC adopted the Minerals Local Plan (MLP) which forms the part of the Development Plan for Milton Keynes that relates to mineral and mineral-related development within the Borough. The MLP, which has a plan period up to 31 December 2032, has the following functions:
- a. It sets out the strategic vision and objectives for minerals related development;
 - b. It identifies the mineral resources of local and national importance as well as the amount of these to be provided from within Milton Keynes;
 - c. It identifies the development strategy and site-specific allocations to facilitate delivery of a steady and adequate supply of aggregates and maintenance of landbanks; and,
 - d. It sets out the policies and proposals against which planning applications for minerals related development will be determined.
- 12.3** The MLP also sets out policies and proposals that apply to other forms of development, covering matters such as the safeguarding of mineral resources of local and national importance, committed and allocated minerals-related development and associated infrastructure as well as measures to reduce potential land use conflict with incompatible forms of development.

Figure 12.1: Minerals Local Plan Strategic Objectives

1. Support Milton Keynes', and wider, needs by ensuring a sufficient supply of aggregates in order to facilitate growth and the delivery of infrastructure.
2. Provide clear guidance regarding how minerals-related development should relate to growth patterns, other land-use forms and infrastructure networks and support industry investment through the spatial strategy for minerals-related development and the identification of specific sites.
3. Reinforce local identity through the supply of locally sourced building stone.
4. Maximise the efficient recovery and use of mineral reserves and the use of secondary and recycled materials.
5. Safeguard Milton Keynes' mineral resources of local and national importance (sand and gravel), reserves and ancillary development from other forms of development.
6. Protect and enhance Milton Keynes' environmental and heritage designations and ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health by avoiding and / or minimising adverse effects to acceptable levels.
7. Ensure minerals-related development and associated transport movements do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on human health and minimise adverse effects on residential amenity.
8. Support the provision of green infrastructure and recreational opportunities to promote healthy communities and quality of life in Milton Keynes.
9. Ensure progressive restoration of mineral extraction sites and maximise environmental gains and benefits to local communities through appropriate after-uses that reflect local circumstance and landscape linkages.
10. Support Milton Keynes' transition to a low carbon economy and tackle climate change through the promotion of sustainable development principles, alternative modes of transport and by addressing flood risk.

- 12.4** The MLP is underpinned by 10 strategic objectives, for which the policies and proposals set out in the plan provide detailed guidance on the implementation of, whilst also outlining how development should seek to support and deliver them. The strategic objectives are outlined in Figure 12.1.
- 12.5** In order to monitor the effects of implementing the plan and its policies, the MLP also includes a monitoring framework, as set out in Chapter 7 of the Plan, which is focussed on measurable planning outcomes. Table 12.1 utilises this monitoring framework by outlining the MLP policy and the plan objectives it is linked to, the key indicators for measuring performance of this policy and the target it is seeking to achieve, and then provides an update of performance for the 2019/20 monitoring period.
- 12.6** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also requires MPAs to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by preparing an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA). The LAA is required to:
- a. Forecast the demand for aggregates based on average of 10-year sales data and other relevant local information;
 - b. Analyse all aggregate supply options; and,
 - c. Assess the balance between demand and supply.
- 12.7** The most recently published LAA for Milton Keynes dates from November 2019 and is based on 2018 data. This LAA and the data contained within has been used to inform the monitoring of the MLP policies in this AMR. The data within the LAA has not been replicated in detail in the following monitoring table and as such should be read alongside the monitoring table if more detailed information or breakdown of the data is required. The 2019 LAA document can be read at: [Milton Keynes Council Minerals Policy](#).
- 12.8** With regards to DtC on minerals matters, MKC has not been involved in any matters specific to the DtC during 2019/20, but retains active membership of the South East England Aggregates Working Party and has also provided responses on the following minerals related consultations during the year:
- a. West Sussex Soft Sand Review Consultation (March 2020).

Table 12.1: Minerals Local Plan Monitoring.

