

Enhancing CMK's Highways Capacity for Growth & Development

- 7.10 A key element of the *CMKAP's* access and transport strategy is to maximise CMK's highways capacity to support future growth and development. Firstly, the Plan promotes the retention of the Gates, Boulevards, Streets and the inter-connected 'slow streets' through perimeter parking areas.
- 7.11 Secondly, the Plan encourages new development to create greater 'permeability' – more routes for walking and cycling, in particular.
- 7.12 Thirdly, the Plan encourages the distribution of land uses in order to disperse entry and exit points around CMK and spread the traffic load on the surrounding junctions. The Plan suggests 'indicative' land uses for development sites, with an emphasis on finer grained mixed-use and wider distribution of employment activity. The land uses shown are not precisely fixed and an alternative mix to help achieve this Plan's objectives may be justified to the Council's Development Control Committee which will monitor the overall delivery of the adopted *Core Strategy's* targets and the

Alliance Plan's strategy.

- 7.13 The wider MK City grid roads, and CMK's Gates, Boulevards and Streets are vital infrastructure that supports future growth and development in CMK by providing flexibility of movement and minimising congestion by distributing all modes of transport through multiple choices of routes. This is key to delivering one of the founding principles for CMK of 'combining the vitality of traditional city centres with the unhindered accessibility of an out of town centre.'
- 7.14 The highway hierarchy for CMK is illustrated in Figure 8:
- » Gates (district distributor roads) running north-south are the portals to CMK from the H5 Portway and H6 Childs Way. They provide access, via the surface level car parking, to development Blocks, and to service delivery points;
 - » Boulevards (local distributor roads) running east-west;
 - » Streets (access roads) running north/south which divide the Blocks of development land;
 - » North and South Rows, running east west and providing longer term parking areas for

CMK, as well as access to development Blocks; and

- » The 'slow streets' through all the parking areas in the Gates, Boulevards and Rows.

- 7.15 This hierarchy is summarised in the *Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005)*.
- 7.16 Integral to the design of the Gates, Boulevards and Streets are parallel rows of public parking space that define and serve the Blocks of development land. The importance of the perimeter parking areas that surround most Blocks in CMK cannot be underestimated, as these areas establish a width of the main movement corridor which can be shared by varying different modes over time. Far from simply providing surface-level parking places, these areas, which are Adopted Public Highway for which MK Council has maintenance responsibility and which cannot be closed without special formal Closure procedures:
- » Provide through routes to North and South Rows as well as access to individual development Blocks;
 - » Provide inter-connected routes between the parking areas adjacent to the Boulevards in

particular (named ‘slow streets’ in the *Plan for Milton Keynes (1970)*;

- » Provide alternative through routes for cyclists;
- » Provide service delivery access, where HGVs can manoeuvre and temporarily park to deliver goods, without obstructing traffic on the busier Boulevards and Gates;
- » Contain porte cocheres which offer pedestrians weather protection and greater safety as they identify key crossing routes; and
- » Accommodate corridors for common trenches and ducts for utility services.

7.17 The space can also be used to accommodate alternative transport modes in future – maybe cycle hire stands, parking and cycle interchanges, small transport interchanges or simply more taxi ranks. The space enables future-proofing of accessibility and transport.

7.18 The final strand of our strategy to maximise highways capacity is to distribute land uses across the city centre. This is particularly relevant to employment land use (e.g. offices and institutions) because work patterns tend

to concentrate journeys into and out of the city centre over shorter time spans (the morning and evening ‘rush hour’) compared to other uses, such as retail and leisure. By distributing the mix of uses across the city centre, the traffic load on roads and junctions will be more dispersed, which creates greater capacity.

Increasing public transport capacity, flexibility and choice

7.19 The Alliance Plan public transport strategy builds on the Council’s third *Local Transport Plan (LTP3)*. Firstly, the *CMKAP* promotes the creation of a second transport ‘interchange’ in the heart of the city centre, in addition to the one recently completed at Station Square. Secondly, the Plan promotes the delivery of an intra-CMK rapid transit network, such as a shuttle service.

7.20 The Alliance encourages MK Council to seek the powers of a Passenger Transport Authority (PTA), which would enable better planning of public transport throughout the Borough. Such an idea cannot be proposed in this plan for CMK in isolation, however.

7.21 Key improvements to public transport are already in progress at Central Milton Keynes station: the enhanced public transport interchange opened in July 2012, and an upgrade of the station building is underway. The interchange includes an extended pedestrian concourse in front of the station which it is hoped might one day be weather protected, increased capacity for buses and coaches, separate taxi and pick-up and drop-off areas, and improved cycling provision.

