

Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan

Referendum – 17 September 2015

General Information for voters

About this document

On Thursday 17 September 2015 there will be a referendum for residents on the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan. This document explains more about the referendum taking place and how you can take part. It also gives you information about the Town and Country Planning System.

The Referendum

The referendum for residents on 17 September 2015 will ask you to vote yes or no to a question. For this referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

“Do you want Milton Keynes Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Lakes Estate to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

The Referendum area is identified on the map in the link below. This is the same as the designated Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan area.

[Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Area Map \(PDF, 529KB\)](#)

How do I vote in the referendum?

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ box on your ballot paper. Put a cross in only one box or your vote will not be counted.

If residents vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan it will be adopted. If it is rejected the Plan will not be adopted. If adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan.

The Town and Country Planning System

The planning system helps to decide what gets built, where and when. It is essential for supporting economic growth, improving people’s quality of life, and protecting the natural and historic environment. Most new buildings, major changes to existing buildings or major changes to the local environment need planning permission.

Without a planning system everyone could construct buildings or use land in any way they wanted, no matter what effect this would have on other people who live and work in their area.

Milton Keynes Council, as the Local Planning Authority, is responsible for deciding whether most forms of development should go ahead within the Borough. Decisions are based on national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) as well as on the local Development Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be taken into account by communities when preparing neighbourhood plans and by local planning authorities when preparing local plans and making decisions on planning applications.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and this has to be reflected in plans, both at a district level and a neighbourhood level.

The NPPF is accompanied by guidance – the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which expands on the NPPF policies and helps in their interpretation and application.

The Development Plan

The Development Plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the local authority area. In Milton Keynes it is currently made up of the Milton Keynes Local Plan (adopted 2005), the Core Strategy (adopted 2013) and the Woburn Sands Neighbourhood Plan and the CMK Alliance Plan 2026 (A Business Neighbourhood plan for Central Milton Keynes).

Once other neighbourhood plans have been approved at referendum they will be included in the Development Plan and will add to the amount of guidance available when considering the development and use of land.

Local Plans

Local planning authorities, such as Milton Keynes Council, must prepare a Local Plan for their area which sets out the opportunities for development and clear policies on what will or will not be permitted and where. Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with the NPPF. As part of the

development plan, local plans are very important when deciding planning applications.

The Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005) includes policies that allocate a range of large and smaller sites for development as well as policies that provide detailed guidance which is used when dealing with planning applications for a wide range of development and land uses.

The Core Strategy (2013) sets out the vision for how the Borough will be in 2026 and how we are going to get there. It includes strategic policies which identifies how much new development will be required across the Borough over the plan period and broadly where that new development should be located.

Work is at an early stage on two new plans for Milton Keynes which, once adopted, will form part of the Development Plan. :

- The Site Allocations Plan is looking for small to medium sized housing sites that can be delivered in a relatively short timescale to make sure that Milton Keynes continues to have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land.
- Plan: MK is a new Local Plan for the whole of the Milton Keynes area and, once adopted, it will replace the Core Strategy and the remaining saved policies in the Milton Keynes Local Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans

What are they?

Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act in 2011. It aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work by showing how a community wants land to be used and developed in its area.

Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet certain “Basic Conditions” by having regard to national planning policy, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, being in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area (i.e. the Milton Keynes Local Plan and the Core Strategy) and being compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.

They should not promote less development than is set out in the Development Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

Who prepares Neighbourhood Plans?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils or neighbourhood forums and there is a statutory process that must be followed to make a plan.

How are Neighbourhood Plans made?

The plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents before an independent examiner reviews the plan and checks whether it meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The examiner then reports whether any changes should be made to the plan and whether it should proceed to the next stage in the process which is the referendum stage.

The referendum asks those voting whether they want the Neighbourhood Plan to be used by the Local Planning Authority to help it decide planning applications in the area covered by the Plan. For this Neighbourhood Plan, all residents registered to vote within the referendum area are entitled to vote in the referendum. For residents to be able to vote they need to be included on the electoral roll.

What status do Neighbourhood Plans have?

If more than half of those voting in a referendum have voted in favour of the neighbourhood plan the local planning authority must make it part of the statutory development plan and use it when making decisions on planning applications in the Plan area.

The Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan

The Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan has been produced on behalf of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council (BFSTC). The Town Council appointed the Lakes Estate Regeneration Steering Group to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. The Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan Task and Finish group is a working group that has delegated responsibility for preparation of the Plan. The working group is made up of local residents, volunteers, Parish and Borough Councillors and officers from both Councils.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in accordance with the statutory requirements and following extensive public consultation with residents and key stakeholders over a number of years and a recent independent examination. The Plan has, subject to minor modifications been recommended to proceed to referendum.

What does the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan aim to do?

The Vision Statement of the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2026 is:-

“Over the plan period up to 2026, the community and stakeholders of the Lakes Estate will seek to develop and enhance its built and natural environment respecting and enhancing where appropriate, its existing character and identity. It will encourage appropriate housing growth, primarily for local needs and create improved facilities and services for all residents .Achievement of these objectives will enable the Lakes Estate to thrive as a sustainable and unified community.”

The core objectives of the Plan (twelve in all) are designed to achieve the aims of the Vision Statement and include:-

CO1: To ensure that all development responds positively to the established character of the Lakes Estate.

CO2: To ensure that new development provides a suitable mix of housing types across all tenures, with particular regard to provision of affordable housing to meet the housing needs of the local community.

CO8: To improve the quality and variety of existing open space, play areas, community facilities and services within the Estate.

Additional information in relation to neighbourhood planning is available on the following websites:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-planning

<http://locality.org.uk/projects/building-community/>

Where can I see a copy of the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan?

A copy of the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying documentation is available to view at in Bletchley Library and in Central Milton Keynes Library.

Bletchley Library is open on Monday 9am-1pm, Tuesday 9am -7pm, Wednesday to Friday 9am-5.30pm, Saturday 9am-1pm and closed on Sunday.

Central Milton Keynes Library is open Monday to Wednesday and on Friday from 9am-6pm, Thursday 9am-8pm, Saturday 9am -5pm and on Sunday 11am-2pm.

The Plan is also available to view at Milton Keynes Council's Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Central Milton Keynes from 9am to 5.15 pm Monday to Friday and at

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council Offices, 74-76 Queensway, Bletchley from Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm except for Wednesday from 9am to 2pm.

Finally a copy of the plan and accompanying documents are also available to view on the Lakes Estate at the Spotlight Office, 114, Serpentine Court, Lakes Estate, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK2 3QL. Spotlight Office opening hours are from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday.

The plan and accompanying documentation is also available to view online at:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/lakes-estate-neighbourhood-plan>

Contacts for further information:

For questions about the Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan itself, the planning system and the process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, please contact:

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