



# **Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015 – 2025**

**Sustainability Appraisal  
(Including Strategic Environmental Assessment)**

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Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment – November 2014

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## 1. STRUCTURE OF THE APPRAISAL

- 1.1 This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – has been prepared in accordance with government regulations and good practice. The Neighbourhood Development Plan it has informed contains seven planning policies, all of which focus around the town centre of Wolverton, an older town within Milton Keynes.
- 1.2 Section 1 outlines the process involved in developing the vision, objectives and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, before considering the process and methodology of the sustainability appraisal.
- 1.3 Section 2 considers the policy context for the Neighbourhood Plan, providing detail to higher level Local Planning Authority policies already assessed.
- 1.4 Section 3 provides the sustainability baseline.
- 1.5 Section 4 is the main part of the assessment for each of the policies proposed in the plan, drawing a conclusion as to the preferred option in each case.
- 1.6 Section 5 details indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the plan, with a baseline drawn from local data sources and some Milton Keynes Council data.
- 1.7 Appendix 1 outlines the stages of the plan-making process, and the stages that need to be completed before the plan is formally adopted. Appendix 2 contains earlier drafts of the policies and the assessment matrices linked to them. Appendix 3 contains comments from the statutory bodies on the scoping report as well as comments on the July 2013 and July 2014 pre-submission consultations. Appendix 4 outlines the monitoring targets for plan, and Appendix 5 has a list of the other plans that have informed the assessment in some way.

### NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.8 The aim of Wolverton Neighbourhood Development Plan is to promote and aid the regeneration of the struggling town centre. The plan creates the planning context for the demolition of the 1970s Agora shopping centre, and the replacement with a mixed use development, which reinstates the original street layout. It also enables wider town centre development, diversification of the retail mix and the protection of historic shopfronts.
- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan area is within the wider Wolverton Conservation Area (the rest of which covers the original Victorian residential part of Wolverton), and comprise high density Victorian terraced housing, Victorian retail and commercial units and town centre civic buildings some

of which are listed buildings, historic industrial buildings and the Grand Union canal which has some ecological value.

- 1.10 The plan also covers a large area of historic Railway Works the operations of which, are due to be consolidated in the next few years. During the plan-making process, the owners of the site St Modwen PLC began a process of masterplanning the site, with the intention of releasing significant areas of brownfield land alongside the Grand Union Canal for redevelopment.
- 1.11 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to establish some broad principles for any future development of the railway works land, prior to a planning application being made for the whole site before Christmas 2014.

### **The Policies**

- 1.12 This appraisal considers the impact of seven policies on the sustainability of Wolverton town centre. These policies are:

#### **Policy W1**

- 1.13 The Agora site – a mixed use development site (referred to as the Agora site) providing for a range of retail, commercial and housing for local needs, new street frontages and a public space. Sufficient car parking to make the town centre scheme viable.

#### **Policy W2**

- 1.14 General Town Centre development – Development proposals for each of the four retail areas within the town centre that support the objectives of the plan including improving the environment for pedestrians and cyclists, promoting flats above shops, enhancing the conservation area and providing opportunities for the creation of green infrastructure.

#### **Policy W3**

- 1.15 The Railway Works site – employment and other mixed-use development on a brownfield site that meets design principles to connect it to the canal and town centre.

#### **Policy W4**

- 1.16 Town Centre Diversity – proposals that will help to achieve a mix of retail and community uses in the town centre, strengthening the viability of the town as one of the four District Centres in Milton Keynes.

#### **Policy W5**

- 1.17 Support for street markets – proposals that support the creation of a semi-permanent street market in The Square.

**Policy W6**

- 1.18 Supporting small, independent retailers – proposals that enable the provision of small shop units either as part of a major development or through the conversion of existing larger retail units.

**Policy W7**

- 1.19 Shopfronts – supporting the retention of historic shopfronts and a high standard of design in modern buildings which contributes to the character of the Conservation Area, creating a distinctive and commercially successful shopping environment.

**The Appraisal Process**

- 1.20 The objectives that structure the appraisal have been ‘scoped’ with the statutory bodies and cover the topics listed in Government regulations. They also cover environmental, social and economic issues relevant to Wolverton.
- 1.21 The appraisal has been a useful tool at various stages of the plan making process, enabling us to properly consider how changes to the policies will impact on the sustainability of Wolverton Town Centre.
- 1.22 Appendix 1 contains earlier versions of appraisals on draft policies, helping to demonstrate how the plan has changed over time to take account of the sustainability assessment.
- 1.23 The process has enabled us to strengthen the objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, giving confidence that the plan is a robust document that meets the aspirations of the local community and sustainability objectives.

**Marie Osborne and Mike Galloway on behalf of  
Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council  
November 2014**

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## 2. INTRODUCTION

### Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.1 This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been prepared in accordance with Government regulations to assess the impacts of the draft Wolverton town centre Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Because it covers social and economic issues as well as environmental impact, the document actually constitutes a full Sustainability Appraisal, so more than meets the 'basic conditions' for neighbourhood planning set down in government regulations.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 It has been produced in line with a Scoping Report (January 2013) which followed a Screening Opinion<sup>2</sup> given in September 2012 by Milton Keynes Council which indicated that the plan should be supported by an SEA.

### Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan – Process

- 2.3 The initial application to be a Frontrunner Neighbourhood Plan area was submitted by Wolverton Steering Group (as a Neighbourhood Forum) who established the Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee to guide the plan development process. As a frontrunner neighbourhood plan area, the steering committee were able to secure funded support from The Princes Foundation for Building Community, who supported the consultation and plan development process. After the Neighbourhood Planning regulations came into force in April 2012, Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council became the relevant body for the plan, working through the already established steering committee.
- 2.4 The tables in Appendix 1 outlines in more detail the various stages of the plan-making process. Table 5: Timetable of stages leading up to submission to Milton Keynes Council and. Once the plan has complied with the regulatory processes<sup>3</sup> and passed a local referendum, it will form part of the development plan for Milton Keynes. It will be used to determine new proposals for the use and development of land in Wolverton town centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Basic conditions include the condition that Neighbourhood Development Plans must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. NDPs must also be compatible with EU obligations.

<sup>2</sup> To determine the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes Regulations 2004

<sup>3</sup> As set down by the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

## Neighbourhood Development Plan – Area

- 2.5 The area designated covers the main part of the town centre (as designated in the Milton Keynes Local Plan 2005) and a part of the Wolverton Conservation Area. Figure 1 shows the extent of the plan area boundary. The area includes the Agora, a local shopping centre and a large and nationally significant area of brownfield land – the Railway Works site – bordered by the Grand Union canal.
- 2.6 The plan area was focused on Wolverton town centre (rather than the whole of the Town Council area) because public consultation over many years had identified the centre and the Agora site in particular, as needing transformational change
- 2.7 Defined as a District Centre in the 2005 Local Plan, Wolverton town centre serves not just the wider Wolverton area, but also surrounding towns, villages and newer Milton Keynes estates as well as parts of South Northamptonshire. As such it has an important status which warrants the scope of this plan.
- 2.8 In considering the extent of the plan area, it was agreed to include the Railway Works site because of the fundamental effect that any redevelopment of the site would have on the town centre. Owned by a joint venture company of St Modwen Plc, the site is now let in its entirety to Knorr Bremse Rail Systems who took an assignment of Alstom's head lease when they acquired the Railcare business in Wolverton. Knorr Bremse wish to consolidate their operations into part of the site when their lease agreement expires in 2018. This releases the remainder of the site for redevelopment.
- 2.9 In light of this, it was felt to be important to agree and enshrine in a planning document some of the principles of redevelopment for the site, whilst acknowledging that an overall masterplan would be required and likely to be produced by the owners of the site.

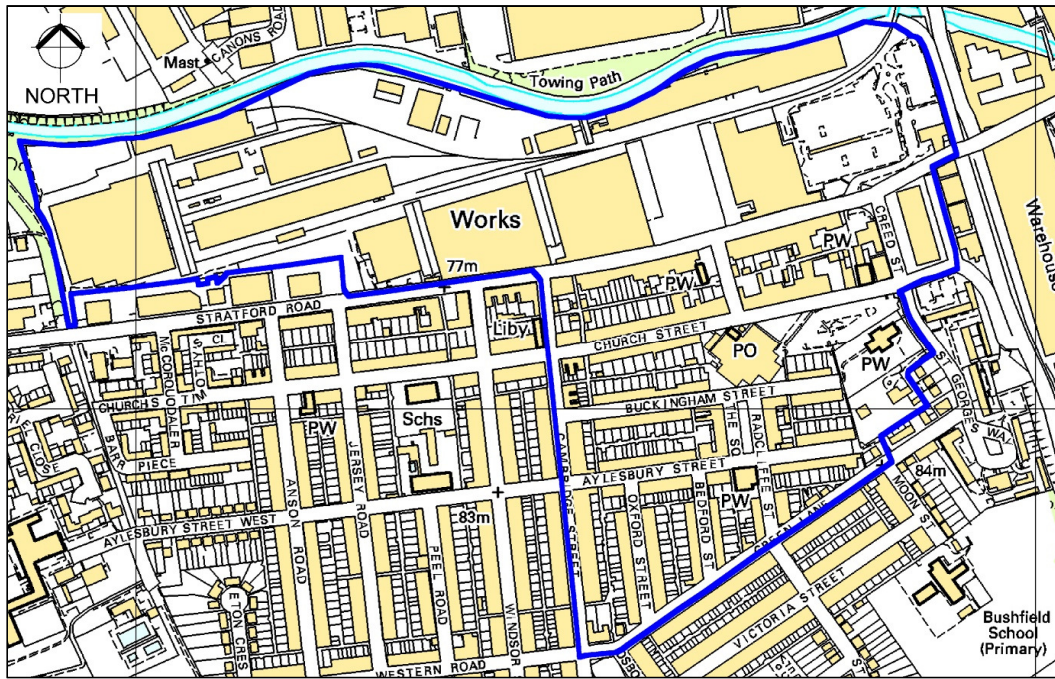


Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Plan area (in blue)

## Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan – Vision and Objectives

2.10 The vision of the draft plan is:

*“The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that Wolverton’s centre, as the heart of the town, is a vibrant, attractive and distinctive neighbourhood with a variety of retail, commercial, cultural, and leisure uses that reflects the town’s rich and proud railway heritage and its diverse business and residential population.”*

2.11 The draft plan has the following objectives:

### Objective 1: Transport and Movement

- Improve ease of movement and accessibility to services and facilities within the town centre.
- Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport.
- Support improvements to safety when walking and cycling in the town centre, particularly to the railway station and along Stratford Road.
- Encourage improved management of streets, parking and the ongoing use of the backways as preferred walking and cycling routes.

### Objective 2: Heritage

- Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal.
- Support the Milton Keynes Councils Heritage Hub project which recognises the industrial, transport and rural past of Wolverton.
- Encourage efficient use of brownfield land assets on the Railway Works site, ensuring that the important heritage and industrial character of these sites is protected, and Victorian/Edwardian buildings retained and re-used where viable.
- Support the Milton Keynes Museum expansion project, ensuring enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the Museum from Wolverton Town Centre.
- Capitalise upon the unique heritage of Wolverton to develop the visitor economy.

**Objective 3: Environment and Design**

- Improve, protect and enhance the quality of the local environment through implementation of the Public Realm Design Manual and involving the local community in long-term management,
- Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open and green space within the town centre.
- Subject to viability testing, all new developments to be zero carbon, designed for climate change and served by a district heating network.

**Objective 4: Housing**

- Ensure affordable, sustainably constructed, decent homes are developed that complement and enhance the existing housing stock.
- Develop a range of housing stock within the town centre that meets the needs of existing and future local people.
- In new housing on the Railway Works site, a proportion of streets are designed so speeds are slow and car parking does not dominate the overall streetscape.

**Objective 5: Economic Development**

- Improve the vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre through a mix of retail and non-retail uses which better reflect the needs of the local community.
- Support existing town centre businesses to develop and thrive.
- Encourage the creation of new businesses and employment opportunities.
- Increase the town centre population and so encourage an evening economy.

**Objective 6: Social, Cultural and Leisure Facilities**

- Support development that addresses the social, cultural and leisure needs of the local community.
- Build upon Wolverton's reputation as a cultural hub by improving accessibility to existing social, cultural and leisure services and facilities.
- Promote healthy living by supporting practical projects that impact positively on the lives of local people.
- Reduce fear of crime and prevent crime by supporting the local community to make a positive difference to their community.