7.22 *LTP3* and other transport studies have identified the need for a second public transport interchange near the retail core in CMK. To support the future delivery of such an interchange, the Alliance Plan has identified a strategic site for this second interchange - the public car parking areas alongside Secklow Gate (see Figure 9).

- 7.23 The second strand of the strategy to improve transport is to deliver an intra-CMK ‘rapid transit’ network, such as a shuttle or more advanced system, provided at a nominal charge at the point of delivery. Described in *LTP3* as a ‘short-term delivery objective,’ which implies a welcome degree of urgency, the Alliance seeks a shuttle service circulating CMK using primarily Silbury and Avebury Boulevards. This would quickly and directly connect local destinations in CMK, including MK Central Station, the Hub, thecentre:mk, Xscape, and the Theatre District.
- 7.24 A pilot programme should be run to test whether a shuttle service can be implemented in an efficient and cost-effective way that proves popular with workers and visitors. Subsidies may be possible by local businesses benefitting from the service. Passengers could transfer between the city-wide ‘MK Star’ bus services and the local shuttle at either the rail station or Secklow Gate / Marlborough Gate interchanges.

Encouraging walking and cycling

- 7.25 A key deliverable of *LTP3* and adopted *Core Strategy* is to encourage other modes of transport, particularly walking and cycling.
- 7.26 A key part of the *CMKAP*’s Spatial and Design Strategy is to improve the pedestrian experience within CMK and the linkages to the surrounding estates. Many of the Plan’s general policies – active frontages, for example – which are aimed at increasing the vibrancy of the city’s streets, will also encourage walking as a mode of transport.
- 7.27 Milton Keynes’ 280 kilometres of world class Redway network is an under-utilised resource. Whilst approximately 40% of journeys to work within Milton Keynes are less than five kilometres in length, the proportion of walking and cycling trips for journeys to work in Milton Keynes (10%) is below the regional and national averages (13%). However, this is mainly due to fewer people walking, as the National Census 2011 shows that whilst only 2.8% of MK residents cycle to work, this is the same as the national average.

- 7.28 The Redway network approaches CMK from many directions, though inside CMK cyclists generally share the same street system as everyone else. A north-south Redway has recently been built across CMK, running alongside Saxon Street, to form part of a cycle ‘cruciform’ that would allow north-south and east-west access.
- 7.29 MK Council’s *LTP3* and 2013 Adopted *Cycling Strategy for Milton Keynes* identify the expansion of the Redway network into CMK as a ‘short-to-medium term deliverable.’ This includes:
- » Completing the ‘cruciform’, ie. a Redway running east-west through CMK;
 - » Re-routing National Sustrans Cycle Route 51, which currently runs through car parks with no distinct surface or prioritisation and with cyclists having to dismount at Midsummer Place. There needs to be a clear identification of where the route will run in the future, and consideration should be given to re-routing NCR 51 utilising the H5 Portway and/or H6 Child’s Way Redways leading to/from Campbell Park.
 - »

- » Upgrading other key Redways arriving in CMK (those running alongside H5 Portway, H6 Childs Way, V6 Grafton Street, and V8 Marlborough Street), possibly as part of the 'Super Redway' initiative; and
- » Improving cycle-way signing within CMK and on the approaches to CMK, possibly as part of a wider re-design of all cycling on the Redways.

7.30 Future longer term proposals include:

- » Further improvements for cyclists within Station Square (e.g. a 'Cycling Hub' with storage, information, repair shop and sales, café);
- » Dedicated changing facilities near the Station (potentially in the former MK Central Bus Station and / or the new Community Sports facility behind new Network Rail offices) and other key locations on the Super Redway network;
- » Cycle hire within the city centre and subsequently across the Borough.