Local Plan policy <i>and link to Key indicator(s) Target objectives</i>	Key indicator(s)	Target	2019/20 Monitoring
Policy 1: Providing for sand and gravel. Objective 1	Amount of aggregate produced in line with annual provision. Size of landbanks for sand and gravel and crushed rock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sand and gravel production of 0.17 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa). - Maintain a 7-year landbank for sand and gravel. 	<p>For the year 2018 sales of sand and gravel in Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire were 1.1 Mt, which compares with the combined 10-year average sales figure for Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire in 2018 of 0.91Mt (Source: SEEAWP report). (figures for MK alone are confidential and cannot therefore be published).</p> <p>The landbank for Milton Keynes as at December 2018 was 5 years based on the adopted provision rate.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Sand and gravel sales in Milton Keynes decreased over monitoring period. However, despite the fall in sales there are still reserves available to continue to support growth in the Borough. The landbank has increased but still falls short of the landbank target.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u> At this stage neither of the trigger points for mitigation measures for this policy, as outlined in the MLP's monitoring framework, have been met and as such no actions, aside from continued monitoring are recommended. However, there is potential that if trends do not change over the next year, correction or mitigation measures may need to be considered.</p>
Policy 2: The spatial strategy for sand and gravel extraction. Objective 2	Approved proposals are consistent with spatial strategy.	100% of approvals are consistent with spatial strategy.	<p>Two sand and gravel sites were permitted in 2018 (permission refs. 17/01267/MIN & 18/00009/MIN). They are consistent with the spatial strategy; both located within the primary area of focus for sand and gravel extraction.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>

Policy 3: Site-specific allocations for the extraction of sand and gravel. Objectives 1, 2	Amount of sand and gravel produced from allocated sites is in line with annual provision.	Allocated sites come forward to ensure sand and gravel production to meet provision rate.	Permission refs. 17/01267/MIN & 18/00009/MIN are both allocated sites for sand and gravel extraction. They have combined reserves of 0.76 Mt and when active will contribute to meeting the annual provision rate. <u>Trends:</u> Target met
Policy 4: Site-specific allocations for the extraction of building stone. Objectives 1, 2, 3	Amount of building stone produced from allocated sites is in line with annual provision.	Allocated sites come forward within the plan period and approvals are in line with the development strategy.	No applications determined in monitoring period. <u>Trends:</u> Sales of building stone increased over monitoring period providing reserves to support restoration, conservation and enhancement in the Borough.
Policy 5: Development principles for mineral extraction. Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5	Approved proposals meet development principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	Mineral extraction sites permitted in 2018 (permission refs. 17/01267/MIN & 18/00009/MIN) comply with development principles including preference for extraction at allocated sites and compliance with local plan policies. <u>Trends:</u> Target met
Policy 6: Borrow Pits. Objectives 1, 2	Approved proposals meet development principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	No applications determined in monitoring period. <u>Trends:</u> No change
Policy 7: Development principles for facilities for secondary and recycled aggregates. Objectives 1, 2, 4	Approved proposals meet development principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	A waste transfer and recycling facility was permitted in 2018 (permission ref. 18/02880/FUL) that will produce recycled aggregates. It complies with development principles for facilities for recycled aggregates. <u>Trends:</u> Target met
Policy 8: Development principles for other forms of minerals-related development. Objectives 1, 2	Approved proposals meet development principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	No applications determined in monitoring period. <u>Trends:</u> Sales of sand and gravel from Bletchley rail depot increased, whilst sales of crushed rock decreased, over the monitoring period.

Policy 9: Natural assets & resources. Objectives 6, 8	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals included assessment of natural assets and resources and, where required, identified measures to contribute to and enhance the environment, including a net gain in biodiversity.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 10: Historic Environment. Objective 6	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Where required, minerals-related development proposals included approved schemes addressing the historic environment. Archaeological investigation took place at all sites with conditions being imposed on those sites impacting archaeology.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 11: Landscape and townscape. Objectives 6, 8	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals met landscape and townscape character development principles and, where required, included landscape character assessments.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 12: General amenity. Objectives 6, 7	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals included measures to avoid and /or reduce potentially adverse impacts on quality of life and amenity. Site management plans, where applicable, were produced to ensure implementation and maintenance of mitigation measures.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 13: Sustainable transport. Objective 7	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals satisfied requirements relating to sustainable transport seeking where possible to reduce transport distances and minimise movements. Where relevant, applications included a sustainable transport statement.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>