## Process and methodology

### Step 1: Scoping Report

- 2.12 A Scoping Report was produced in January 2013 and was the subject of a five-week consultation period with the relevant environmental bodies. This scoping report helped to identify factors that could be used to understand and assess the potential impact of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2.13 The full detail of the responses to the scoping report are contained in Appendix 2 of this report, and are summarised below:
- Natural England was keen to see access to green infrastructure emphasized more strongly and reference made to the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards.
  - English Heritage welcomed Objective 2 “Design & Heritage”, but felt that more distinction should be made between the Conservation Area and listed buildings and/or designated assets. They also suggested that suitable reference was made to the Conservation Area Review.
  - The Environment Agency was keen to see reference to Sustainable Drainage systems especially where developing brownfield sites. They also highlighted the potential for contamination of the land due to historical use and recommend site investigations prior to any future planning applications.
- 2.14 As a result of these comments, changes were made to the plan, specifically:
- Greater emphasis was placed on accessing green infrastructure from the Town Centre, with revisions made to policy W1 and W2.
  - Changes were made to distinguish between the Conservation Area, listed buildings and designated assets. The Conservation Area Review was referenced in policies W2 and W3.
  - An aspiration for SUDS to be considered as part of any redevelopment of the Railway Works site was included in policy W3, together with reference to appropriate checks into site contamination. Reference to SUDS were also included in the assessment matrices for the Railway Works lands.

### Step 2: Definition of SA/SEA Objectives

- 2.15 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations 2004 requires an SEA to assess:  
*“the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air,*

*climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”*

- 2.16 For the purposes of this SA/SEA, these areas of possible impact are defined as SEA Regulation Topics.
- 2.17 Government guidance<sup>4</sup> advises that identifying objectives is an effective way of considering and comparing the impacts of a plan’s policies and any realistic alternatives.
- 2.18 To this end, six Sustainability Appraisal objectives incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment were identified. These were based on recent appraisal exercises undertaken by Milton Keynes Council, the overall policy context, sustainability baseline and feedback on the scoping report. These draw together the environmental, social and economic issues into a framework against which the plan has been assessed.
- 2.19 It should be noted that the decision was taken to expand upon the SEA topics to include consideration of the economic and social impact. This decision was made because the significance of the development proposed in the plan warranted a more comprehensive consideration of the wider issues for Wolverton town centre.
- 2.20 **SA/SEA Objective 1:** Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home
- 2.21 **SA/SEA Objective 2:** Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities
- 2.22 **SA/SEA Objective 3:** Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and environmental assets through brownfield sites
- 2.23 **SA/SEA Objective 4:** Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport
- 2.24 **SA/SEA Objective 5:** Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal
- 2.25 **SA/SEA Objective 6:** Improve vitality and viability of the town centre
- 2.26 In order to ensure that all of the SEA topics defined by government regulations have been covered, a cross-checking exercise was undertaken to establish the relationship between the SEA topics and the SA/SEA objectives of the plan.

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<sup>4</sup> A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance)

- 2.27 Table 1 below summarises this relationship and demonstrates that the topics defined by government are all covered in some way by the SEA objectives.



	SEA Regulation Topics														
	Biodiversity	Flora/Fauna	Soil	Water	Air	Climate Factors	Population*	Human Health	Cult. Heritage	Landscape	Material Assets*				
Key: <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td>Clear relationship</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td>Neutral relationship</td> </tr> </table>	✓	Clear relationship	-	Neutral relationship											
✓	Clear relationship														
-	Neutral relationship														
<b>SEA/SA Objectives</b>															
Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓				
Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓		✓	-	-	✓				
Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and environmental assets through brownfield sites	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓				
Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓				
Conserve and enhance the town's heritage particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓				
Improve vitality and viability of town centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓				

\* including Social factors, Housing, Jobs and Employment, Retail/Economy, Transport and Movement factors, as appropriate to Wolverton

Table 1 – SEA Regulation Topics and Objectives

2.28 As good practice, the SA/SEA objectives have also been cross-referenced with the Neighbourhood Development Plan objectives:

<b>Plan Objectives</b>	<b>SA/SEA Objectives</b>					
	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton's environmental. assets through brownfield sites	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre
1. <i>Transport and movement</i>	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
2. <i>Heritage</i>	-	-	✓	-	✓	-
3. <i>Design and environment</i>	✓	-	-	-	✓	-
4. <i>Housing</i>	✓	-	✓	-	-	-
5. <i>Economic development</i>	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
6. <i>Social, cultural and leisure</i>	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓

Key:

✓	Direct linkage
-	Indirect linkage

*Table 2 – SA/SEA Objectives cross-referenced with plan objectives*

2.29 The cross-checking exercise enabled us to ensure that the SA/SEA objectives fully incorporate both the SEA topics defined within Government regulations and the plan objectives. Taken together, this indicates that the SA/SEA Objectives defined above provide a complete and rigorous means of assessing the impacts of the plan in line with government regulations.

- 2.30 This cross-checking process also helped to clarify the scope of some of the plan objectives. For example the heritage and design objectives were originally combined as one, but the cross-checking process illustrated the importance of the heritage objective standing alone in the plan. It also led to “environment” being added to the design objective within the plan, strengthening the aspirations of the community around environmental sustainability and sustainable house construction. Subsequent work was also done to strengthen the social, cultural and leisure objective, to ensure that the cultural contribution to the local economy was fully assessed.

### **Step 3: Assessment of Sustainability Baseline**

- 2.31 An assessment was undertaken of each of the SEA Regulation Topics in relation to the plan area in order to establish a baseline against which any potential impacts of the plan can be measured. This is set out in Section 3.

### **Step 4: Assessment of Policy Options and Reasonable Alternatives and identification of Preferred Policies**

- 2.32 Draft policies, together with some reasonable alternatives, were assessed using the SA/SEA objectives and preferred policies were identified. These preferred policies were then subject to community consultation as part of the first pre-submission consultation in the summer of 2013.
- 2.33 Overall feedback from this consultation was very positive, with compliments made by the local community that the plan focussed on the most important issues facing Wolverton, and by Milton Keynes Council that the plan was a focussed and succinct document which clearly set out the community’s vision.

### **Step 5: Identification of other reasonable alternatives on policy W1**

- 2.34 Whilst many of the policies received overall support, a number of key issues emerged from the first pre-submission consultation. These issues included concerns over the retail offer likely to be delivered as part of the Agora redevelopment and the overall mix of retail in the town centre, questions over whether or not the new Radcliffe Street would be open to motor vehicles, and comments about the importance of “opening up” views through the Stratford Road wall and links with the canal if redevelopment of the Railway works went ahead.
- 2.35 Concerns from a minority of people about whether or not the Agora site should be redeveloped gained a new prominence during the 6 week periods of consultation, with a social media campaign launched to save the Agora and media coverage of their cause.

**Step 6: Assessment of further alternatives for the Agora site**

- 2.36 As a result of the concerns expressed by a minority of people and feedback on the SA/SEA from Milton Keynes Council, further work was then undertaken to assess alternative options for the Agora site, including retention with investment and redevelopment of the car park only.
- 2.37 These two further options for the site were fully appraised and are included in Section 4.
- 2.38 Other minor changes to the policy W1 were made to reflect concerns over whether or not Radcliffe Street would be a vehicular route once the Agora was redeveloped. The changes made are in line with the Development Brief, which supports the re-connection of the grid road system whilst ensuring that the final decision about vehicular access is made at the point of a planning application.
- 2.39 The impact of the nature and scale of the redevelopment of the Railway Works site was further assessed at this time, enabling more in depth consideration of the risks and benefits of losing some parts of the Railway Works wall, the scale of housing development and access in and out of the site.
- 2.40 Changes to policy W3 were made to reflect the assessment process, including the addition of specific reference to openings in the wall and vehicular access.

**Step 7: Additional policies added to the plan**

- 2.41 Following a large number of comments from local people about the retail offer in Wolverton Town Centre, some additional plan policies were written. Policy W4 (Town Centre Retail) and W5 (Shop Fronts) were designed to address concerns about retail mix, support for independent traders and the protection of historic shop fronts.
- 2.42 Appendix 3 includes the appraisals carried out at this point in the plan making process. These appraisals consider the extent to which the sustainability of the town centre would be affected by more national brands or a greater mix of independent businesses and street markets.
- 2.43 On the basis of these assessments W4 and W5 were added to the plan in the autumn of 2013, and following advice from Milton Keynes Council and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) a further limited period of community and statutory consultation was then carried out.
- 2.44 It was agreed that this period of consultation would be limited to four weeks because it was, in effect, a “rearrangement” of the existing policies.

- 2.45 However, in recognition of the likely interest of local businesses in the revised plan, additional efforts were made during the four weeks to reach local businesses who would be most affected.

### **Step 8: Further revisions to the new policies**

- 2.46 Following the four weeks consultation period, comments from the community and Local Planning Authority, were considered.
- 2.47 This resulted in further options being assessed to address the issues within policies W4 and W5, and further revisions being made to the policy wording.
- 2.48 The Town Council then decided to seek some specific retail advice about the retail policy and to have a “healthcheck” carried out of the whole plan.
- 2.49 This was in order to ensure the robustness of any revisions that had been made since the pre-submission consultation.

### **Step 9: External consultant’s report on plan revisions and options**

- 2.50 Two separate external opinions were sought on the plan revisions and options, with a retail consultant specifically considering policies W4 and W5 and a planning consultant taking an overview of the whole plan.
- 2.51 The feedback proved to be very useful in restructuring the plan and tightening up the evidence base, especially within the SA where the progression of the various options considered at different stages in the plan process is now fully included.
- 2.52 Given the extent of the revisions made to the plan and the introduction of National Planning Guidance, the Town Council made the decision in June 2014 to carry out a further six weeks pre-submission consultation on the revised draft plan.

### **Step 10: Final changes to the plan**

- 2.53 A range of comments were received from statutory organisations, Milton Keynes Council and the local community during the pre-submission consultation, and time was spent during September 2014 making minor revisions to the plan and associated documents.
- 2.54 At the same time as revisions were being made to the plan, the owners of the Railway Works site (St Modwen) launched their initial ideas for regeneration of the site. St Modwen’s intention was to start formal consultation during November and submit a planning application for the whole site before Christmas 2014.
- 2.55 This gave a renewed focus to Policy W3 in the Plan, and time was spent by the Town Council ensuring the policy truly reflected the concerns of the community and was as robust as possible.

- 2.56 The final plan was finally agreed by the Town Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 and submitted to Milton Keynes Council at the beginning of November.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT RELEVANT TO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

#### Introduction

- 3.1 The plan covers a part of Wolverton, and is focused on securing sustainable redevelopment within the town centre and Railway Works site.
- 3.2 Wolverton is located in the north west of the Milton Keynes and it has a historical relationship based upon its railway heritage with the other older towns, especially its closest neighbour Stony Stratford, Newport Pagnell in the east and Bletchley in the south.
- 3.3 In order to understand the policy context for the Wolverton Neighbourhood Development Plan it is important to understand the relationship between the town, its hinterland, wider surrounding area and the unique way in which the New City of Milton Keynes was developed.