7.31 The Alliance plan supports these aspects of the LTP3 strategy.



CMK's wide, day-lit underpasses encourage pedestrian movement

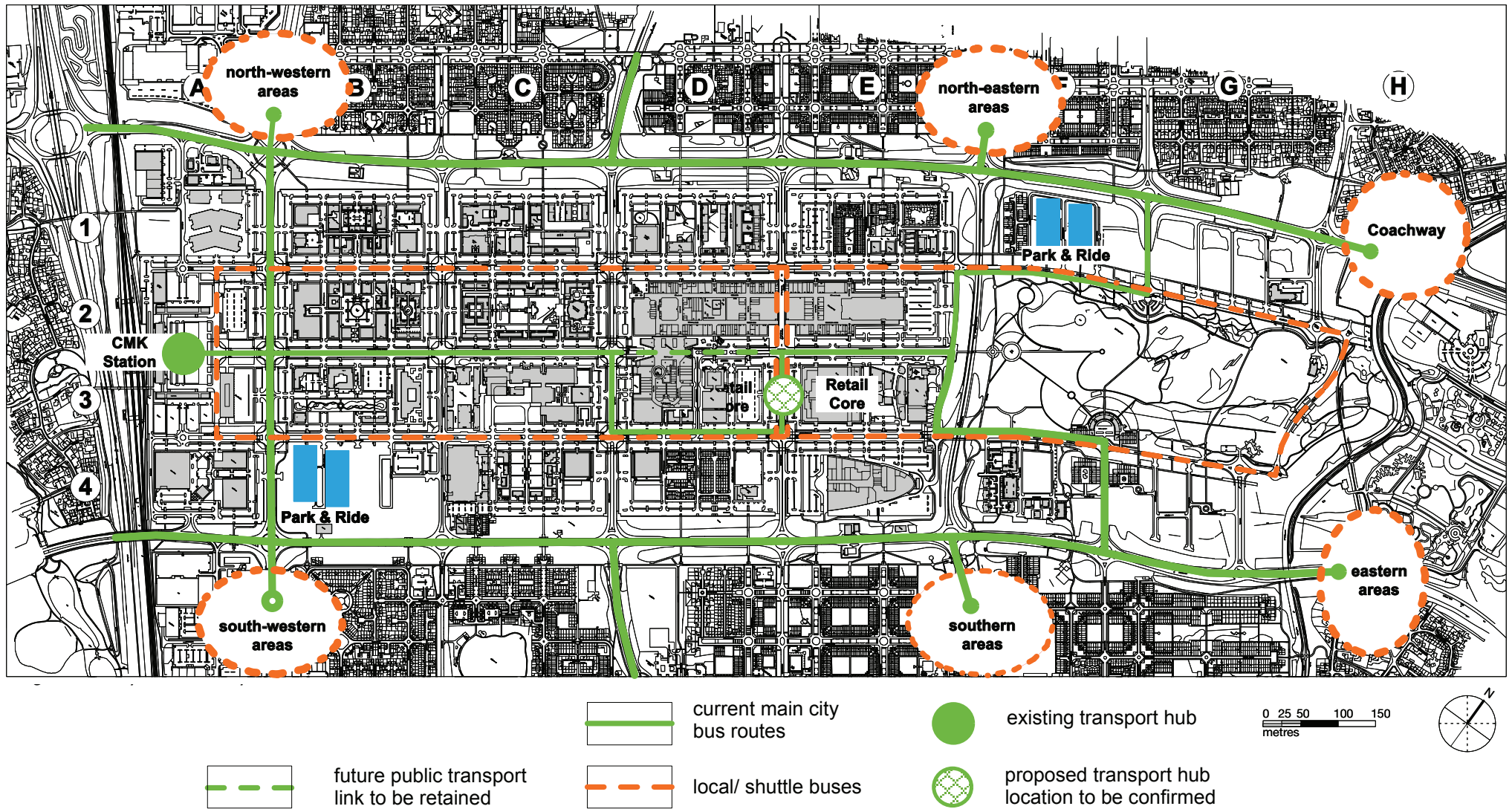


Figure 9: Proposed Transport

Better aligning and delivering parking provision

- 7.32 One of the most difficult problems in developing sustainable transport for CMK is balancing the transition from high levels of private car use to public transport without losing the convenient accessibility that gives CMK a competitive advantage compared with other towns and cities. CMK has the highest numbers of car parking spaces in proportion to development of any city centre in the country. Milton Keynes also has a high level of car ownership and a low number of public transport journeys.
- 7.33 As CMK grows, it simply will not be possible to keep building surface-level parking spaces, because we're running out of land and even our famous grid roads will eventually become grid-locked with congestion. Car parking provision in CMK must serve to maintain the economic vitality of Central Milton Keynes as a place to live, work and visit, whilst recognising parking management as a tool that can and must be utilised to promote a shift to more sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.34 Current CMK parking policy restricts on-plot

provision of parking to 30% of the standard, with the remaining 70% provided off-plot, mainly via planning obligations to support the delivery of multi-storey car parks (MSCPs). Unfortunately, an insufficient value for the planning obligation (only £2,500 per parking space versus an actual cost of over £10,000 per space), and the lack of a planning and institutional mechanism to co-ordinate the delivery of the MSCPs, have meant that MSCPs have not been delivered.

- 7.35 The Plan supports the aspiration to provide parking in MSCPs at gateways in the outer Blocks – locations where there is easier access and greater capacity. These MSCPs should be integrated or enclosed within some commercial, retail or residential development, as these facilities have proven more popular than stand-alone MSCPs. Funding would need to be provided through revised planning obligations and the possibility of exclusive use of some off-plot MSCPs spaces should be explored for new office developments. This would most likely need 'forward funding' for some of these MSCPs, as current levels of parking charges will not provide sufficient income to attract investment.