Policy 14: Site design and layout. Objectives 6, 10	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals satisfied requirements relating to site design and layout principles.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 15: Climate change. Objective 10	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Approved minerals-related development proposals met (as appropriate) requirements to address climate change and contribute towards the transition to a low carbon future.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 16: Restoration and after-care. Objective 9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Where required, all mineral-related permissions included an adequate after-use/ restoration scheme.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 17: Implementation. Objectives 1, 2	<p>Approved proposals meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>Mechanisms to facilitate the control and implementation of minerals-related development were enacted (as appropriate) for approved proposals.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> Target met</p>
Policy 18: Mineral safeguarding and consultation areas. Objective 5	<p>Approved proposals do not have an adverse effect on a safeguarded mineral resource and meet development principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mineral resources are not needlessly sterilised. - 100% of approvals meet development principles. - No appeals lost on proposals not meeting development principles. 	<p>It is considered all development applications identifying sites within MSAs meet the requirements set out in the MLP that relate to protecting economically important resources from sterilisation. As a result, no development took place which caused sterilisation to economically viable resources.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> No change, no permissions have been granted that would in the view of the minerals planning authority result in sterilisation of economically viable resources.</p>

<p>Policy 19: Safeguarding minerals-related development and associated infrastructure.</p> <p><i>Objective 5</i></p>	<p>Approved proposals meet requirements.</p>	<p>100% of approvals meet requirements.</p>	<p>It is considered no development permitted within the monitoring year would adversely affect minerals-related development and associated infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Trends:</u> No change, no permissions have been granted that would in the view of the minerals planning authority result in minerals-related development being adversely affected.</p>
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Waste

- 13.1** As a Unitary Authority, MKC is the Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for the Borough area. The Waste Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in 2008, outlines local waste policy which provides the basis for planning decisions on waste matters within the Borough.
- 13.2** The Waste DPD sets out the long-term spatial vision for the Borough in relation to waste and sets strategic policies required to deliver the vision. Furthermore, the Waste DPD outlines allocations of sites for waste management facilities and provides a range of Development Management policies related to the delivery of site-specific allocations and for use in assessing other waste related planning applications which may come forward.
- 13.3** MKC also produces a Waste Strategy which covers the implementation of waste-related services such as waste collection and waste disposal. This is not a planning document but does seek to set targets in relation to issues such as the percentage of household waste sent for reuse and recycling, and other waste related areas in which MKC is required to feedback information to national government for reporting on an annual basis.
- 13.4** The most recent MKC Waste Strategy was published in 2017 and covers the five-year period through to 2022. Whereas in previous MKC Waste Strategies specific targets had been set in a number of areas, specifically in relation to issues of landfill allowances and recycling targets, the 2017 Waste Strategy does not do so to the same degree. The main driver for the 2017 update was the financial position, and associated funding gap, of MKC. Therefore, as MKC currently does not have to meet any recycling or landfill targets, the main aim of the 2017 strategy was to enable high quality waste services to be delivered to a growing city with reduced resources.
- 13.5** This AMR therefore seeks to look at the last four years of available data in relation to waste management to review performance against national indicators. The most recently published data is for the year 2018/19. Data for 2019/20 will not be published until approximately November 2020, as such this AMR only outlines performance on waste matters up until 31 March 2019.

Duty to Cooperate on Waste Matters

- 13.6** As a strategic matter, the planning of waste falls under MKC's duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies. During the 2019/20 Monitoring period, MKC has sought to fulfil its duty by undertaking engagement with different organisations shown in the table below.

Table 13.1: Duty to Cooperate on Waste Matters.

Type of Engagement	Parties Involved	Date of Engagement
Meetings	South East Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG)-meeting with South East Waste Planning Authorities and Environment Agency	April 2019 July 2019 Nov 2019 Jan 2020

13.7 South East Waste Planning Authority Group (SEWPAG) is a non-executive body, funded directly by the WPA members. It comprises of:

- a. WPAs in the south east of England;
- b. the Environment Agency;
- c. representatives from similar fora in London and the east of England and waste industry;
- d. representation through the Environmental Services Association (ESA).