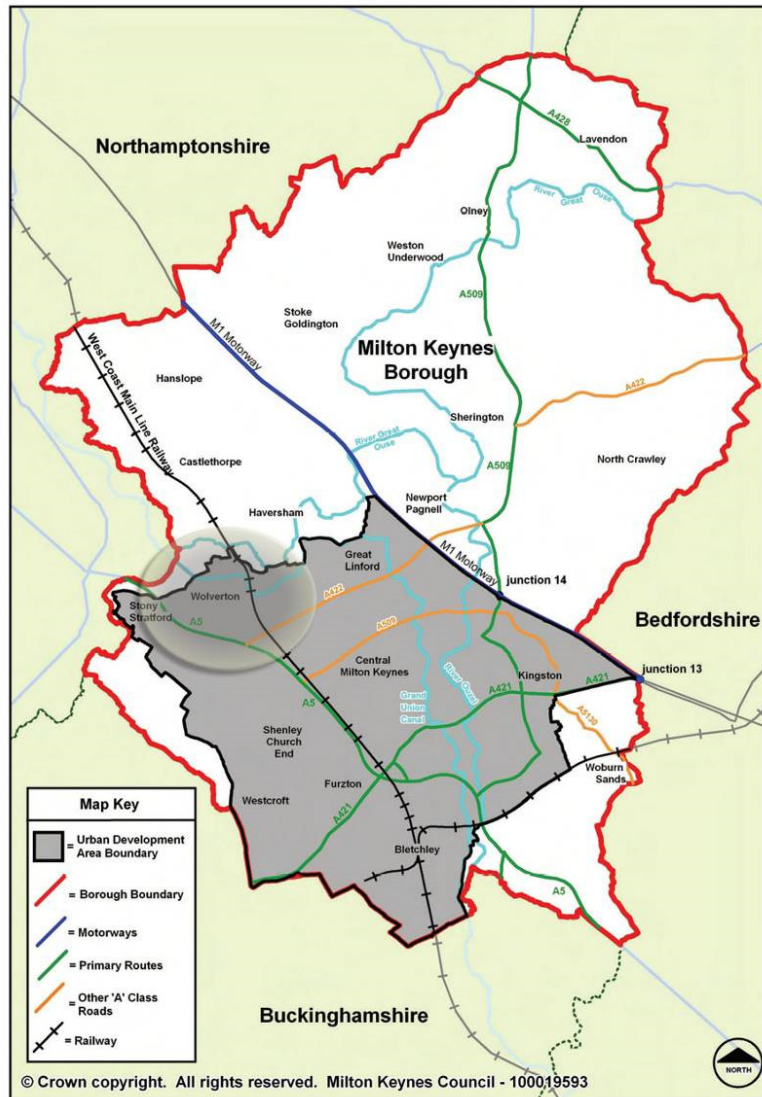


Figure 2: Wolverton within wider Milton Keynes built-up area

- 3.4 When Milton Keynes was planned the decision was made to include the existing towns and villages within the designated New Town area. This policy was not without controversy, and in the case of Wolverton and Bletchley led initially to a loss of identity and self-determination.
- 3.5 Following a necessary period of adjustment, the older towns have managed to regain a sense of their unique identity and heritage, and are recognised, within Milton Keynes, as offering something distinctly different and valuable.
- 3.6 However, being part of Milton Keynes still creates additional challenges for the older towns particularly in terms of retail, with the shopping centre in Central Milton Keynes only a short car or bus journey of the existing town centres.

### **Strategic and national policies, plans and programmes**

- 3.7 The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to strategic national policy, plans and programmes. The government's objectives for planning are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>5</sup> (NPPF) based on the three strands of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental, and the definition set out in the UK's sustainable development strategy<sup>6</sup>.
- 3.8 The NPPF contains policies which, read as a whole, guide sustainable plan-making. Those of particular relevance to the plan include:
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres (NPPF paragraph 23)
  - Requiring good design (NPPF paragraph 58), agreed with the community (NPPF paragraph 66)
  - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) (NPPF paragraph 111)
  - Protecting and enhancing historic assets including Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (NPPF paragraph 7)
  - Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance (NPPF paragraph 17)
- 3.9 Milton Keynes was identified as a major area for growth in the South East, in plans such as the Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy 2005, and the South East Plan (2009).

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<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-the-planning-system-work-more-efficiently-and-effectively/supporting-pages/national-planning-policy-framework](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-the-planning-system-work-more-efficiently-and-effectively/supporting-pages/national-planning-policy-framework) (NPPF March 2012)

<sup>6</sup> "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundland Report 1987)



- 3.10 It should be noted, however, that this regional level of planning no longer exists, and the South East plan has been formally revoked. However, Milton Keynes remains a key focus for growth and an important area of activity for the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP).
- 3.11 SEMLEP's recently submitted Strategic Economic Plan<sup>7</sup> identifies a number of key priorities for Milton Keynes and the whole region including building more new homes, creating sustainable jobs, attracting and creating new businesses and investing public and private money in key infrastructure projects.

### **Local policies, plans and programmes**

#### **To regenerate Wolverton town centre**

- 3.12 The Wolverton Regeneration Strategy was adopted by Milton Keynes Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in September 2004. The Milton Keynes Local Plan (adopted in 2005) remains in place, with some strategic policies replaced by the Core Strategy adopted in 2013. A new Local Plan for Milton Keynes, called Plan:MK is being prepared by Milton Keynes Council which will replace remaining policies in the 2005 Local Plan and be an early review of the Core Strategy.
- 3.13 The current Local Plan *Policy KS6* will be incorporated into the new Plan:MK, but remains one of the saved policies of the Local Plan until that time. It states that new development in the town must comply with the following aims:
- (i) Support the regeneration of Wolverton Town Centre
  - (ii) Preserve or enhance the character of the Wolverton Conservation Area;
  - (iii) Minimise the traffic impact of development and improve links between the area and the rest of the town
  - (iv) Improve public access to the Grand Union Canal
  - (v) Improve leisure and recreational facilities within the West End area
  - (vi) Ensure a high quality of design
  - (vii) Increase the amount and range of housing available in Wolverton
  - (viii) Promote mixed use development, consistent with the location of the area adjoining the Town Centre and existing areas
  - (ix) Enable the continuing operation of rail-related activities

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<sup>7</sup> [www.semlep.com/news/2014/strategic-economic-plan-submitted-to-government](http://www.semlep.com/news/2014/strategic-economic-plan-submitted-to-government)

### To manage future retail proposals

- 3.14 *Policy TC13* of the Local Plan relates to shopping and retail in the town centre of Wolverton with objectives to; define the role of Wolverton town centre; improve the attractiveness of the town centre; and to ensure retail development in Wolverton does not prejudice the Milton Keynes Council's wider regeneration objectives.
- 3.15 *Policy TC 11* classifies Wolverton as a *District Centre* serving the weekly convenience shopping needs of residents within its catchment area, which covers the northern half of Milton Keynes. In considering future retail development, *Policy TC (ii) and (iii)* can continue to be used, as these criteria are considered to be in conformity with the NPPF. Criterion (i) is not in conformity with paragraph 23 and 26 of the NPPF. Future retail development proposals in Wolverton town centre can therefore be considered using the following criteria:
- (i) the extent to which such development would further the aims of regeneration (see *Policy KS6*)
  - (ii) the degree of support given to the improvement of multi-modal access to and within the Town Centre
- 3.16 The Core Strategy identifies Wolverton as an area which has the potential to deliver new housing on brownfield land which supports the role of the town centre and deliver wider regeneration objectives.
- 3.17 Wolverton is also designated as an 'area of change' within Core Strategy *Policy CS8*:

*"Bletchley and Wolverton town centres will also be key areas of change in the city where new development, including housing, will help regenerate these older centres and encourage sustainable patterns of travel."*

- 3.18 Core Strategy Policy CS12 is particularly significant to Wolverton in that it focuses on those factors which are considered to support the development of a successful neighbourhood. Many of these aspirations are already features of Wolverton or aspirations within the plan.

1. Creating walkable neighbourhoods and extensions of the existing walking, cycling and key public transport networks
2. Siting key day-to-day facilities, including schools, shops, leisure and employment in locations easily accessible on foot, by bike and by public transport
3. Creating high quality open spaces in line with the MK Open Space Strategy and private amenity space for houses
4. Appropriately locating development to maintain and improve current flood risk and air quality standards
5. Separating housing from noisy/24 hour working employment uses (B2 and B8)
6. Encourage home working
7. Achieving the highest quality standards of design in terms of safety and security
8. Creating diverse and flexible neighbourhoods that can change respond to change over time, allowing communities to form and grow effectively
9. Ensuring flood water management is planned at the largest appropriate scale of new development, and where possible designed as public open space
10. Not precluding further expansion other than where the proposals include a permanent long-term boundary for the city

### **Protecting and enhancing the Conservation Area**

- 3.19 Much of the town centre of Wolverton lies within a designated Conservation Area: an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The objective of the designation is to ensure Wolverton does not lose its traditional building features and boundary treatments, particularly those which contribute to the Victorian/Edwardian character of the town. A Conservation Area Review was undertaken in 2009.<sup>8</sup>

### **Local transport priorities**

- 3.20 In June 2011 the Milton Keynes Council adopted the Transport Vision and Strategy<sup>9</sup> (Local Transport Plan 3 – LTP3) for Milton Keynes, which sets

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<sup>8</sup> [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/archaeology/documents/Wolverton\\_final\\_reduced\\_24-03-10.pdf](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/archaeology/documents/Wolverton_final_reduced_24-03-10.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/transport/displayarticle.asp?ID=72970](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/transport/displayarticle.asp?ID=72970) LTP3 and review

out the Milton Keynes Council's transport aims, objectives and implementation strategy for the period 2011-2031. A review<sup>10</sup> of LTP3 was carried out in June 2012 (and adopted by the Council 13th June 2012).

- 3.21 Of significance in LTP3 was support for the proposal to upgrade Wolverton station interchange facilities to improve services and station safety. The new station building has been completed but bus interchange and access remain ongoing issues.

### **Improving public realm**

- 3.22 The Wolverton Public Realm Design Manual was adopted in 2012 as technical guidance<sup>11</sup>. It aims to ensure that public realm in Wolverton provides a vibrant, high quality, well-connected setting for business, commerce, retail and living to flourish, by:
- (i) Providing guidance for the design, selection, installation and future maintenance of the public realm, street furniture and materials within Wolverton.
  - (ii) Guiding the determination of planning applications, formal highway agreements and the discharge of planning conditions.
- 3.23 A summary of relevant plans and programmes is included in Appendix 5.

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<sup>10</sup> Review of Transport Strategy June 2012 [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streets-transport-and-parking/transportpolicy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streets-transport-and-parking/transportpolicy)

<sup>11</sup> [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-andbuilding/urban-design-and-landscapearchitecture-udla/urban-design-policy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-andbuilding/urban-design-and-landscapearchitecture-udla/urban-design-policy)

## 4. SUSTAINABILITY BASELINE

The current baseline position is outlined below using the SEA Regulation Topics, covering relevant sustainable factors as appropriate.

### **Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna, Soil**

- 4.1 The plan area is urban in character, but with a number of sites which have potentially significant biodiversity, flora and fauna. These include the Grand Union Canal which borders the plan area, the Churchyard of St George's Church (an important green space within the Town Centre), and the public car park attached to the Agora Shopping Centre which includes some important trees which are subject to Tree Protection Orders. (*SEA Regulation i*)

### **Water, Air, Climatic Factors**

- 4.2 The only Air Quality Management Zone within Milton Keynes Borough is in Olney. All air quality management objectives for the rest of Milton Keynes, including Wolverton, are being met, the only issues being some locations adjacent to the M1 which suffer from high levels of nitrogen oxide. (*SEA Regulation ii*)
- 4.3 The 2008 Water Strategy showed low risk of groundwater flooding and limited instances of sewer flooding or surface flooding. Water quality remains high in the area and the only flood risk area nearby is alongside the River Ouse north of Old Wolverton and outside the plan area. (*SEA Regulation iii.*)
- 4.4 There has been considerable local effort to address climatic impact, with the "Future Wolverton Future Energy" initiative leading the way on energy conservation and sustainable transport. Local projects led by the community have focused on retro-fitting Victorian homes to make them more energy efficient and the promotion of sustainable forms of transport including Wolverton's innovative Electric Car Club. Recent new development in the Wolverton area (both residential and commercial) has benefitted from the Sustainable Development Policies in Milton Keynes Local Plan Policy D4. (*SEA Regulation iv*)
- 4.5 The Environment Agency has stated that the area is underlain by aquifers which are part of the Upper Bedford Ouse Oolite groundwater body. The area is not within a source protection zone but opportunities for sustainable drainage could be investigated. The nearby Grand Union canal is an EU Water Framework Directive inland canal with moderate ecological status. The canal is considered to be a valued resource by local people, and opportunities to enhance public access are explored in the Neighbourhood Plan. (*SEA Regulation v*)