- 7.36 Milton Keynes Council's current Parking Standards are specified in two documents - the *2005 Parking Standards SPG and 2009 Addendum*. The *2009 Addendum* identifies four 'accessibility zones' across Milton Keynes, with Zone 1 covering CMK (excluding Campbell Park), Zone 2 covering Campbell Park and other town and district centres, Zone 3 covering the rest of 'urban' MK, and Zone 4 the rural parts of the borough.
- 7.37 Zones 1 and 2 have reduced levels that are 30% and 60% respectively of the amount of parking allowed on average in Zones 3 and 4. Since the parking levels for Zone 3 represent in general the standards that existed in local policy prior to 2005, the *2005 Parking Standards SPG* effectively caps new parking provision in CMK at 30% and Campbell Park at 60% of the previous standard, respectively. This severe restriction of new parking requires a 'step-change' in the number of future journeys to CMK by public transport, cycling and walking, or the growth of jobs and visitors in the city centre will be significantly curtailed.
- 7.38 Provision for residential parking was revised by the *2009 Addendum*, which increased allocated parking to a minimum of two spaces

per dwelling for dwellings with three or more bedrooms in Zones 1 and 2. Unfortunately, the *2009 Addendum* left out un-allocated (i.e. visitor) parking which had been included as a requirement in the original *2005 Parking Standards SPG*.

- 7.39 Provision of a greater number of un-allocated residential parking is not needed in CMK because there are sufficient public car parking spaces around the perimeter of most developments (local residents are issued scratch cards by MK Council so their visitors can use these bays). However, this is not the case for the Campbell Park grid square or where perimeter car parking has been removed.
- 7.40 The *Consultation Draft* of this Plan proposed that Zone 2 parking standards be adopted for all land uses in CMK and Campbell Park. Whilst this was welcomed by a number of respondents during public consultation, others were critical of this proposed change, which was interpreted as a backward step in efforts to increase public transport use and improve sustainability. The challenge we face is that severely restricting additional parking provision can lead to unintended consequences – firstly,

that CMK’s economic development stalls because it becomes less attractive as a place to do business, and secondly, that we set up a perverse incentive to develop in out-of-centre locations, where parking is plentiful and free and public transport is poor, rather than in the city centre.

- 7.41 After reviewing all of the representations regarding the original parking proposals (both for and against), the Alliance have re-visited the parking standards and have identified two key issues – parking for office developments in CMK and visitor parking for residential developments in the Campbell Park grid square. This revised *Examination Draft* of the Plan now changes only these two elements and retains the existing parking standards for other land uses.
- 7.42 It cannot be over-emphasised that even with these changes to the parking standards, a step-change to alternative transport modes is required during the plan period if CMK is to achieve the growth aspirations set out in this Plan and in the *Core Strategy*. Currently only 10% of journeys to work in CMK are made by public transport. This will need to increase to 20-25% over the next 15 years¹³. At the

same time the number of workers will greatly increase, which means the number of journeys to work using public transport will have to increase nearly 5-fold (from fewer than 2,500 bus journeys to work today to greater than 10,000 - 12,000 in 2026). This is considered to be at the outer limit of what is feasible. Furthermore, even with this best-case scenario for a transformation of public transport usage, the number of car journeys for workers in CMK will have to increase, from approximately 20,000 today to 25,000 – 30,000 in 2026, which means that more parking spaces are required.

¹³ 2007 MKP Transport Strategy Review

- 7.43 Available CMK parking is relatively inefficiently used. During weekdays, many of the parking spaces surrounding the retail area in eastern CMK lie empty whilst the businesses in the western area complain about the lack of parking. The reverse is true during weekends.
- 7.44 The proposed CMK shuttle service will encourage better use of existing parking places and temporary parking on development land (such as any new Park & Ride facilities that may be provided in Blocks F1 and B4 will help (see below). In addition, the *CMKAP* provides policy support for an improved and expanded Variable Messaging System (VMS) which will direct drivers to available parking more efficiently, further making best use of the available parking stock.

