

**SEMK Local Stakeholder Group Meeting**  
**17:30-19:00, Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019**  
**Room 1.05/06, Civic Offices, Central Milton Keynes**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Attendees**

Lesley Sung	Walton CC
Mario Toto	Walton CC
Jaime Tamagnini-Barbosa	Walton CC
David Hopkins	MKC Danesborough and Walton Ward
Michael Geddes	Woburn Sands TC
Becky O'Rourke	Bow Brickhill PC
Tony O'Rourke	Bow Brickhill PC
Ben Everitt	AVDC Great Brickhill and Newton Longville Ward
Neil Blake	AVDC Great Brickhill and Newton Longville Ward
Andrew Turner	Senior Planning Officer MKC
Neil Sainsbury	Head of Placemaking, MKC
Matt Clarke	Senior Urban Designer, MKC

**Item 1 – Apologies**

Sue Malleson	Representative of Bow Brickhill PC
John Baker	CBC Aspley and Woburn Ward
Stewart Bailey	Aspley Guise PC
Cllr Alice Jenkins	MKC Danesborough and Walton Ward

**Item 2 – Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes were agreed subject to the following changes:

- Amendments to attendees/apologies
- Clarifying how the group would like the portfolio holder to engage in the meetings (i.e. be invited as an observer)
- Clarify the group's position on inviting different local groups and societies to future meetings.
- Add a record of the discussion of how papers for meetings would be published and shared.

**Item 3 – Draft Transport Study Brief**

The group discussed the draft brief. The following is a summary of the issues raised:

- The scope does not look to assess the impact on existing urban areas of MK and areas further afield in Aylesbury Vale/Central Beds, instead focusses too much on the villages immediately beyond the urban area of MK (Woburn Sands and Bow Brickhill)
- Brief is too railway centric. It should look to assess the totality of the impact arising from growth and infrastructure projects in the wider, rather than just areas astride the railway
- The study needs to assess the likely impact of the Expressway, but the study should not be delayed simply because of uncertainty around the Expressway announcements.
- The group queried what MKC's preferred route for the Expressway was. Officers outlined the Delegated Decisions taken in 2016 and 2019 regarding the Expressway. It was noted that MKC has signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement with Highways England regarding the Expressway.
- General discussion of possible Expressway effects on the area, and that these would need to be assessed properly and taken into account once an announcement is made by Highways England later in the year.
- The group noted that the study needs to set out how any potential or preferred solutions (e.g. new bridges over the railway) would be fully funded by the relevant parties involved (e.g. Network Rail, MKC, developers).
- The group had a discussion as to how the study and any proposed bridge using land within South Caldecotte would sit alongside the planning application process for South Caldecotte (noting that an application had now been submitted). Concerned the application would be approved before the study and its recommendations could influence the Council's determination of the application. Officers noted that MKC has to consider the application. MKC are reconsidering the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be provided with the application. If that is the case, then the determination of the application would likely be put back by a number of months whilst the applicant went through the process of preparing the EIA. In that scenario, then the study may have reported back and its conclusions/recommendations would be a material consideration when considering the South Caldecotte application.
- It was stated by the group that the Council should refuse the application as an SPD has not yet been adopted by the Council – therefore contrary to Plan:MK policy.
- The group queried whether the Secretary of State may intervene if they think the South Caldecotte development would prejudice the Expressway.
- Need to be clear which roads are being referred to in the brief (e.g. there are more than one Church Road in the area)
- Traffic count surveys should be carried out at the junction of Bow Brickhill Road and Brickhill Street just south of the level crossing
- Traffic counts should not be carried out during school holidays and traffic flows are very different during the period
- Suggested that traffic conditions on weekends equally need to be considered, not just the normal mid-week days.
- Geographical scope of the study needs to cover communities in AVDC, e.g. Great Brickhill and Newton Longville
- The study may need to test different development and infrastructure scenarios cover off different outcomes

- Queried what layout would be assumed for SEMK when undertaking modelling and other work as part of the study. Officers advised that this would be something to discuss during the study when agreeing what assumptions are used.
- Queried how the study would factor in modal choice of new residents and employees
- Suggested that parking issues around Caldecotte and Tilbrook need to be looked at as part of the study, taking account of new employers moving into the area. This issues may go hand in hand with bridge options.

#### **Item 4 – SEMK Concept/Vision discussion**

As there was not clear brief or structure for this discussion, Officers suggested the group focus discussion on the draft vision statement contained in the draft SEMK Workshop Report issued in February (circulated again on email ahead of the meeting). Officers picked up the clear aspiration for a distinct development that complements existing settlements, innovative/high quality design (not anywhere type development) and the need for buffers. The group then had a discussion about the vision and concepts shown in the workshop report. The following is a summary of points raised:

- The aspiration for a green development would be compromised by the additional diesel trains associated with East West Rail, and additional traffic arising from the new housing and large employment sites.
- Difficult to find a balance between seeing SEMK as an extension of MK or part of the rural edge and adjacent villages
- Generally considered that it should link into the grid road system so traffic is not routed through the villages, although the impact on existing communities in the urban area of MK equally needs consideration
- Site should not be high density. A lower density would enable the edge of urban character to be achieved, as well as innovative/distinct designs to come forward
- MKC needs to consider how different house builders can be brought in to avoid the usual house builders just building to same 'anywhere' houses and places.
- High density should not just be situated near Wavendon
- There should be buffers with traffic diverted around Woburn Sands and Bow Brickhill.
- Noted MKC's recent declaration of a Climate Emergency and adopting an ambitious Sustainability Strategy. This should further support a push for a lower density development that respects wildlife and habitats.
- MKC needs to implement Plan:MK policies more forcefully to ensure high quality design and places. Officers noted that the SPD was an opportunity to translate those policies into a more specific vision and set of principles for SEMK, which would strengthen the Council's ability to enforce higher quality development at SEMK.
- Considered that the grid road system should be extended into SEMK to enable traffic to flow into the MK urban area appropriately. Officers noted this would be supported by Plan:MK, but also noted the group's and Plan:MK's other aspirations and objectives around achieving walkable neighbourhoods, good connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists through and beyond the site, and for lower density. Grid roads typically make it difficult to achieve these other objectives due to their barrier

effect and the amount of land they take up (meaning housing has to be accommodated on a smaller area of land, pushing up densities).

- The group discussed that a mixed solution of grid roads and other roads may be the way forward, to enable a range of objectives to be met.

### **Item 5 – Future meeting agenda items**

The group agreed to continue the discussion of the vision and concept at the August meeting (and potentially the September meeting), and would provide further thoughts on email to officers by 9 August. MKC officers would then draw up a range of concepts to inform the discussion at the meeting on the 29 August. MKC officers would also pull together a synopsis of Plan:MK policies dealing with the design issues that were raised.

**AOB** – Request for meetings to commence at 6.15pm to avoid parking charges. This was agreed by the group.

### **Actions**

- **Group members to provide any final comments on the Draft Transport Study Brief to [James.Povey@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:James.Povey@milton-keynes.gov.uk) by 5pm Monday 29 July**
- **Group to provide comments on the vision statement within the draft SEMK Workshops report (to be added to the website at <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/south-east-milton-keynes-strategic-urban-extension>) to [andrew.turner@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.turner@milton-keynes.gov.uk) by 5pm 9 August**
- **MKC officers to prepare additional concept plans on how the vision (and further comments on it) could be translated spatially to SEMK for discussion at the next meeting on 29 August**
- **Future meetings to commence at 6.15pm to help people with parking.**