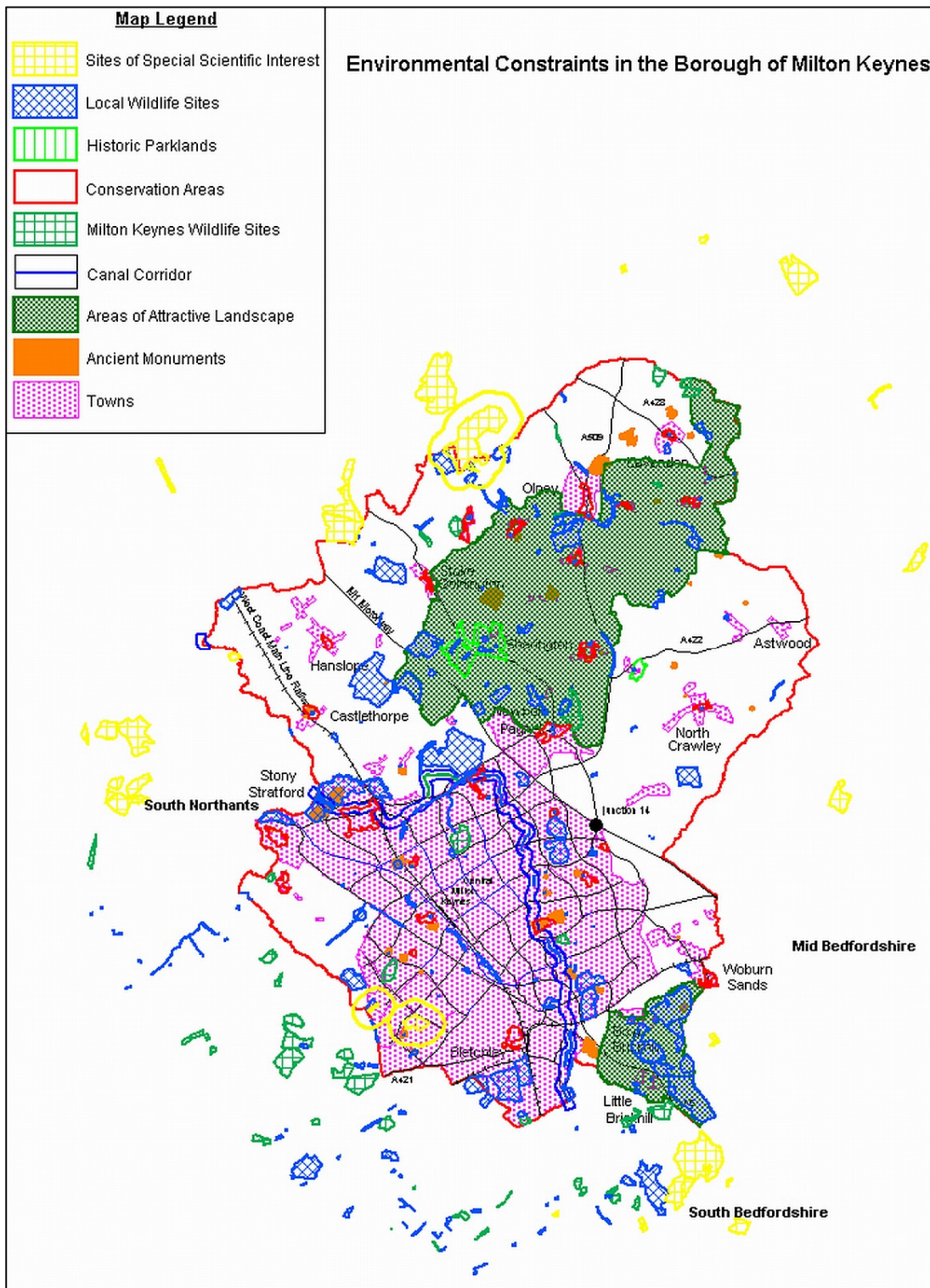


Figure 3: Environment constraints (Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal)

**Population, Human Health  
(including Social factors, Housing, Jobs and Employment)**

- 4.6 The population<sup>12</sup> of Wolverton Ward in mid-2014 was 16,900 with an anticipated growth of around 10% per year up to 2020. The census shows the population in 2011 was 15,600, an increase of 2,055 (15.2%) since 2001, the 10th highest growth rate of all wards in Milton Keynes. (*SEA Regulation vi*)
- 4.7 The highest proportion (33%) of Wolverton residents are between 25 and 44 years of age. Between 2001 and 2011 the highest percentage growth occurred in the 90\* year old age group, with the highest actual growth in the 0-4 and 30-44 age groups. 25.3% of the Wolverton population were from a black and minority ethnic group in the 2011 census, compared to 12.8% in 2001 and 26.1% for Milton Keynes as a whole. (*SEA Regulation vi*)
- 4.8 The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation suggests that although Wolverton Ward contains 10 lower 'super output areas' four of which are within the 30% most deprived in England (New Bradwell, Greenleys, Stacey Bushes and Hodge Lea), is primarily within 40-50% least deprived. The majority of the area was described as 'typical traits' with a smaller proportion as 'blue collar' and smaller still as 'multi-cultural'. (*SEA Regulation vii*)
- 4.9 Unemployment in Wolverton Ward is around 4.2% as at March 2014, a reduction from around 6-8% in March 2011. It is higher than for Milton Keynes Borough as a whole (2.7%) and for England (2.9%). According to census data, Wolverton is a nevertheless diverse centre with a wide variety of demographic, economic and lifestyle traits. (*SEA Regulation viii*)
- 4.10 Wolverton Ward (boundary prior to May 2014) currently has 7,168 dwellings, an increase of 1,227 (21%) since 2004. There are around 400 within the plan area. The majority within the plan area are either Victorian housing or classified as Victorian commercial with the dominant housing being 1850-1900 Victorian terraced. Little in the way of apartments exists in the town centre, apart from those off St George's Way and in more recent developments including Wolverton Park and Stratford Park, all of which are outside the plan area. (Regulation ix)

### **Cultural Heritage, Landscape**

- 4.11 Wolverton is a district centre of Milton Keynes. It is at its northern edge, between Stony Stratford and Newport Pagnell. The town is on the north facing upper scarp of the river Great Ouse valley with, to the east, its minor tributary the Bradwell Brook. The slope of the valley sides thus makes a subtle but nonetheless important contribution to the topography of the town centre. The canal and Railway Works site are located at the

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<sup>12</sup> Source: 2014 figures from Milton Keynes Council Population Bulletin 2013/14 (Wolverton including Old Wolverton and Wolverton Mill). Wolverton Ward based on ward boundaries that applied prior to May 2014, the Ward boundaries have now changed.

bottom of a gentle but lengthy incline. This results in a stepped form to the built landscape, either of entire rows of terraces where their line follows the east – west contours, or as stepped pairs where roads run north to south. At the high points of the longer north – south aligned streets some dramatic views out of the conservation area exist. The change in heights also has the effect of making some buildings more dominant from one vantage point but less so from another. *(SEA Regulation x)*

4.12 Compactness is an important part of Wolverton’s character, with many amenities within walking distance. The Wolverton Conservation Area is unusually comprehensive in that it includes all of the railway community-associated elements of the town, including an Anglican Church, Working Men’s Clubs, sport grounds, parks and a cemetery. It has a sense of place stemming in part from the town’s physical layout – a grid-like series of redbrick terraced houses and corner shops – which in itself promotes a sense of community. *(SEA Regulation xi)*

4.13 The Conservation Area Review (2009) indicated that

*“Wolverton is characterised by its diverse mix of late nineteenth and early twentieth century terraced housing, industrial quarters, commercial areas and functional open spaces. There are active shopping and commercial frontages, busy with traffic and people that contrast with the quieter residential streets and their distinctive, narrow, interconnecting backways.”*

A character appraisal of the main residential part of the Conservation Area has been carried out. This has helped to establish important characteristics of individual and listed buildings. Further work needs to be done to establish the condition of listed buildings in the town centre and the relative importance of individual heritage assets within the Railway Works site. *(SEA Regulation xii)*

### **Material Assets (including Retail/Economy, Transport and Movement factors)**

4.14 Due to its location, Milton Keynes has developed particular economic strengths in logistics, retail, hotels and restaurants, banking, insurance and business services. Milton Keynes also sits at the centre of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership area and its good transport links to London and Birmingham help to attract businesses to the area. *(SEA Regulation xiii)*

4.15 Wolverton is identified in the Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005), as a district centre within Milton Keynes functioning as a centre accommodating the weekly convenience shopping needs of the catchment population. The town centre fulfils a variety of roles apart from providing high street shopping and food markets. It offers employment, educational and administrative uses. The main shopping areas are focused on Stratford Road, Church Street, The Square, Glyn Square and the Agora. The large



- Tesco store in Stratford Road has planning permission to increase in size but has indicated that it will not do so. (*SEA Regulation xiv*)
- 4.16 Goad Plans of 2010 show that retail accounts for about 55% of other use in the town centre. The split in the town centre was approximately 30% A1 comparison, 15% each of A1 convenience, A2 and A3/4/5. The remainder was primarily D uses. This data has been supplemented by the Action for Market Towns Benchmarking Survey 2012 which showed that Wolverton town centre had a 13% vacancy rate and an 82% independent sector compared to a national average of 67%. Although shops predominate there are a number of community uses in the town centre including the town hall, library, community centre, the Anglican Church, the Wesleyan chapel and a mosque. A2 uses were undermined in 2013 when Nationwide Building Society made the decision to close their Wolverton branch. Lloyds Bank in The Square is now the only remaining bank or building society in Wolverton. The redevelopment of the Agora site aims to reinstate the traditional centre of pre-1979, providing modern standard floor-plates to attract national and regional retailers, and reviving street markets. (*SEA Regulation xv*)
- 4.17 The car will continue to be the main mode of transport in Milton Keynes and Wolverton for the foreseeable future, although as previously mentioned, Wolverton does have an E-car club scheme<sup>13</sup> which is starting to address numbers of second car households. At current rates of growth, there will be a 57% increase in journeys by car at peak travel times (years 2001 to 2031). However, Milton Keynes Council estimates in its Core Strategy that they can only increase the capacity of the existing grid road system junctions by 25% at peak times, through junction improvements and other measures. This highlights the pressure that the existing grid system faces and the need to start managing the demand for car travel now, to make sure the city's transport network will continue to function effectively in the future. The car has a particular impact on Wolverton's Victorian streets, with parking a finite resource. (*SEA Regulation xvi*)
- 4.18 The Local Transport Plan 3 (2011), Milton Keynes Bus Strategy (2008) and Wolverton Station Travel Plan (2012) all aim to improve bus/rail interchanges at Wolverton station and to improved bus services and facilities for buses and bus users in the town centre. (*SEA Regulation xvii*)

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<sup>13</sup>E-Car Club – [futurewolverton.org/projects/e-car/](http://futurewolverton.org/projects/e-car/)

## 5. ASSESSMENT MATRIX

- 5.1 Taking the SA/SEA objectives outlined in the scoping report, each of the plan policy options has been assessed in turn, and the results set out in the tables below. The outcomes of these assessments are then brought together in a summary table which seeks to demonstrate the overall impact of the plan policies on the sustainability objectives.
- 5.2 The assessment matrices included in the main body of the report are assessments of the final seven policies. The earlier assessment matrices and earlier version of the plan policies are included in Appendix 2 of the document. This clearly demonstrates how changes (mitigation measures) have been made to the Neighbourhood Plan in light of the sustainability appraisal, and how the policies have evolved following the various stages of the consultation.
- 5.3 Assessing the policies against the sustainability objectives at various stages of the plan making process, has helped to clarify the plan objectives, determine the priorities within the policies and the mechanisms for delivery.

### Summary of assessment process for Policy W1

- 5.4 Despite the very clear steer from the majority of the community that redevelopment of the Agora site is the only option, the assessment process for policy W1 enabled us to consider the sustainability implications of the retaining the Agora shopping centre and car park in its existing form. We also considered the option of investment and part development of the Agora. The assessment process showed that neither of the retention options is sustainable.
- 5.5 Continued decline of the Agora following a failure of the redevelopment process was also added into the assessment process in June 2014, addressing concerns raised by the healthcheck consultant that this particular risk had not been given due attention. Overall, the various scenarios considered illustrate that complete redevelopment is the most sustainable option for Wolverton.

### Summary of assessment process for Policy W2

- 5.6 Policy W2, guides general town centre development outside the two specific development sites (the Agora and Railway Works). The assessment process for this particular policy has been lengthy as it has undergone a series of changes.
- 5.7 Overall, the process has illustrated that wider development in the town centre linked to the two specific development sites will only be sustainable if “joined-up thinking” takes place. For instance taking care to ensure good physical links between development on the Railway Works site and

Stratford Road is likely to promote local shopping and a shift from the car to more sustainable methods of travel.