Park & Ride facilities

- 7.45 The Spatial and Design Strategy identifies two sites to be reserved for major development of strategic significance: F1 Block on the north side of Campbell Park, and B4 Block south of Avebury Boulevard between Grafton and Witan Gates. These Blocks are the best undeveloped sites remaining in CMK, and

the Alliance is of the view that these sites should be reserved for major development of strategic significance, such as a University, major corporate HQ or international institution that would bring significant numbers of skilled jobs and prestige to Milton Keynes. In the meantime, the 'meanwhile use' of these sites for temporary Park & Ride facilities will be encouraged: they would provide parking

spaces for the growing city centre, events in Campbell Park, and use the CMK shuttle service as the 'ride' part of the service. When the B4 and F1 sites are eventually developed, these additional parking facilities should be eliminated without any need for replacement as the Council completes its intended transformation of public transport across the whole of Milton Keynes.



Section 2: Policies

8. General Policies

- 8.1 As a practical expression of the spatial and design strategies described in Chapter 6, a number of specific development management policies are needed to guide development across the city centre as a whole. These policies aim to provide guidance that supplements the high-level principles set out in MK Council's revised *CMK Development Framework* (January 2013). Should any conflict occur between the Framework and this Plan, this Plan is the over-riding statutory development plan document once it is formally Adopted by MK Council.
- 8.2 These policies apply to the whole area of CMK, including the Campbell Park grid square.

List of General Policies

- G1 Public Realm Infrastructure
- G2 Heritage Buildings & Public Art
- G3 Landscaping & Open Space
- G4 Campbell Park
- G5 Green Frame
- G6 Mixed Use
- G7 Active Frontages
- G8 Block Structure
- G9 Design of Buildings
- G10 Residential Developments
- G11 Exceptional Developments
- G12 Planning Obligations

Public Realm Infrastructure

Aim of policy:

- » To protect the classic CMK infrastructure.
- 8.3 Part of the vision for the *CMK Alliance Plan* is to celebrate and promote the city centre's distinctive cityscape and high-quality infrastructure. As noted in Chapter 5 on economic growth, quality of life and quality of place are powerful magnets for attracting highly skilled workers and innovative companies. CMK has a strong identity as a place, and the *CMKAP* recognises and supports CMK's unique public realm as a key way to differentiate our city from others. This unconventional cityscape is unique.

- 8.4 The distinguishing feature of CMK¹⁴ is the extent, layout and quality of the public realm. This is the setting within which the more transient buildings and activities come and go over time. It is the public space that is the most important building of all in CMK. One of the key challenges for the Plan is to retain the distinctive and high-quality CMK infrastructure whilst encouraging more innovative and intensive development on the parcels of development land for which it provides both access and setting.
- 8.5 The infrastructure is to be protected because it is a unique framework for prosperity: no other contemporary city centre in the UK has a complete grid of boulevards, gates and streets designed and built as the framework within which buildings sit and activities take place. It is consistently detailed to a carefully considered modular design, stretching from MK Central Station at the west end, to the Grand Union Canal at the east end of Campbell Park.
- 8.6 The public realm is defined by a strong, clearly identifiable set of elements. These include:
- » A landscaped hierarchical grid of Gates, Boulevards and Streets that provides the setting for all buildings and activities;
 - » A parallel grid of 'slow streets', including North and South Rows, providing space for surface level parking areas for public use (variously one, two or four rows - the need varies according to adjacent uses, and the use of this public space for public purposes may change over time);
 - » The 'Green Frame' - the landscaped areas at the margins of CMK contributed by City Road corridors H5 Portway, H6 Childs Way and V8 Marlborough Street and, to the east, the Grand Union Canal;
 - » Wide day-lit underpasses with gentle gradients that connect main footpaths seamlessly under busy Gates and Boulevards;
 - » Porte cocheres that nudge pedestrians to the safest Boulevard crossing points;
 - » Linkages to neighbouring grid squares - Springfield, Fishermead, Oldbrook and Winterhill, Rooksley, Bradwell Common, Conniburrow and Downs Barn, either via wide underpasses or via overbridges;
- » Granite retaining walls marking the entry points into CMK from H5 Portway and H6 Childs Way; and
- » A carefully selected suite of modern street furniture and the use of silver grey granite for kerbs, planters and facings to retaining walls; silver grey stone chippings rolled into asphalt road surfaces on Gates and Boulevards; silver grey blockwork for streets; and Breedon Gravel in Boulevard medians.
- 8.7 Milton Keynes is renowned for its city-wide grid of City Roads which is draped over the contours of the land. In CMK the grid is given a formal geometry, and provides a very clear hierarchical movement system:
- » Gates run north-south between H5 Portway and H6 Childs Way, acting as the entry points into CMK. Two of these – V6 Grafton and V7 Saxon Gates – are part of the cross-city grid;
 - » Three Boulevards run east/west through CMK acting as the main spines for movement within the city centre (the central Boulevard - Midsummer - stops short of Campbell Park);

¹⁴ CMK includes the Campbell Park grid square

- » The Gates and Boulevards provide access, via the Streets and 'slow streets,' to development Blocks and Blocklets ('slow-streets' are block paved routes that run through and connect the parking areas, and form continuous routes through the parking areas around each Block); and
 - » The Streets enable deliveries to business and residential premises – major uses have specially designed access points from Streets thus avoiding inconvenience to pedestrians and ugly delivery bays on main frontages.
- 8.8 The grid network has the advantage of providing flexibility of movement and minimising congestion by enabling the distribution of all forms of traffic through a wide variety of routes. It helps deliver one of the founding principles for CMK of 'combining the vitality of traditional city centres with the unhindered accessibility of an out-of-town centre.'