13.8 SEWPAG meets to discuss waste planning matters in the South East. SEWPAG helps WPAs including MKC to plan for waste management taking account of the wider strategic cross boundary waste issues in the South East. Being a part of this group helps MKC to fulfil our statutory plan making ‘Duty to Co-operate’ by working together in groups in order that we may carry out our individual responsibilities more effectively. While being a part of SEWPAG MKC provides a wider response to relevant consultations such as neighbouring areas’ plans for waste management, DCO projects and waste planning applications of strategic importance.

13.9 A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SEWPAG members was signed by MKC in August 2018. The MoU sets out how the SEWPAG Authorities would approach the Duty and set thresholds below which it was considered that the Duty need not apply. This had been recently revised in the form of the new SoCG between SEWPAG members.

13.10 During 2018-19 the group compiled the following documents (MKC are not yet signatories to either):

- a. *Joint Position Statement: Permanent Deposit of Inert Waste on Land in the South East of England November 2019* (MKC not yet signatory). The position statement focuses on discussing the capacity for managing inert waste through permanent deposit to land in the SE of England and issues affecting permanent deposit of inert waste on land in the South East of England;
- b. *Statement of Common Ground between Waste Planning Authority members of the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group Concerning Strategic Policies for Waste Management March 2020* (MKC not yet signatory). This SoCG replaces current MoU between WPA of the SEWPAG from August 2017 (MKC signed it in August 2018). The SoCG covers strategic matters and areas of agreement such as the need for net self-sufficiency, movements of waste between authorities and thresholds to be used when identifying strategic waste movements.

13.11 During the monitoring period 2019/20 the group responded to the following:

- a. New London Plan Examination in Public Written Statement – Waste and Circular Economy;
- b. Response provided to Application by WTI/EFW Holdings Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Wheelabrator Kemsley (K3) Generating Station and the Wheelabrator Kemsley North waste to energy facility
- c. Response provided to application for Wheelabrator Harewood Waste-to-Energy Facility (Hampshire).

Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority

13.12 There was no increase in the operational capacity of waste management facilities in the monitoring period. An application to extend the operational life of the Bletchley landfill was received to extend the operational life of the site by 15 years with final restoration of the whole site to be completed within a further 24 months.

Amount of municipal waste arising and managed by Milton Keynes Council 2018/19

13.13 Table 13.2 outlines the percentage of Local Authority collected waste recycled, both as a total and broken down into household and non-household waste for 2018/19 whilst also providing a comparison with the previous three years. Table 13.3 then outlines the means that have been used to manage the waste that has been collected across the same time periods.

13.14 As both tables 13.2 and 13.3 outline, the total amount of waste generated in the most recent monitoring period reduced by over 3,000 tonnes from the previous year, as it also had done in 2017/18. For 2018/19, the reduction was however entirely from household waste, with the overall amount of non-household waste increasing from 2017/18. This differs from the previous years outlined, where non-household waste had decreased in every year.

Table 13.2: Percentage of Local Authority Collected Waste recycled 2015/16 - 2018/19								
	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected
Household Waste: Dry recycling or Reuse	32987	26.5	34318	27.5	32636	26.4	35605	30.4
Household Waste: Green recycling or Reuse	27943	22.5	28963	23.2	31262	25.3	33702	28.7
Household Waste not sent for recycling	63508	51	61703	49.4	59741	48.3	47965	40.9
Total Household Waste	124438	100	124984	100	123639	100	117272	100
Non-household waste sent for recycling,	7895	83.1	7267	79.4	5937	82.2	6093	62.6

composting or reuse								
Non-household waste not sent for recycling	1607	16.9	1889	20.6	1285	17.8	3635	37.4
Total Non-household Waste	9502	100	9156	100	7222	100	9728	100
Local Authority Collected Waste sent for recycling, compost or reuse	68825	51.4	70548	52.6	69835	53.4	75400	59.4
Local Authority Collected Waste not sent for recycling	65115	48.6	63592	47.4	61026	46.6	51600	40.6
Total Local Authority Collected Waste	133940	100	134140	100	130861	100	127000	100

Table 13.3: Management of Local Authority Collected Waste 2015/16 – 2018/19.