### **Summary of assessment process for Policy W3**

- 5.8 Policy W3 – the Railway Works site – has been complex to assess given the uncertain nature of what is likely to happen with the site. However, the assessment process has shown that the status quo does not have a neutral impact, but an on-going and cumulatively negative effect on the nationally important industrial heritage of the site.
- 5.9 Community consultation has shown significant concern over the railway works site becoming “a giant housing estate” but the assessment process has illustrated that development of the site for employment uses only has an uncertain impact on the sustainability of the town centre. This is despite the existing development plan policies regarding retention of employment uses.
- 5.10 The complexity involved in the redevelopment of the entire 36 acre site makes any assessment of the sustainability of this option difficult, but the loss of a major employer and the impact on Wolverton’s identity as a railway town of wholesale redevelopment appears to make this less sustainable overall than part redevelopment of the site.
- 5.11 Overall, the assessment process for policy W3 has helped clarify the nature and focus of the plan policy which now includes safe guards to protect the unique heritage of the site. Specific reference is made within the policy to links between any new development on the site and the town centre. Emphasis is also placed on a mixed use development which adds something distinctly different to the Wolverton offer.

### **Summary of assessment process for Policy W4**

- 5.12 Policy W4 focuses on achieving a diverse mix of retail uses in Wolverton Town Centre. The options for achieving this diverse mix have been subject of discussion, disagreement and debate during the plan making process, partly helped by national debate around the future of the high street led by Mary Portas.
- 5.13 The debate has centred on the extent to which it is right to intervene in the market to try and create a greater, more attractive mix of shops in the Town Centre, with one option being to let the free market create more diversity as Wolverton gentrifies, and the other being to control the market through planning policy. Public sector investment to stimulate a change, and the ongoing impact of the current, unsuccessful retail mix were also considered using the sustainability appraisal process.
- 5.14 Then outcome of the process was that the commercial success and viability of Wolverton Town Centre is supported by a greater mix of retail and community uses, and that the best way to stimulate the development

of this mix is through the introduction of planning controls which seek to protect ground floor A1 use. Leaving the achievement of this mix to the free market is shown through the assessment process to have an uncertain timescale and outcome, whilst public sector investment may be positive but unlikely in a time of austerity and cuts.

### **Summary of assessment process for Policy W5**

- 5.15 Policy W5 seeks to support the creation of a street market in Wolverton Town Centre, attracting shoppers to the town and giving local entrepreneurs and businesses an additional retail outlet.
- 5.16 The assessment process has enabled us to consider the most appropriate location for such a market which is likely to deliver the most sustainable outcomes for the town. The options considered have all been discussed at various points in the plan-making process, and before the Neighbourhood Plan was even a possibility.
- 5.17 It has been extremely useful to go through a rigorous assessment of the benefits of the different sites, and has clearly illustrated that the community's preferred location – The Square – is also the most beneficial location in terms of sustainability.
- 5.18 The assessment process enabled us to tighten up some aspects of the policy, such as ensuring good links between public transport interchange and The Square (to support modal shift) and enhancing the heritage of Market Square.

### **Summary of assessment process for Policy W6**

- 5.19 Policy W6 is about supporting and promoting small and independent trade in Wolverton Town Centre. The inclusion of this policy in the plan is a direct result of the pre-submission consultation in the summer of 2013, when comments were received from the local community about the need to protect small, independent shops. This concern was expressed partly as a result of discussions about the viability of the Agora redevelopment, and whether or not a large retailer would be necessary to enable the redevelopment to take place.
- 5.20 Local people felt that another large food retailer was not the answer to the long-term sustainability of the town centre, and so various options were discussed to enable small, independent retailers to be retained in the town.
- 5.21 The possibility of the Agora being “rebranded” as a business start-up space was one of the options considered, but the scale and design of the building do not make this the most sustainable way in which to deliver the right sort of facilities for small businesses. Neither does the provision of business start-up space by the public sector, where there are question

- marks over whether funds would even be available to make such a provision possible.
- 5.22 The conversion of larger shops units to small shops has been discussed at various points in the plan-making process, especially when the Agora was threatened with closure and various businesses moved out onto the high street. The provision of small shops as part of the major development was discussed during the preparation of the Agora Development Brief. The assessment process illustrated that these two options were the most realistic and sustainable way to support small and independent shops.
- 5.23 The question of whether or not the policy should specify affordable small shop units has been a cause of concern from the Local Planning Authority, retail consultant and healthcheck consultant.
- 5.24 The sustainability appraisal process has been useful in separately assessing whether or not the rents for small shop premises provided through the policy should be affordable.
- 5.25 The outcome of this assessment was that with major redevelopment making Wolverton a more attractive place to live and do business, it may be desirable to protect rental values for some shop units to prevent start-ups and specialist businesses being priced out of the market.
- 5.26 However, changes have subsequently been made to the policy to ensure that a number of delivery mechanisms are included, such as payment of rents on a monthly basis, short-lease terms and turnover rents.

### **Summary of assessment process for Policy W7**

- 5.27 Policy W7 seeks to protect historic shop fronts in the town centre by introducing guidance about shop front design, signage and advertisement and security measures.
- 5.28 The sustainability assessment showed that without controls in place there is risk that unsympathetic changes will continue to be made, detracting from the distinctiveness of the town centre and undermining viability of the whole town centre.
- 5.29 There are a few examples in the town of shop fronts which have been carefully and sympathetically restored (using Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) funding secured a number of years ago by Milton Keynes Council and which positively impact on the conservation area. There are also many examples of shop fronts which have a very detrimental effect on the environment.
- 5.30 The assessment process has been useful in showing that mitigation of the policy through grants which available to shop owners to make improvements will be important to ensure sustainability. This is reflected in the delivery section of the plan.

- 5.31 For ease of reference, the plan policies are included at the beginning of each assessment.

**Policy W1 – The Agora site**

Redevelopment proposals for the Agora site will be actively supported where they are consistent with the objectives set out below. The planning and design principles in the Agora Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (adopted September 2013) are consistent with this policy and referenced below.

Redevelopment proposals will:

- A. Follow the historic grid street pattern and reinstate Radcliffe Street as a direct highway link, which is pedestrian and cycle friendly, between The Square and Church Street. (Reconnection of the Grid)
- B. Provide an active retail frontage on the reinstated Radcliffe Street and Church Street with a mix of new ground floor units of modern size and standard, suitable for current retail, service and office requirements. (Scale and Orientation of New Development and Active Ground Floor Frontages)
- C. Include development fronting Church Street, with a priority of around the junction with Radcliffe Street. (Development along Church Street)
- D. Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces, particularly at the rear of buildings. (Public and Private Space)
- E. Incorporate public open space around the junction of Church Street and the new highway link to The Square, to improve the urban environment and support street markets and community events. (Street markets and community events)
- F. Retain views of St George's Church, in particular the spire, through breaks in development along Church Street. (Retention of Key Views)
- G. Be between two and four storeys in height with the taller buildings on the corners of the site and along the re-instated Radcliffe Street link between Church Street and The Square. (Building Heights)
- H. Where practicable ensure service yards do not conflict with private amenity space or private parking provision for residents or undermine the quality of the environment at the front. (Servicing)
- I. Except in new residential development where parking should be designated to each unit, all parking should be accessible to town centre users, and include an element of on-street parking. Existing adopted highway access should be retained and enhanced where practicable. (Parking and Existing Adoptable Highway Access)
- J. Integrate the existing Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure located in Church Street. (Electric Bus Charging Point Infrastructure)

*continued ...*

**Policy W1 – The Agora site – *continued***

- K. Improve cycling and walking links within the town centre, retaining existing pedestrian links such as that between St George’s Church and Church Street as practicable and viable. (Existing Adoptable Highway Access)
- L. Include a mix of new housing which complements the existing provision and meets the particular needs of older people (extra care housing) and younger people (supported housing). Housing provided on the site should also meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, and best practice guidance in ‘Safer Places’ and ‘Secured by Design’. Some dwellings should support home based working and all homes should have high speed broadband.
- N. Include a range of small to medium sized retail (50 to 1000 square metres) and office units and workshops suitable for current town centre businesses that may require relocation and new occupiers. (Allow for a range of land uses and unit sizes)
- M. Retain the existing London Plane trees and other trees where practicable replacing any trees lost as a result of development. (Landscaping)
- O. Include the introduction of water efficiency measures and new green infrastructure in the form of sustainable urban drainage systems which reduce flood risk and add ecological value and interest to the development.
- P. Street materials and street furniture should comply with the Public Realm Design Manual. (Public Realm materials and street furniture)
- Q. Be of good design more in keeping with the Victorian architecture of the setting which preserves and enhances the character of the Conservation Area. Poor quality pastiche is not acceptable. (High quality architecture)
- R. Ensure redevelopment is accessible to all users. (Access to All)
- S. Subject to viability testing, new development will be zero carbon and resilient to the impact of climate change and served by a district heating network.
- T. Ensure that the necessary on and off-site infrastructure, for example school places, and community facilities are provided to support and mitigate the impact of development.



**Assessment Matrix – Policy W1 – The Agora site**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Retention of the shopping centre as is.	Impact	Redevelopment of the whole site and the car park	Impact	Retention with capital investment and part development	Impact	Redevelopment of the car park only	Impact	Retention as a leisure venue only	Impact	Continued decline of the Agora site following failed attempts to bring forward redevelopment	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	There is no housing provided on the current Agora site.	o	Redevelopment of the site would allow for the housing needs of local people to be addressed, specifically flats for younger people and a range of housing for older people with and without care needs. The housing developed on the site will be sustainable and energy efficient, ensuring that running costs are kept low, and 30% of the stock will be affordable.	+	There may be the opportunity to redevelop the second floor of the Agora building to accommodate apartments, although the viability of doing so is not known.	?	Redevelopment of the MK Council owned car park would in theory allow for some housing development to take place addressing the housing needs of some local people. However, the proximity of such new housing to the Agora may limit the attractiveness and viability of such a housing development. It would also depend upon the owners of the Agora agreeing to surrender the lease of the car park, or Milton Keynes Council being willing to bring the lease agreement to an end, which may be a legally complex process.	?	If the Agora building was retained and operated as a leisure venue only, no opportunities would be created to supply additional housing units. Indeed, the use of the building late at night for leisure activities might detract from the desirability of existing housing in the town centre.	-	Failed attempts to redevelop the Agora and continued decline of the building are likely to have a negative impact on the way in which the town is viewed within Milton Keynes. This will, in turn, have a negative impact on the supply of new local housing market.	-
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	Access to the shops and services on The Square is physically blocked by the location of the Agora, and movement between the different shops and facilities within the Town Centre hampered by the building.	-	Reconnection of Radcliffe Street will improve access to the shops and services on The Square, and help link the four different retail areas of the Town together in a more legible way.	+	Imaginative investment in the Agora building, may allow for a direct access route to be created to the shops and services on The Square. However, movement between the different shops and facilities within the Town Centre will still be hampered by the location and scale of the building.	-	Redevelopment of the car park may allow alternative highways routes to The Square to be considered but they are likely to be complex and involve extensive negotiation with Buckingham St owners. A legible route to The Square in line with the town's grid pattern would still not be possible.	+	Whilst use of the Agora as a leisure venue might improve access to leisure activities, movement between the different shops and facilities within the Town Centre will still be hampered by the location and scale of the building.	-	Continued decline of the Agora building, with the subsequent impact on the attractiveness of the town centre, is likely to have a negative impact on the accessibility of services and facilities in the town. This is because fewer shoppers/visitors will mean fewer businesses will want to locate in town.	-

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W1 – The Agora site – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Retention of the shopping centre as is.	Impact	Redevelopment of the whole site and the car park	Impact	Retention with capital investment and part development	Impact	Redevelopment of the car park only	Impact	Retention as a leisure venue only	Impact	Continued decline of the Agora site following failed attempts to bring forward redevelopment	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton's environmental assets through brownfield sites.		The land is under-used and the current building does little to enhance the environmental assets of the town.	-	The brownfield site will be reused for a development that enhances the character of the town and surrounding historic assets. Redevelopment will enable far more efficient use of land.	++	Even with investment, the Agora site is under-used and the current building does little to enhance the environmental assets of the town.	-	Development fronting the car park would go some way to creating a more vibrant town centre and re-using brownfield land. However, the development may appear somewhat piecemeal, which will do little to encourage the urban renaissance which Wolverton has the potential to deliver.	++	Even if investment took place to convert the Agora to a leisure only facility, the site would have to compete with the new Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre at the West End of the town, as well as many other modern, attractive facilities across Milton Keynes. There is no guarantee that it would be able to attract sufficient usage of the right activities to be economically viable. The building, even with investment, would continue to detract from the environmental assets of the town.	?	Failure to bring forward a redevelopment of the Agora site will seriously impact upon other attempts to regenerate the town, and will have a detrimental impact on urban renaissance.	
Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport		Cycling within the Town Centre is currently problematic because of the way in which the Agora interrupts the grid road/backway system of the town.	-	Redevelopment of the site would enable new pedestrian and cycle routes to be provided within the Town Centre thereby supporting sustainable modes of transport within the Town Centre.	+	Capital investment in the Agora may result in more attractive shops taking up tenancies within the building which may result in more people shopping locally. However, cycling (and to a lesser extent walking) will remain problematic because of the way in which the Agora interrupts the grid road/backway system of the town.	?	Redevelopment of the car park may enable new pedestrian and cycle routes to be provided within the Town Centre thereby supporting sustainable modes of transport within the Town Centre. However, with the Agora building still in place these routes are still likely to be indirect, and not as legible as they could be with the grid road system re-established.	+	Conversion of the building to a leisure only venue has the potential to result in far greater levels of car transport into Wolverton. Cycling (and to a lesser extent walking) to the venue will remain problematic because of the way in which the Agora interrupts the grid road/backway system of the town.	?	With the Agora building still in place it will not be possible to improve the legibility of routes for people and cyclists. It is unlikely that the opportunity to run a bus service to The Square will be realised without development.	-