8.9 The sub-division of development land is also derived from the overall formal geometry (see Figure 13 for block numbering system). Orderly Blocks of land fronting Boulevards are generally divided by Streets into four equal Blocklets, though this pattern is broken where development required it and permeability through the Block for local movement was secured in other ways. In creating larger development Blocks, the need for the necessary permeability was sometimes overlooked through later redevelopment. This is regrettable because movement in CMK is inhibited or diverted to the inconvenience of the public. The concept of a grid of movement corridors is to maximise choice and flexibility for all modes of transport. Once part of the grid is lost to development - or sold into private ownership without enforceable legal protection - the desired permeability is lost to the public for ever.

8.10 An objective of this Plan is to assert the need for a finer grain of development created by permeable networks for movement in CMK, especially through large development schemes extending over a whole Block or more.

Policy CMKAP G1

Classic CMK Infrastructure

The classic CMK infrastructure* is widely recognised as part of CMK's heritage and as an important public asset that establishes a principle design framework for further development and future prosperity in CMK and its extent, layout and quality will be retained.

The exceptional circumstances which might justify alteration of the extent and layout of classic CMK infrastructure are set out in Policy G11.

*the 'classic CMK infrastructure' includes the grid of tree-lined Boulevards, Gates, Streets, tree-lined North Row and South Rows, and the space for one, two or four rows of ground level car parking that flanks them; the associated grid of pavements, with underpasses, bridges and porte cocheres; the function and position of linkages to the adjacent grid squares; use of silver grey granite facings, granite quadrants, planters, and kerbs; the use of silver grey stone chippings rolled into asphalt road surfaces on Gates and Boulevards and silver grey blockwork for streets; and the use of Breedon Gravel or similar in Boulevard medians.

Heritage Buildings & Public Art

Aim of policy:

» To protect the built heritage and public art of CMK.

- 8.11 The listing of the Shopping Building (currently trading as 'thecentre:mk') is national recognition that CMK makes a significant and distinctive contribution to contemporary British architecture and urban design. The Listing of buildings just over thirty years old is unusual; the Listing of a building complex designed primarily for shopping is unique.
- 8.12 Other buildings in CMK are also likely to be recognised in due course as heritage assets and should be considered for Local Listing and where appropriate, referred to the Secretary of State for statutory Listing.

8.13 Amongst these are some of the distinctive pioneering buildings in CMK designed and developed by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation. They follow a common design philosophy and epitomise the Miesian architectural thinking in Milton Keynes in the 1970s and 1980s. They express a modernist and minimalist approach reflected through, for example, significant amounts of mirrored glazing, sleek building lines with simple massing, and extremely high quality detailing. Such buildings should be retained and adapted to new uses if possible.

8.14 Likewise there are a number of other distinguished buildings designed by other architects which respond in different ways to the context of CMK: they may be similarly worthy of protection and adaptation to new uses over time.

8.15 Commitment to investment in Public Art has been an explicit part of the development of CMK and is a major feature of local distinctiveness. Existing artworks should also be considered for local Listing, and should be retained in their current location unless a special case for relocation to an enhanced position can be made. The management and maintenance of the public art collection, and its extension by more acquisitions, requires a long term strategy of the type suggested by the city's Public Arts Trust.

Policy CMKAP G2

Classic CMK Buildings & Public Art

CMK Alliance shall support the preparation of a Local List by the Council, and periodic reviews to identify any assets that might be appropriate to be referred to the Secretary of State for statutory Listing.

Landscaping & Open Space

Aim of policy:

- » To protect the landscaping and open spaces which contribute to the classic CMK infrastructure;
- » To protect the historic sites of Secklow Mound and Common Lane;
- » To guide provision of new public space.