	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected	Quantity (Tonnes)	% waste collected
Landfilled	37103	27.7	39390	29.4	17138	13.1	3276	2.6
Incineration with EfW	29604	22.1	24170	18	43214	33	42173	33.2
Incineration without EfW	39	0.03	16	0.01	15	0.01	12	0.009
Recycled/composted	68825	51.4	70548	52.6	69835	53.4	75400	59.4
Other	-1640	-1.2	0	0	659	0.5	6139	4.8
Total Local Authority Collected Waste	133931	100	134124	100	130861	100	127000	100

13.15 Other notable points are that the amount of collected waste sent to landfill significantly dropped for the second year running, now accounting for only 2.6% of the total collected waste within the Borough; a reduction of 26.8% over the two-year period 2017/18 – 2018/19. Whilst this decrease aligns with a small increase in the amount of waste recycled and composted (6.8% increase in two years), the main increase relates to the amount of waste incinerated via an Energy from Waste (EfW) plant, which over the same two-year period, increased by 15.2%.

13.16 This increase coincides with the opening of the Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Plant (MKWRP) which has been operational since March 2018. The plant utilised state-of-the-art mechanical treatment and heat energy recovery technologies to manage waste in a more sustainable manner, enabling the creation of enough energy to power the equivalent of 11,000 homes whilst also reducing the amount of waste that is sent to landfill and providing a saving to MKC on its waste management bill in the forthcoming years (Landfill being the most expensive means of managing collected waste).

13.17 The amount of waste collected by MKC and sent to landfill is also a national benchmark indicator (NI 193). The 2017 MKC Waste Strategy outlined that with the MKWRP coming online, it was expected that the amount of waste being sent to landfill would be below 5% by 2022. As outlined in Table 13.3, this has already been achieved by the end of 2018/19.

Recycling, composting and reuse of waste in Milton Keynes

13.18 Whilst MKC does not have to meet any targets in relation to recycling, it does, however, have a duty to separate out paper, metals, plastics and glass for recycling and to have regard to the waste hierarchy. The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment, with reuse and recycling being the highest in the hierarchy for means of managing waste that has been created.

13.19 As outlined in the 2017 MKC Waste Strategy, waste hierarchy rates are measured using the benchmark national indicator known as “NI 192” (the percentage of household waste recycled) or by using the percentage of total waste collected by MKC that is recycled.

13.20 With regards to NI 192, Table 13.2 outlines that the percentage of household waste recycled or reused in 2018/19 was 59.1%, this is an increase of 7.4% from the amount in 2017/18 and 10.1% from 2015/16. A similar trend is also shown in Table 13.3 for the amount of total collected waste that is recycled or reused with the percentage rising from 51.4% in 2015/16 to 59.4% in 2018/19.

13.21 The 2017 MKC Waste Strategy outlined that for both these measures it was expected that the Strategy would result in a reduction of the recycling rate by approximately 3-4% from the percentages recorded in 2015/16. As the above monitoring data shows, this has however not been the case and recycling rates have continued to increase in 2018/19. The impacts of the Strategy which is for the period 2017-2022 will however only be fully understood at the end of the period, taking account of future years’ monitoring.