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W1 – The Agora site – continued**

Key		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6						
-	Negative impact	Retention of the shopping centre as is.	Impact	Redevelopment of the whole site and the car park	Impact	Retention with capital investment and part development	Impact	Redevelopment of the car park only	Impact	Retention as a leisure venue only	Impact	Continued decline of the Agora site following failed attempts to bring forward redevelopment	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal		Current building is judged an eyesore by the community and detracts from the character of the conservation area and listed buildings within the town.	-	Redevelopment of the Agora site will enable new buildings to be designed which are sympathetic to the historic character of Wolverton, enhancing the Conservation Area and views of neighbouring Listed Buildings.	++	Capital investment /part development of the Agora will create an opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the whole building. However, the design and style of the building will continue to detract from the Conservation Area and listed buildings within the town.	-	Redevelopment of the car park will enable new buildings to be designed which are sympathetic to the historic character of Wolverton, enhancing the Conservation Area and views of neighbouring Listed Buildings. However, having new development which is in keeping with the conservation area alongside the Agora building may emphasize that the Agora is completely out of character with the rest of the town.	++	Conversion to a leisure only venue may result in some investment to improve the attractiveness of the whole building. However, the design and style of the building will continue to detract from the Conservation Area and listed buildings within the town.	-	Continued decline of the Agora building will have a huge impact on the surrounding conservation area, detracting from the neighbouring listed buildings, and the public realm.	-
Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre		There are vacant units within the Agora building which detract from the vitality of the Town Centre. There appear to be no real proposals to refurbish the building, and the poor quality public realm detracts from the viability of the rest of the Town Centre.	-	New shops, cafes, offices and flats will be provided through the redevelopment with potential to regenerate the town. The reconnection of the historic grid road pattern will enable the different retail areas of the town to be linked together in a more legible way, enhancing the ability of local shoppers to move from area to area using local shops and facilities.	++	If investment results in vacant units being filled, it could be that the vitality of the town will be enhanced. However, even with redevelopment it may not be possible for the building to provide the size and quality of units which are required by retailers in the current market. This may mean that the building continues to be occupied by retailers who do little to attract footfall into the town.	?	Redevelopment of the car park may result in new town centre housing, which will increase the number of potential customers available to use businesses. However, without the full redevelopment, it is unlikely that it will be viable to create many retail premises. This will limit the opportunity to improve the vitality and viability of the town through new shop premises on new Radcliffe Street.	++	If conversion to a leisure only venue resulted in use 8 hours a day, each day it could be that the vitality of the town will be enhanced. But even with investment it may not be possible for the building to provide the type and quality of provision which are required in the current leisure market, such that it continues to be underused and detract from the viability and vitality of the town.	?	The uncertain future of the Agora building over the last 10 years has significantly blighted Wolverton, and failure to redevelop the site despite wide overwhelming community support to do so may have a catastrophic effect on the vitality and viability of the town.	-

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W1 – The Agora site – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Retention of the shopping centre as is.	Impact	Redevelopment of the whole site and the car park	Impact	Retention with capital investment and part development	Impact	Redevelopment of the car park only	Impact	Retention as a leisure venue only	Impact	Continued decline of the Agora site following failed attempts to bring forward redevelopment	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		Retaining the existing Agora building and site does nothing to support the SA objectives – indeed the assessment shows that overall retention has a negative impact on the objectives.	-	Redevelopment of the Agora site represents an opportunity to make a positive impact on the SA objectives, and positively contribute to the regeneration of Wolverton Town Centre. The assessment process has enabled us to fine-tune the policy within the NDP and to have greater clarity about the outcomes we want to deliver. This in turn has contributed towards a process of being more specific about the NDP objectives and monitoring arrangements.	++	At the beginning of the Neighbourhood Plan process a minority of local people, and traders from the Agora, were calling for a part redevelopment and refurbishment of the building. They believed that with investment the Agora could be transformed into an attractive place to do business and visit. The appraisal process has illustrated that the results of such an approach are largely unknown, and in some cases do little to address the underlying issues that the building presents for the town; namely the inappropriateness of the design and the scale and orientation of the building. Without further significant work to assess the viability of such an approach it is not possible to say that this is a sustainable option.	?	Redevelopment of the Agora car park alone may be possible as the land is ultimately in the ownership of Milton Keynes Council. However, the assessment demonstrates that securing the land for redevelopment and carrying out the necessary negotiations to improve links and access may be highly complex and costly. This might undermine the viability of the development, which is unlikely to deliver the mix of retail, housing and commercial premises which the community is so keen to see.	?	At the beginning of the Neighbourhood Plan process some local people believed that the Agora could be revitalised as a leisure-only venue, transforming it into an attractive place to do use and an asset to the town. The appraisal process has illustrated that the results of such an approach are largely negative or unknown, and do little to address the underlying issues that the building presents for the town.	?	Failure to redevelop the Agora site will have a hugely detrimental impact on the town centre and the whole of Wolverton. For local people it is difficult to imagine a long-term scenario that doesn't involve total redevelopment of the site, and until the decision made by Milton Keynes Council in 2012 to pursue compulsory purchase of the site is reversed, redevelopment of the site remains a realistic option. Continued political pressure from the Town Council and Future Wolverton remain essential to mitigate against any reversal of the decision made in 2012.	-

## **Policy W2 – General Town Centre Development**

Development proposals that accord with the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan will be supported. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, the Town Council will work with Milton Keynes Council to assess the proposal against the achievement of the overall objectives of the plan.

With the exception of minor alterations and householder applications, all development and redevelopment within Wolverton Town Centre will:

- A. Improve the movement of pedestrians and cyclists around the town centre, promote sustainable travel to the railway station, and improve bus interchange facilities.
- B. Improve the public realm, such as streets, pavements, signage, and street furniture as specified in the Public Realm Design Manual including measures to manage run-off.
- C. Enable the creation of new green infrastructure such as private gardens, open spaces and green roofs within the town centre, complying with Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard.
- C. Include the introduction of water efficiency measures and sustainable urban drainage systems which reduce flood risk and add ecological value and interest to new development.
- D. Improve social, leisure and cultural facilities and promote the development of a visitor and night-time economy.
- E. Incorporate flats above shops to increase the town centre population and improve the viability of the local economy.
- F. Foster active frontages such as shop or office windows and doors, and/or entrances and windows to housing at the ground floor.
- G. Enhance views of the listed St George's Church and other key buildings such as The Wesleyan Chapel and St George's Institute (previously known as MADCAP).
- H. Provide parking on-street or in car parks to the rear of properties.
- I. Incorporate climate change measures, including where viable zero carbon development and served by district heating.

Development /redevelopment proposals in the following specific locations within Wolverton Town Centre will be supported:

- J. In The Square where they combine ground floor shop units to create larger premises in particular for café and office use.
- K. In Glyn Square where they are of a smaller scale which helps to deliver a more traditional street with active shop frontages, improves pedestrian crossing points at the junction of Creed Street and Stratford Road, and improves traffic flow and bus infrastructure where viable.
- L. In Stratford Road where they support the development of a more mixed retail offer and flats above shops.

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**Assessment Matrix – Policy W2 – General Town Centre streets and spaces**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	<b>Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Redevelopment of Glyn Square (linked to wider town centre developments)</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Development of The Square (linked to the redevelopment of the Agora building)</b>	<b>Impact</b>		<b>Impact</b>		<b>Impact</b>
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
<b>SA objectives</b>	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	The development of the Agora car park would undoubtedly realise new housing units, stimulating the market for housing within Wolverton Town Centre.	+	Some additional flats above shops on Stratford Road could take place as a result of the development of some parts of the Railway Lands. However, if new housing is developed on the Railway lands an oversupply of housing might undermine the conversion of flats above shops to living space.	?	It is unlikely that development of Glyn Square will realise a large number of housing units, although there is the potential with a complete redevelopment of the site for apartments above shop units.	?	Many of the flats above shops on The Square are already occupied, but redevelopment of the Agora building is likely to further promote the conversion of the remaining empty premises. There is also a large warehouse style building to the rear of The Square which may well be converted to housing if access to The Square could be improved.	+				
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	Development of new housing on the Agora car park will give new residents access to services and facilities in the town centre. It is unlikely to improve the accessibility of services to existing residents, although a greater population will create an increased pressure for such services to be retained.	+	Development of parts of the Railway Lands should hopefully result in improved links across Stratford Road into the town centre, increasing footfall and improving access to services and facilities for existing and new residents. However, without clarity on where access to and from the site will be created, it is difficult to say for certain if the impact will be positive.	?	Glyn Square is situated directly opposite the Town Hall, Library and Creed Street Arts centre (formerly Madcap). A key aspiration of any redevelopment is likely to include improving movement of traffic and access to such services.	+	Redevelopment of the Agora will open up access to shops and services on The Square which have been "hidden" since the building was constructed over 35 years ago!	++				
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton's environmental assets through brownfield sites	Development of the car park will result in more efficient use of the brownfield site on Church Street, and should go some way to encouraging	+	Development of the railway lands is likely to radically alter the character and appearance of this part of the town centre.	+	Glyn Square is located at a key gateway into the town centre, and redevelopment of the site would do much to improve the overall	++	Redevelopment of the Agora is likely to radically alter the character and appearance of Wolverton town centre.	++				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W2 – General Town Centre streets and spaces – continued**

Key		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6				
-	Negative impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Redevelopment of Glyn Square (linked to wider town centre developments)	Development of The Square (linked to the redevelopment of the Agora building)						
?	Uncertain impact										
0	Neutral impact										
+	Positive impact										
		a renaissance in the town centre.	As the “shopfront” to Wolverton, any changes to Stratford Road are likely to be transformational in terms of how Wolverton is seen by those who “pass through”, so will have a major impact on the urban renaissance of the town.	impression of Wolverton. Redevelopment would also enable the existing buildings at the rear of the site to be better utilised, and may also result in BT considering the long-term future of their telephone exchange located to the rear of Glyn Square.	With Radcliffe Street reconnected, The Square will be opened up to shoppers and is likely to be used for even more local events and activities.						
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	Development on Church Street has the potential to deliver the comprehensive improvement scheme that local people favour, allowing for bus interchange facilities to be created, pedestrian and cycle access to be improved.	++	Development on the Railway lands on the other side of Stratford Road should help realise further bus infrastructure, including new pedestrians and cycle links into the town centre. If local aspirations for a sustainable development not based around the car can be realised, then the potential impact on modal shift could be significant. However, with the detail behind such a development uncertain, it is difficult to be certain that the potential for a positive benefit to transport in and out of the town centre will be realised.	?	Redevelopment of Glyn Square may enable proper bus interchange facilities to be provided in Wolverton, relieving bus traffic and pressure on Church Street. This will do much to improve pedestrian and cycle access across the town centre, and relocating bus interchange facilities at Glyn Square will also move it closer to the Railway Station with all the potential advantages for supporting sustainable journeys.	++	Redevelopment of the Agora will improve the flow of people, cyclists and bus traffic in Wolverton, and in particular to The Square. Ultimately it may result in some re-routing of bus traffic through The Square, improving access to public transport to people living in the east end of the town.	++		
	Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage,	Redevelopment of the car park with buildings which	+	There is a local aspiration for any	?	Redevelopment of the warehouse style	+	Redevelopment of the Agora and opening up	++		



**Assessment Matrix – Policy W2 – General Town Centre streets and spaces – continued**

Key		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6					
-	Negative impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Redevelopment of Glyn Square (linked to wider town centre developments)	Development of The Square (linked to the redevelopment of the Agora building)							
?	Uncertain impact							Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact
0	Neutral impact											
+	Positive impact											
particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal		are more sympathetic to the heritage of the town has the potential to enhance the conservation area. However, without development of the Agora building itself it will be difficult to fully resolve the impact of the 1970's development on the town centre.	development of the Railway lands to result in the preservation and conservation of the existing heritage assets. The principle issue for Stratford Road will be the extent to which the railway works wall remains intact or have "openings" through it into any new development. Without easy access to the shops and services on Stratford Road, the impact of development on the site is unlikely to have a regenerative impact on Stratford Road.	building at Glyn Square with buildings which are more sympathetic to the heritage of the town has the potential to enhance the conservation area. It may also allow for improved access to be created to the Grand Union Canal.	of The Square will do much to conserve and enhance the Conservation Area. It is hoped that once the Agora building is gone there will be more incentives for local businesses to look after their original shop fronts, and that redevelopment of the Town Centre will enhance views of St George's Church and other listed buildings.							
Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre		Redevelopment of the car park is likely to negatively affect businesses in the short-term, with parking and access to shops difficult during the construction phase. In the longer term, more people living in the centre of Wolverton will increase footfall to local retailers, improving the viability of the town centre.	Development of the Railway lands has the potential to promote development of new shops and businesses on Stratford Road, thereby improving the overall vitality of this part of the town centre. Access to and from the site will dictate whether or not this positive impact will extend to other parts of the town.	Although the shops at Glyn Square are heavily used by people resident in and visiting the Town, the current access and parking arrangements are not ideal, and restrict the potential of the shops to attract further footfall into the town. If redevelopment of the site could improve access and parking, the contribution that the site makes to the vitality and viability of the town centre would be enhanced.	The shops and businesses on The Square have suffered for many years because of the access difficulties, and there is a commonly shared view that the redevelopment of the Agora will have a very positive impact on the footfall they attract.							