- 8.16 CMK's high quality of generous green landscaping surprises and delights workers, visitors and residents alike and adds interest throughout the seasons. It makes the city more attractive to potential investors and new businesses and is part of the city's living heritage which will continue adding to the city's appeal as the trees mature. It also helps to maintain air quality and moderate the local climate, and to enhance biodiversity.
- 8.17 Part of the vision of this Plan is to protect this investment and ensure that everyone will have easy access to high quality public areas, including green and open space.
- 8.18 Formal avenues of London planes define the Boulevards, horse chestnuts are used along the Gates and a variety of smaller ornamental trees such as cherries and whitebeams are generally planted along Streets. There are

also informal patterns of tree planting and soft landscaping in public gardens and small parks, and around underpasses in quadrant planters. Together they make a significant contribution to the townscape and structure of the public domain in CMK.

- 8.19 A distinctive feature of the historic Bradwell Common upon which CMK is built was Common Lane, a rural route that in part is believed to have followed the ancient track Port Way. Common Lane ran across the Common from Loughton to the Secklow Mound (behind Milton Keynes Library), and from there east to Willen and beyond. Remnants of Common Lane, and its hedgrows and trees, are a heritage asset and should be conserved (see Figure 15).
- 8.20 As a dominant feature of the classic CMK infrastructure, the London planes along the Boulevards, and horse chestnuts along the Gates, and street trees, will be protected from development under Policy G1. MK Council's adopted *Street Trees in CMK: Guidance on the Development Process*, which outlines how street trees should be dealt with in accordance with nationally recognised good practice, will apply.

- 8.21 Future landscaping must continue to reinforce this planting strategy. It is to be designed in accordance with the guidance contained in the latest edition of the *CMK Handbook*. This sets out landscape principles and species within the streetscape of CMK.
- 8.22 Whether green or paved, public open space is particularly important to the quality and sustainability of urban life. These are spaces for busy workers to relax and enjoy lunch in the fresh air; for mums and toddler groups to meet and exchange stories, for informal sports and recreation, and community events. Provision can also be made in some public green spaces for communal gardens, community orchards, wild flower meadows and more formal seasonal planting displays. Overall, a wide variety of public open space is an essential feature of CMK for visitors and the local community alike.
- 8.23 CMK benefits from some substantial areas of public open space, such as Campbell Park, Fred Roche Gardens and Station Square. There are smaller public gardens to be found in Grafton Park, Bouverie Square, around the Saxon meeting place of Secklow Mound, and by MK Gallery.

8.24 A number of previously public spaces have become semi-public or private. Midsummer Place, which has been built across the line of Midsummer Boulevard, has limited rights of public access. The CBX Winter Garden has been sold into private ownership and the public are not admitted. The great enclosed Middleton Hall and its reciprocal open space of Queens Court, and the small City Square opposite the Civic Offices are now in the ownership of thecentre:mk. The owners of all these former public spaces are encouraged to continue to promote their use for public activities and enjoyment as much as possible.

8.25 The provision of private or semi-private incidental open spaces within new developments is welcomed. The provision of any new public open space should be accessible and of a usable size and shape. It should be capable of a range of activities, across a range of age groups and disabilities. Changes to the public realm - whether alterations to the older assets, or the creation of new ones - must always be sympathetic with and respectful of CMK's unique structure and cityscape.

8.26 Overall, however, despite the wide variety of open spaces within CMK, there is no definable public space which local people feel they could readily identify as the 'heart' of the city centre

for public assembly - a public urban space or 'civic square' for demonstrations, celebrations, and entertainment (see Policy SS3).

Policy CMKAP G3

Landscaping & Open Space

- a) Retention of landscaping: the structural tree planting and landscaping forming part of the classic CMK infrastructure is protected by Policy G1. Remnants of Common Lane (Figure 15), and its hedgerows and trees, are a heritage asset and shall be conserved.
- b) Existing public open spaces to be retained (Figure 15): these amenity assets are integral to the design and successful enjoyment of CMK and a reduction in quantity, quality and usefulness shall not be acceptable other than for exceptional developments as defined within Policy CMKAP G11.
- c) Existing semi-public spaces: a reduction in quantity, quality, use and public accessibility of all or part of Bouverie Square, Ashton & Norfolk House Square, Middleton Hall, Queens Court, Midsummer Place, City Square, and Exchange

Square to make way for new development shall not be acceptable other than for exceptional developments as defined within Policy CMKAP G11.

d) Creation of new public space: voluntary proposals are welcome for the creation of new public or semi-public open spaces on the Blocks or Blocklets of CMK beyond that which already exists. They will be assessed against the following criteria:

- i. Long term maintenance: arrangements must be made for long-term management and maintenance.
- ii. Imaginative uses of open space and the public realm for various activities, from quiet enjoyment to large assembly as appropriate, will be encouraged. The provision of water features and other animations which change throughout the day or through the seasons create special interest and attract return visits and will be encouraged.