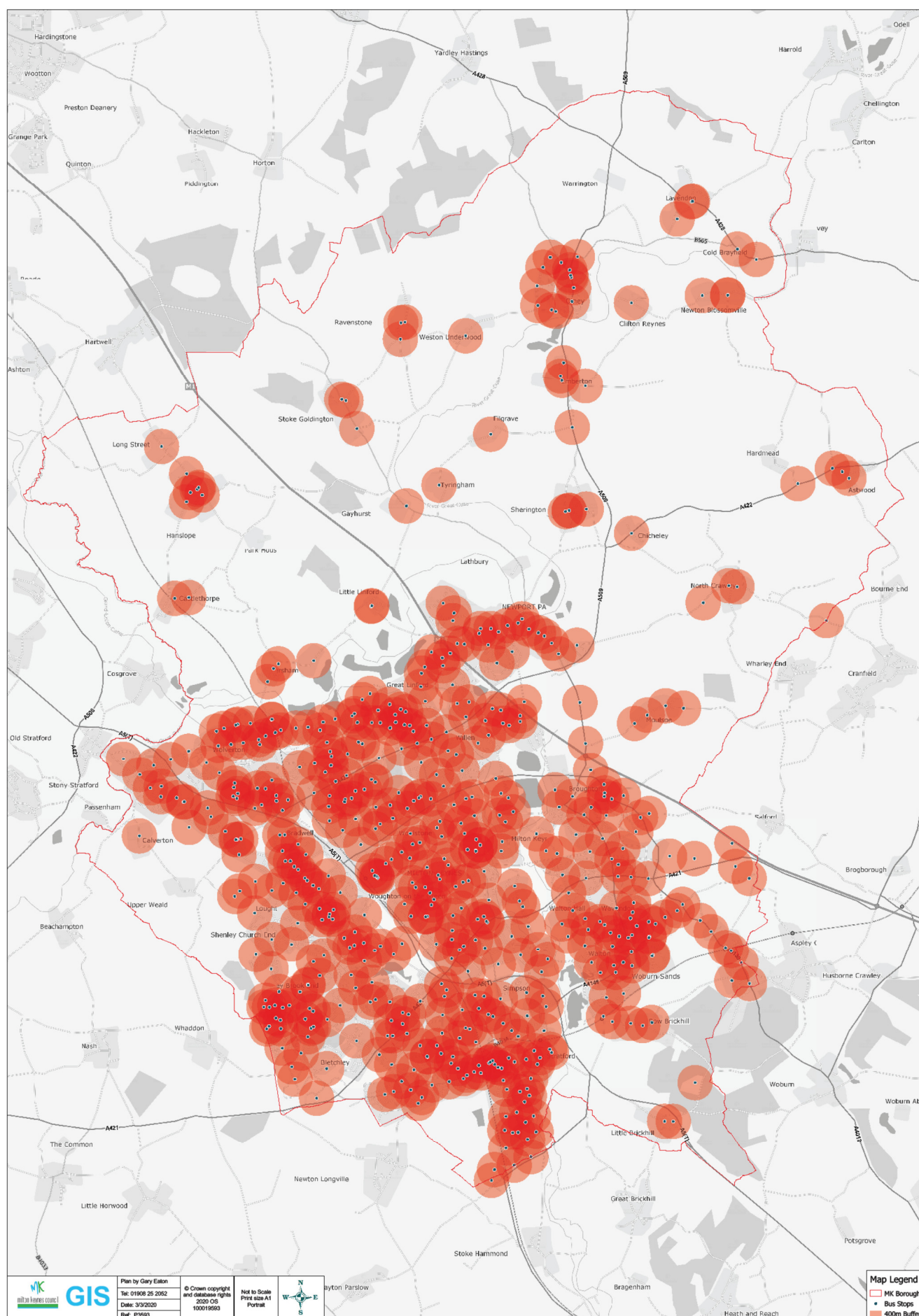
13.22 Overall it is clear that MKC are meeting their duty to have regard to the waste hierarchy with recycling and reuse, followed by incineration (now with the majority being used for waste to energy conversion), accounting for the management of 92.6% of all waste collected within the Borough and the lowest amount being that which is sent to landfill.

Mass of waste produced per household

13.23 As outlined in Table 13.4, for the monitoring period 2018/19, the residual waste per household figure (which is a national benchmark indicator (NI 191)) was 431.8kg. This represents a significant reduction of over 100kg from the figure recorded in 2017/18 and continues a trend of reduced amounts.

Table 13.4: Residual Waste per household in Milton Keynes 2018/19				
Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Residual Household Waste (kg/household)	592.4	568.8	544.4	431.8

Appendix A



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