

Statement of Common Ground

Between 12491/03/MS/MT Milton Keynes Council and Berkeley
Date 22 June 2018

Subject Plan:MK and Land East of the M1 (Milton Keynes East)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is prepared between Milton Keynes Council (MKC, the Council) and Berkeley ("the parties"). It is provided to inform the Examination into the soundness of Plan:MK and sets out the areas of common ground between the Council, as the plan making and highway authority, and Berkeley, as the developer controlling the majority of the Land East of the M1 (Milton Keynes East – MKE) allocation site.
- 1.2 This SoCG is supported by a jointly prepared Development Statement which is appended to this SoCG. The Development Statement sets out information on the evidence underpinning the delivery of the MKE site, provides details of the development proposals and sets out a future programme of joint work which will be undertaken.

2.0 Areas of Agreement

Milton Keynes East

- 2.1 The parties agree on the principle of allocating the Milton Keynes East site within Plan:MK for housing and employment development.
- 2.2 The parties agree that MKE has the potential to play a key role in the next phase of strategic growth for Milton Keynes. It is strategically well located and it responds to the growth agenda set out by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) report into the Cambridge-MK-Oxford arc (MK/INF/004) and the MK Futures 2050 Commission.
- 2.3 It is a shared position that the site is developable in the terms of NPPF footnote 12. It is a suitable location, it is available and there is a reasonable prospect that the site could be developed viably at a point within the plan period.
- 2.4 The parties agree that allocation of MKE would not be contrary or prejudicial to any wider strategy that may be pursued following on from these pieces of work and commit to working together to ensure MKE responds to the opportunities which the Cambridge-MK-Oxford arc affords Milton Keynes.
- 2.5 The parties believe, based on current indications from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) process including the successful Stage 1 shortlisting, that there is a better than reasonable prospect that Government funding will come forward to address up-front infrastructure requirements which would help release the full potential of the site. The parties are now working together on the Stage 2 HIF bid, including developing the business case in further detail with the intention of making a submission to Government before December 2018.
- 2.6 Should the current HIF bid be unsuccessful the parties agree that there are other funding opportunities and/or models that could be explored to help unlock the site for example Government Growth Deal or LEP funding.

- 2.7 The enclosed Development Statement sets out a shared understanding of how the site could come forward.

Transport

- 2.8 The parties agree that MKE and its associated strategic road infrastructure has been assessed within the Milton Keynes Multi-Modal Model (MKMMM) and that this modelling work is robust and demonstrates that a highway strategy for MKE to enable the development, deliver significant benefits to the wider MKE network and extend the operational life of M1 J14 is achievable. The parties agree that the highway strategy could address local and strategic traffic movements in MK and that the modelling indicates flows into Central Bedfordshire would be modest and would not have a material impact on the strategic or local road network within Central Bedfordshire.
- 2.9 The parties agree that the development could be served by suitable bus routes to connect the site to key locations including Central Milton Keynes, MK railway station, Newport Pagnell and Cranfield and agree that suitable walking and cycling routes can be provided to connect the site to surrounding areas including connectivity to the existing Redway network.
- 2.10 The parties agree to the principle of a fast mass rapid transit corridor, with a safeguarded alignment to be set through the Development Framework.

Agreed Proposed Modifications to Plan:MK

- 2.11 Milton Keynes Council has put forward a proposed modification to introduce further land to the MKE allocation (PM44). This land is not owned or controlled by Berkeley, but Berkeley has no in-principle objection to the proposed modification and addition of this land.
- 2.12 Subsequent to the submission of the plan, the parties have also agreed that, without prejudice to any other modifications that might be put forward as necessary by either party, a focused modification to Plan:MK policy SD14 as currently drafted (as a reserve site/additional source of supply) is necessary to provide clarity over MKC's position and ensure the policy is effective.
- 2.13 On the assumption that MKE is retained in Plan:MK as submitted as a 'reserve' or additional source of housing supply as currently proposed by MKC, rather than as a full allocation, the parties agree that policy SD14 would benefit from an amendment to state that the MKE site can be delivered ahead of 2031 provided that any necessary up-front infrastructure can be funded and delivered, as opposed to the current wording, which refers to the Council's bid to Government for infrastructure funding in the singular. This policy modification would provide clarity that if the current HIF bid was to be unsuccessful, there are likely to be other funding opportunities and/or models which would be pursued to help unlock the site.
- 2.14 This proposed modification would change the wording as follows:
"Development will not can commence until-after before 2031 unless the Council's bid to the Government for if any necessary strategic infrastructure required to make the site deliverable within the plan period can be funding is successful and delivered. In that circumstance, the development of the site will be allowed to proceed..."
- 2.15 The proposed modified wording will be added to the Council's schedule. Berkeley's support for this modified wording is notwithstanding the position set out in 3.0 below.

Joint Working


- 2.16 The parties are committed to constructive joint working to bring forward and deliver development at MKE. Joint working has already been a large factor in the submission of the HIF bid.
- 2.17 The parties will continue to work together, including in producing a 'Development Framework' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will set out the principles for the development and provide a comprehensive masterplan for the allocation site.
- 2.18 The parties are committed to continuing public consultation, community involvement and stakeholder liaison in respect of the development of the MKE site. This will include engaging with parish councils, ward forums and other local groups. Both parties are aware of local concerns about the development of the site and, whilst it is a shared position between the parties that none of these concerns fundamentally make the site unsuitable for development, the parties will seek to work with those interests and ensure the development is designed to minimise any impacts upon existing communities.
- 2.19 There will be continued joint working with statutory consultees, building on the constructive discussions undertaken to date.
- 2.20 MKC and Berkeley are currently putting in place a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) to guide the planning process, including setting out project milestones and resources. The PPA will cover the programme of work in relation to both the Development Framework SPD and the planning application process.
- 2.21 For the avoidance of doubt, Berkeley's outstanding objections to Plan:MK (as set out under Section 3.0) do not affect the commitment to constructive joint working with the Council.


3.0 Areas of Disagreement

- 3.1 There remain areas of disagreement between Berkeley and the Council; Berkeley's position is set out in the response to the Proposed Submission version of Plan:MK (December 2017) and in the separate Matters Statements.
- 3.2 These principally relate to the status of MKE as a reserve or additional site, in the context of the overall Plan:MK strategy over a plan period. Notwithstanding Berkeley's above support for the site's allocation in principle, and the above proposed modification to policy SD14 to clarify the Council's proposed position, Berkeley will continue to submit that MKE should be identified as a full allocation for delivery within the plan period.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The above is agreed as a shared position and both Milton Keynes Council and Berkeley look forward to delivering an exceptional new urban extension to Milton Keynes at MKE.

Signed: 
Print: Baron Lewis
on behalf of Milton Keynes Council
Date: 22 June 2018

Signed: 
Print: STEVEN GOUGH
on behalf of Berkeley
Date: 20 June 18