Campbell Park

Aim of policy:

- » To protect Campbell Park as one of the finest contemporary urban parks in Europe;
- » To guide development along the Grand Union Canal at the eastern edge of Campbell Park.

8.27 Campbell Park is of national and international importance, being one of the largest and finest contemporary urban parks in Europe: it is the jewel in CMK's crown, beautifully maintained and managed. The extent of Campbell Park is defined in Figure 15. Urbanisation of the Park with permanent buildings will not be permitted.

8.28 Most of the Blocks across the Boulevards surrounding Campbell Park have yet to be developed, but in the fullness of time it is destined to become one of the most popular areas in the city centre and increasingly a visitor destination. As a feature of an outline planning permission granted to itself by English Partnerships some years ago, a 'park extension' linking the Park to an adjoining Grid Square has been completed (it connects with Springfield). Three more are planned at present and as each 'Park extension' consumes more than a significant part of a

Blocklet, now appear to be a questionable use of development land and the appropriateness of the commitment should be reviewed when Reserved Matters applications are brought forward for those Blocklets, or if wholly new planning applications are made.

8.29 The Grand Union Canal is a major amenity of Milton Keynes, the eastern boundary of CMK,

and is a very attractive aspect of Campbell Park Grid Square and its parkland network. Long vaunted proposals for a boat basin in Blocklets H3.1 and H4.1 in the south east corner of the Campbell Park grid square, with marina facilities and a public slipway, would be welcomed subject to detailed design and content and to having good connections to the existing public footpath route on the west bank of the canal.

Policy **CMKAP G4**

Campbell Park and its Setting

- a) Campbell Park (Figure 15) shall be retained and protected. It is of national and international importance, being one of the largest and finest contemporary urban parks in Europe.
- b) The development of buildings within the public green space of Campbell Park will require special justification. The design of any building proposed and justified on an exceptional basis shall be appropriate to the character area of the Park within which it is proposed and be of the highest architectural standard, demonstrably enhancing the quality and function of the Park.

- c) The development of buildings on development land adjacent to the public green space of Campbell Park in Blocks G3 and H3 must be worthy of their outstanding setting.
- d) Proposals for a boat basin in Blocklets H3.1 and H4.1 in the south east of the Grid Square, with marina facilities and a public slipway, would be welcomed subject to detailed design and content and to having good connections to the existing public footpath route on the west bank of the canal. The design of developments adjacent to the canal will be required to enhance the appearance of the waterway and to provide active elevations facing the waterway.

Green Frame

Aim of policy:

- » To guide development within the Green Frame;
- » To ensure the overall character of the Green Frame remains one of a green setting.

8.30 The Green Frame is the landscaped corridor around CMK on either side of the H5 Portway, H6 Childs Way and V8 Marlborough Street grid roads, and the Grand Union Canal: it acts as the gateway into CMK and provides the city centre with a green setting (Figure 15).

8.31 One of the significant design characteristics of Milton Keynes is the dense planting along the grid road reserves which separate often heavy traffic from adjacent development, reducing the effects of noise and pollution. The landscaping has itself become a source of delight and pleasure to local residents, who observe the passing of the seasons as they travel around their green city. Now increasingly valuable wild life corridors, the reserves have become an essential part of the Milton Keynes heritage, the city of trees.

8.32 From time to time there is pressure to extend development into the Green Frame around CMK. Development in the Green Frame must either derive from the function of the City Road corridors – uses such as petrol stations or utility substations – or improve the safety of the linkages and places of connection between CMK and the surrounding residential grid squares. Even then the functionality of the City Road corridor should not be compromised. For example, room has been left to give future generations the opportunity to route forms of public transport not yet designed – that future proofing should not be lost by developing too close to the road surfaces of today.

8.33 South of Block B4, along H6 Childs Way, the Green Frame has been removed. This should be re-instated when the Block is developed.

8.34 Carefully justified interventions in the Green Frame for public or civic purposes (there is already one war memorial that has been beautifully accommodated) or for quiet public recreation, would be welcomed.

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The Green Frame

Development in the Green Frame (Figure 15) will only be permitted if:

- a) It is located at places of connection with adjoining grid squares where it can be clearly demonstrated that it has a public benefit in terms of improving the quality and safety (as well as perception of safety) of pedestrians and cyclists using overbridges and underpasses, and ideally will occur on both the CMK and adjoining grid square sides;
- b) It does not harm the capacity of the city road corridors to accommodate the movement needs of future generations, including public transport;
- c) The overall character of the Green Frame is still predominantly one of a green setting, only occasionally punctuated by high quality developments at 'points of connection' or by special interventions such as public art and memorials.