

Cabinet Advisory Group South Caldecotte Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

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Purpose

1. To inform CAG members of the revised draft South Caldecotte Development Framework (SPD) which has been prepared by UDLA team with support provided by officers in the Development Plans Team. To seek comments on the draft before it proceeds to a public consultation which would be followed by adoption.

Background

2. The South Caldecotte Development Framework SPD has been created to provide planning and design guidance for the development of the strategic employment allocation site in South Caldecotte for the development of large footprint B2/B8 units as per requirements of the policy SD14. Once adopted, it will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
3. The SPD is not a policy itself but is intended to supplement the policies in Plan:MK governing this and other strategic allocations. It is a requirement of policy SD10 in Plan:MK that Development Frameworks are prepared for strategic development sites prior to planning permission being granted.
4. As per the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, two rounds of public consultation were carried out between March and April 2018 and May-July 2019 on the draft SPD. The Development Framework was published on the Council's website and copies of the document displayed in libraries and the Civic Offices. Copies/weblinks were sent to Danesborough and Walton Ward Councillors, Walton Community Council, Bow Brickhill Parish Council, Cabinet Members and the Cross Party Planning Spokespersons. Statutory and other consultees, including those that had previously expressed an interest in the Development Framework, were consulted.

5. Progressing the SPD to adoption was put on hold in July 2019 pending further information on the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway route (a public consultation was expected in Autumn 2019) and completion of a transport study by the Council into movement and crossings of the railings to the South of MK.
6. The revised draft SPD provided at this meeting addresses the comments from previous consultations and further engagement with local communities and residents since the two consultations took place. It also reflects the Council's view on certain matters that was established when determining the recent outline planning application.

Issue/implications/key considerations:

7. Policy SD14 of Plan:MK requires that a comprehensive development framework for the site should be prepared prior to planning applications being approved.
8. The developer of the site (Hampton Brook) applied for planning permission for the site prior to the adoption of the SPD and the application was refused (ref 19/01818/OUT) on biodiversity, archaeology and transport grounds. Hampton Brook have appealed the Council's decision to refuse planning permission for their proposed development. The Planning Inspectorate has confirmed that the appeal will take the form of a public inquiry which would involve public hearings between 25 August and 4 September 2020.
9. In terms of highways/transport issues, the Expressway consultation expected in Autumn 2019 was delayed, and in March 2020 the Government published the Road Investment Strategy 2¹ which stated that the Expressway had been 'paused'. No further guidance or information on what the pause amounts to has been provided by Government yet.
10. Since 2019, the Council had been progressing a transport study for the south east area of Milton Keynes. In early 2020, MKC officers were approached by the East-West Rail (EWR) Company in relation to an assessment of what infrastructure was required to enable the extension of EWR services from Bedford to Cambridge, with a focus on level crossings. This work closely overlapped with the work MKC was trying to progress on possible railway crossings. As a result, it was decided it would be more sensible, efficient and productive for MKC to input into the work being undertaken by the EWR Co. on these issues. Draft outputs of this work are expected over the summer/early autumn.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-investment-strategy-2-ris2-2020-to-2025>

Bow Brickhill Crossing

11. As noted above, the transport work being undertaken by the EWR Co with input from MKC will feed into the SPD. It is anticipated that outputs of this work will be available to inform the draft SPD ahead of any Delegated Decision to consult on a revised draft SPD.

Archaeology

12. The significance of the archaeological remains on the site has been assessed as part of the determination of the outline planning application. The remains of a Roman street with buildings alongside has been judged to be of high, and possibly national, significance. The revised draft Development Framework requires that the part of the site containing the most significant and well-preserved buried archaeological remains should be kept free of built development

Biodiversity

13. Further information regarding the biodiversity value of the site has been provided and assessed as part of the determination of the outline planning application. The lowland meadow is identified as a District level value habitat which forms an important ecological feature. Part of the habitat coincides with the area of significant buried archaeological remains. The revised draft Development Framework states that any development proposals should seek to preserve and restore this habitat in situ.

Next steps

14. Following consideration by CAG and any feedback given on the document, and progress made with EWR Co on transport work, it is planned to take the draft South Caldecotte Development Framework SPD to a Delegated Decision on 8th 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.