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W2 – General Town Centre streets and spaces – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact	Redevelopment of Glyn Square (linked to wider town centre developments)	Impact	Development of The Square (linked to the redevelopment of the Agora building)	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		The assessment shows that development of the Agora car park is likely to have a positive impact on Church Street, promoting wider regeneration and development on this key shopping street. The impact is likely to be more positive if the Agora building was also redeveloped.	+	The assessment has shown that although development of the Railway lands should ultimately be positive for the regeneration of Stratford Road, it is dependent upon the extent to which the new development is physically linked to the existing town centre. This will be unknown until a development framework has been prepared for the site. Without clarity on access issues between the site and the town centre it is difficult to tell if the overall impact of the development will be positive.	?	Overall, a redevelopment of Glyn Square would have a positive impact on the sustainability of Wolverton Town centre, enabling potential changes to be made to bus infrastructure in the town centre, easing congestion and enhancing the appearance of the conservation area at this key gateway site.	+	Redevelopment of the Agora building will improve access to shops and services in The Square, improve legibility and movement around the town centre, and result in an urban renaissance for the town. Local people already value The Square as a location for community events and activities, but redevelopment of the Agora will open up this important area of the town centre to visitors and shoppers, improving the vibrancy and vitality of the retail areas, and the overall sustainability of the town.	++				

**Policy W3 – The Railway Works site**

Proposals for the site should be in accordance with Milton Keynes development plan policies regarding retention of employment uses.

Subject to the planning status of any proposals for the site and the results of investigative work carried out by Milton Keynes Council, a Development Framework may be prepared in partnership between Milton Keynes Council, the Town Council, the local community and the landowner.

Proposals brought forward prior to a Development Framework being prepared will show compliance with the principles below and show how the particular proposals will contribute to a masterplanning approach to the site.

Proposals for redevelopment and regeneration of the site will:

**Improve linkages and movement by:**

- A. Providing new pedestrian and vehicular routes within those parts of the site that are publicly accessible, reinforcing the character of the area which has a strong east/west orientation.
- B. Ensuring that the new pedestrian and vehicular routes within those parts of the site that are publicly accessible make as direct links as possible with Stratford Road and the town centre and complement the grid layout of the residential part of Wolverton.
- C. Ensuring priority is given to pedestrian and cycle movements and creating links as direct as possible with existing bus stops.
- D. Providing access for heavy vehicles serving the railway works by a new access taken to the north of Tesco from the end of McConnell Drive.

**Conserve the unique heritage of the site by:**

- E. Opening up views (and access into and out of the site) through the wall along Stratford Road where possible, whilst seeking to retain the wall's integrity and role as a symbol of Wolverton's origins as a railway town. Where the wall has to be removed, ensuring it is replaced by structural features which reflect the industrial heritage of Wolverton.
- F. Conserving and enhancing the historic buildings on the site, informed by further investigative work which may take place as part of a development framework for the site.

**Contribute to public amenity by:**

- G. Contributing to the net gain of public and green spaces in the town centre by providing on-site high quality green infrastructure and public spaces including sustainable urban drainage landscaping schemes.
- H. Exploiting the asset that is the Grand Union Canal by maximising opportunities to access the canal from the town centre, encouraging recreation and tourism.

*continued ...*

**Policy W3 – The Railway Works site – *continued*****Provide new development that:**

- I. Re-uses historic buildings and provides sites for new homes. Consideration should be given to a proportion of streets being designed so that speeds are slow (10mph) so as to meet the needs of children and pedestrians in particular, and where car parking is designed into the overall streetscape so as to not dominate it. A proportion of the new homes should also meet the Lifetime Homes standard. Secured by Design and Safer Places best practice should be applied to the design of all the new housing.
- J. Contributes to the overall mix of employment uses in Wolverton, incorporating light industrial use and leisure use where viable.
- K. Subject to viability, gives a particular emphasis to sustainability through the use of zero carbon solutions, designed for climate change and district heating.
- L. Actively encourages the incorporation of a local energy network, such as a link to the Waste Recovery Park at Old Wolverton where practicable and viable to do so.

**Deliver new infrastructure**

- M. On and off-site infrastructure will be provided to support and mitigate the impact of development, in particular school places and health care provision for all new residents.
- N. Water efficiency measures should be introduced into any new development, including the introduction of sustainable urban drainage systems which reduce flood risk and add ecological value and interest to the development. Opportunities should be taken to completely remove or significantly reduce any water flows currently discharging to the surface water network.

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W3 – The Railway Works site**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
		Lands remains in current use	Impact	Redevelopment of some parts of the site	Impact	Employment uses only on land surplus to requirements	Impact	Complete relocation of the Railway Works and redevelopment of the entire 36 acre site	Impact		Impact		Impact
-	Negative impact												
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	Housing market would not be stimulated.	o	New housing that contributes to the overall mix of housing in Wolverton, and potentially offers something distinctly different – such as a zero carbon development – could be provided on the site.	+	Housing market would not be stimulated.	0	If the whole Railway Works site became available for redevelopment, it is likely that a large amount of new housing would be constructed. However, there is likely to be significant local opposition to the use of whole or the majority of the railway works site being used for housing development. This is because Wolverton has already absorbed a large amount of the housing development that has taken place in Milton Keynes outside of the designated growth areas in the last 5 years, without an equivalent increase in local infrastructure such as school places and GP services.	+				
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities	No particular change from status quo would occur	o	Providing a direct link into the Railway works site from the Town Centre, and potentially opening up access through the works wall will positively improve accessibility to services and facilities.	+	If the new businesses provided services directly to the public, there might be a slight increase in accessibility	?	Large scale housing development on the Railway Works land would create an opportunity to create new links with Town Centre shops and services, but would not improve existing links with the existing residential community.	?				
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s	The site is currently underutilised and opportunities for environmental	-	Redevelopment of existing uses or new uses on the site in the future offers potential	++	Whilst further employment uses would result in the site being better utilised, it	?	Redevelopment of whole of the Railway Works site would result in efficient use of a	+				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W3 – The Railway Works site – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Lands remains in current use	Impact	Redevelopment of some parts of the site	Impact	Employment uses only on land surplus to requirements	Impact	Complete relocation of the Railway Works and redevelopment of the entire 36 acre site	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
	environmental assets through brownfield sites	improvements lost.		for a more efficient use of the site. It also creates opportunities for sustainable drainage and district heating and or renewable energy systems to be created.		is unlikely that urban renaissance will be encouraged by employment uses alone		major brownfield asset. However, urban renaissance would only be achieved if a range of uses were achieved, and it may be challenging to from a viability point of view to create a development with new employment, community and heritage uses					
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	Little impact will be made on modal shift if the works site remains undeveloped.	0	Whilst redevelopment of the Railway works site may increase traffic levels, this policy is not specifying uses for the site so it is difficult to assess the effect on modal shift. There would however, be a local ambition to create a development which favours sustainable modes of transport over car use.	0	Little impact will be made on modal shift if the works site remains employment use only, unless specific efforts are made to encourage the new employees working on the site to travel to work sustainably.	0	Although there would be a local ambition to create a development which favours sustainable modes of transport over car use, there may be viability issues and developer pressure to have a more traditional car based development. Large development is likely to increase traffic levels, although without specific information about the mix of uses it is difficult to assess the overall effect on modal shift.	?				
	Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	The heritage assets on the site would remain hidden and it would be difficult to assess their current condition. This would be likely to affect the likelihood of long-term term preservation.	-	Redevelopment of some parts of the site would have the potential to protect and conserve important heritage assets whilst improving their setting and opening up views Partial redevelopment is likely to result in some sections of the	+	It is unlikely that new employment uses could take place within the heritage buildings on the the site, which would either remain hidden or be under threat if the land was needed for modern warehouse style buildings	?	Development of the whole site may create a greater opportunity to protect and conserve important heritage assets whilst improving their setting and opening up views. It may also threaten some of the important buildings on site, since	-				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W3 – The Railway Works site – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6		
-	Negative impact	Lands remains in current use	Impact	Redevelopment of some parts of the site	Impact	Employment uses only on land surplus to requirements	Impact	Complete relocation of the Railway Works and redevelopment of the entire 36 acre site	Impact		Impact		Impact	
?	Uncertain impact													
0	Neutral impact													
+	Positive impact													
				Stratford Road wall being removed, but large areas being retained. Overall, the degree of survival of the site makes it nationally significant in terms of industrial heritage, and redevelopment may enable the story of Wolverton as the first railway town to be fully explored and celebrated.				the need for extensive infrastructure may also create more pressure for removal of some the existing heritage assets. Total redevelopment of the site is likely to result in removal of all of the Stratford Road wall, with the adverse effect this is likely to have on the heritage of the town. The loss of a business which has been in the Town for over 175 years would have a profound effect on Wolverton's identity as a railway town.						
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	Employment uses remain, but opportunities for growth or diversification of employment uses seem limited by this approach.	?	New employment, with the potential of other uses, should mean the site continues to provide jobs and supports the rest of the Town centre.	++	Additional employment use of the site may result in increased use of the town centre shops and services.	+	Loss of employment in the Railway Works will have a detrimental effect on the local economy since many of the people employed by the Works live in Wolverton and the surrounding area. New employment created as a result of the new development is unlikely to be as significant as the jobs lost. The construction of many new homes may however, increase the number of people using local shops and services, thereby increasing the vitality of	?					

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W3 – The Railway Works site – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Lands remains in current use	Impact	Redevelopment of some parts of the site	Impact	Employment uses only on land surplus to requirements	Impact	Complete relocation of the Railway Works and redevelopment of the entire 36 acre site	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
								the town centre.					
CONCLUSION		The assessment shows that there is an uncertain impact of leaving the Railway Works site in its current situation, and a negative impact with regard to efficient use of brownfield land and conservation of important heritage assets. Overall, the national significance of the site both in terms of the acres of brownfield land it represents and the unique industrial heritage it contains means that implementation of the policy is the better option.	?	Overall, implementation of this policy through the preparation of a development framework for the site would have the potential to promote a series of large changes or numerous smaller changes that would positively impact on Wolverton. The opportunity to develop new types of housing, a greater range of employment uses and to promote heritage uses of the site, mean that redevelopment of part of the site recommended in this policy is likely to contribute to the regeneration of Wolverton and support aspirations for sustainable development.	+	The assessment shows that the use of surplus land on the railway works site for employment use only will have an uncertain impact on the sustainability of Wolverton. Although new employment uses would probably result in more workers using local shops and services, without a more mixed development taking place, the creation of a more sustainable community is unlikely.	?	Redevelopment of the whole of the Railway Works lands appears, on the first analysis, to be positive. However, the impact on the local economy of losing a major employer, and the loss of the railway works business to the town is so significant that overall it is difficult to be certain of the impact of this option. The complexity involved in delivering a development of this scale and complexity, and the length of time it is likely to take to deliver will have a significant impact on the existing community of Wolverton, which puts a question mark over whether or not the development meets the broader sustainability objectives of the plan.	?				



**Policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses**

Proposals which protect, enhance and promote a diverse range of uses will be supported, to secure the success of Wolverton town centre.

**Primary and Secondary Frontages**

The over dominance of any particular use will be avoided by:

- A. Retaining all shops and shop floorspace (A1 use) at ground floor level within the primary and secondary frontages, in accordance with the town centre use mix requirements for the specified frontages set out within Table W4 – 1.
- B. Ensuring that within any defined primary frontage, non-retail uses do not create a continuous frontage of more than two units. However, where there is an identified need, support will be given to proposals for non-retail use which would enhance and diversify the mix of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in the town centre.

**Town Centre generally (as defined in 2005 Local Plan):**

Adverse impact of town centre uses on neighbouring premises will be managed by:

- C. Setting a maximum limit for food and drink uses within the primary and secondary frontages in accordance with the town centre use mix requirements for the specified frontages set out in Table W4 – 1.
- D. Improving the provision of off street long-stay (more than 4 hours) parking in the town centre, where appropriate and feasible.
- E. Continuing Local Plan policy TC18, which ensures that planning permission will only be granted for an amusement centre if it is located in a secondary shopping area or mixed use area away from housing, schools, churches, hospitals and hotels.

**Retail services**

Retail services in the town centre will be promoted by:

- F. Providing protection for the secondary frontages in accordance with the town centre mix requirements for the specified frontages set out within Table W4 – 1 and Table W4 – 2.
- G. Ensuring that superstores (2,500 sq m or above) that incorporate town centre uses such as banking, pharmaceuticals, dry cleaners, opticians or health services, will only be supported if they can demonstrate that the new service will not have an unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

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**Assessment Matrix – Policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
		Current retail and non-retail uses remain unchanged	Impact	A more diverse retail and non-retail use is supported by planning policy	Impact	The Town Council and other community organisations seek to acquire key buildings in the town centre to achieve a greater mix of uses	Impact	The market creates a more diverse retail and non-retail mix	Impact		Impact		Impact
-	Negative impact												
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	A failing town centre continues to have a negative impact on the local housing market.	-	A more diverse retail and non-retail mix in the town centre is expected to be a key driver in promoting housing development in the Wolverton area, with housing developers more able to market housing sites and house purchasers attracted to living in a town which has a distinctive and commercially successful town centre.	+	Public sector/community investment in the town may give developers confidence to support housing development in the town, but it may also be a cause for concern that the “market” is no leading the process.	?	If changes to the retail and non-retail mix are left to happen as a result of market forces, it is likely to take longer to achieve a diverse mix of retail and non-retail uses. This will have some impact on the sustainable development of housing in the area, with housing developers going ahead despite the town centre rather than because it is an added attraction.	?				
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities	No particular change from status quo would occur	o	Controlling uses which have a negative impact on the town centre, and positively promoting a mix of uses including community facilities will improve access to services and facilities for residents and visitors.	++	Having acquired key buildings in the town, the public sector/community organisation might be able to operate new services in the town centre, thereby improving the accessibility of services and facilities to local people and visitors.	+	It is unlikely that the market will support the acquisition of town centre premises for non-retail use, thereby limiting the extent to which the accessibility of services and facilities can be improved.	-				
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites	A decline in the urban environment and inefficient use of property assets and land will continue unchecked.	-	Encouraging use of land and property for a mix of retail and community uses will support an urban renaissance in Wolverton Town Centre, making it a	++	Public sector or community investment in property in the town centre has the potential to halt the decline in the urban environment and support the efficient use of property	+	A change in retail mix, however it is achieved, has the potential to support an urban renaissance in Wolverton Town Centre, making it a distinctive and	?				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Current retail and non-retail uses remain unchanged	Impact	A more diverse retail and non-retail use is supported by planning policy	Impact	The Town Council and other community organisations seek to acquire key buildings in the town centre to achieve a greater mix of uses	Impact	The market creates a more diverse retail and non-retail mix	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
				distinctive and attractive place to shop and visit.		assets.		attractive place to shop and visit. However, without intervention from the planning system this change may not be achieved in all retail areas in a coherent manner, jeopardising the overall sustainability of the town centre.					
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	There will be little impact will on modal shift if the mix of retail remains unchanged.	o	Creating a more distinctive and attractive town centre will potentially have a negative effect on modal shift, by creating more car-based traffic. However, Wolverton is fortunate to have good public transport connections, and efforts will be made to encourage visitors to travel to the town more sustainably. The policy is partly about encouraging people who come already to stay longer and spend more money, and there is an aspiration to create more long-stay parking in the town to support this.	?	Investment by the public sector or community organisations will have little impact on modal shift, unless one of the sites acquired can provide a site new bus infrastructure facilities.	O	Creating a more distinctive and attractive town centre will potentially have a negative effect on modal shift, by creating more car-based traffic. This risk is greater if it is a market led solution as development may occur with little reference to the infrastructure required.	?				
	Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area,	It is unlikely that any significant improvements will be made to conserve and enhance the	-	A wider mix of uses in the town centre is likely to have a positive impact on the historic	+	Properties purchased by the public sector and community based organisations are likely	+	A market led solution may not deliver a consistent improvement to historic	?				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	<b>Current retail and non-retail uses remain unchanged</b>	Impact	<b>A more diverse retail and non-retail use is supported by planning policy</b>	Impact	<b>The Town Council and other community organisations seek to acquire key buildings in the town centre to achieve a greater mix of uses</b>	Impact	<b>The market creates a more diverse retail and non-retail mix</b>	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
	Listed Buildings and the canal	conservation area with the current mix of retail.		shops and other buildings in the conservation area, with independent and small businesses and community-based services more inclined to invest more time and energy in creating an attractive environment for shoppers and visitors alike.		to be sensitively refurbished, with proper regard given to conserving and enhancing the conservation area.		shops and other buildings in the conservation area without further planning policy to support and encourage retention of original shop fronts features.					
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	The current mix of uses will continue to detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre.	-	With a mix of independent retail and community uses Wolverton Town Centre will become a place where shopping is just one small part of a rich mix of activities. The right mix of social, culture, health, and wellbeing and creative and learning uses will help to create a town centre that is vibrant and attractive, and which has the capacity to develop and sustain new and existing businesses.	++	A town centre supported by public sector or community investment is likely to be more vibrant than one without such support. However, there is a risk that too much non-retail use might affect the important shopping function of the town centre, so the actual mix of uses would need to be carefully assessed.	?	It could be argued that a market-led solution will deliver a more sustainable mix of retail and non-retail uses, which has the potential to adjust over-time to changes in the retail sector.	+				
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		This assessment shows that there is a negative impact on the regeneration of the local economy by leaving the current mix of retail uses in the town centre unchanged. Over time the cumulative impact of these factors is likely to	-	The commercial success and vitality of Wolverton Town centre is supported by a greater mix of retail and community uses which together have the potential to create a more reasons to visit	++	The assessment has shown that public sector/community investment in town centre property maybe one way to achieve a greater mix of uses. However, since the decision to make such	?	Changes to the retail mix in Wolverton Town Centre over the last few years indicate that a market led solution may be slowly delivering the change to the retail mix that Wolverton needs.	?				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Current retail and non-retail uses remain unchanged	Impact	A more diverse retail and non-retail use is supported by planning policy	Impact	The Town Council and other community organisations seek to acquire key buildings in the town centre to achieve a greater mix of uses	Impact	The market creates a more diverse retail and non-retail mix	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
		lead to further decline.		the town and greater overall footfall. The impact on modal shift remains unknown, but with efforts to provide more long-stay parking and measures which mitigate against traffic problems, the overall impact of the policy is positive.		investment is ultimately a political one, and made against a backdrop of cuts to resources, it is difficult to say if in reality public sector investment would ever be a possibility. Community investment maybe more of a realistic option, but the length of time this might take to realise does not make this option a realistic one.		However, overall leaving it to the market to deliver a long-term sustainable solution appears (through the assessment process) to be a more uncertain and therefore risky approach than intervening through planning policy to deliver a solution.					

**Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets**

A site for a street market in The Square will be supported by:

- A. Improvements to the existing highway, signage, public open space and public realm to create a suitable space for a market to take place. Such changes should seek to raise awareness of the heritage of The Square, through for instance appropriate interpretation signage and public art.
- B. Improving physical links between public transport interchange and The Square, supported by appropriate pedestrian signage.
- C. Enabling the provision of semi-permanent pop up shops or kiosks to give a range of retail facilities and support the ongoing viability of the market.
- D. Providing appropriate storage within the town centre to store stalls and other equipment needed to support markets.
- E. Providing appropriate litter and recycling facilities.
- F. Providing public toilets for visitors and traders.
- G. Providing off street long stay (more than four hours) parking to support market trade.
- H. Providing short-term parking for market traders which will allow them to load and re-load at the beginning and end of the market session.

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**Assessment Matrix – Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
		Street market takes place in The Square	Impact	Street market takes place in Church Street	Impact	Street market takes place in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco	Impact	Street market takes place in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road	Impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact
-	Negative impact												
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	The establishment of a regular, high quality street market in The Square is unlikely to have any impact on housing construction, other than being one of a number of factors that makes Wolverton an attractive place to live.	0	The establishment of a regular, high quality street market in Church Street is unlikely to have any impact on housing construction, other than being one of a number of factors that makes Wolverton an attractive place to live.	0	The establishment of a regular, high quality street market in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco is unlikely to have any impact on housing construction, other than being one of a number of factors that makes Wolverton an attractive place to live.	0	The establishment of a regular, high quality street market in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road is unlikely to have any impact on housing construction, other than being one of a number of factors that makes Wolverton an attractive place to live.		The development of the Agora car park would undoubtedly realise new housing units, stimulating the market for housing within Wolverton Town Centre.	+	Some additional flats above shops on Stratford Road could take place as a result of the development of some parts of the Railway Lands. However, if new housing is developed on the Railway lands an oversupply of housing might undermine the conversion of flats above shops to living space.	?
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	A regular market in The Square will improve accessibility to fresh produce, and help to attract shoppers and visitors to the town. The only remaining bank in Wolverton is located in The Square, together with Milton Keynes Christian Foundation who provide services and facilities to the local community. Footfall to both may well increase on market days.	+	Church Street is the location of the Post office in Wolverton, so a market located along a stretch of the street may attract people to make more use of post office services.	?	The Community Centre is located on Stratford Road, and is the main thoroughfare for people coming in and out of the Town. The centre provides a range of activities and services to local people, so locating the market alongside this facility is likely to have positive benefits in terms of access to services and facilities	+	The Town Hall car park is the current location of the Farmers Market which takes place monthly on a Saturday. There is already evidence of people using the Town Hall and Library when they go the Farmers Market, so it is likely that this would continue and that numbers would increase if a new market was in this location.  However, use of the car park on a weekday for a regular market may have a negative impact on the ability of people to use the Town Hall and Library.		Development of new housing on the Agora car park will give new residents access to services and facilities in the town centre. It is unlikely to improve the accessibility of services to existing residents, although a greater population will create an increased pressure for such services to be retained.	+	Development of parts of the Railway Lands should hopefully result in improved links across Stratford Road into the town centre, increasing footfall and improving access to services and facilities for existing and new residents.  However, without clarity on where access to and from the site will be created, it is difficult to say for certain if the impact will be positive.	?

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Street market takes place in The Square	Impact	Street market takes place in Church Street	Impact	Street market takes place in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco	Impact	Street market takes place in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road	Impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites		A market in The Square will make regular use of a public space which is currently underutilised, except for community events. Urban renaissance will be supported by a key attractor such as a regular market in the town centre, especially if located in The Square which is often considered one of Wolverton’s hidden secrets.	+	A market on Church Street would either be located on Agora owned land (as it currently is) or on the highway. The Agora owners are unlikely to agree to a rival market being established to the one they operate every Friday so the most likely location would be the western end of Church Street. However, this would create issues for residents living on the street, who may not have easy access to their homes on market days, and businesses many of whom rely on customers being able to park outside their business premises. Overall a market located on a highway does not meet the sustainability objective of making efficient use of under-utilised assets, and is unlikely to promote the regeneration of the town if it creates conflict with businesses and residents.	-	The car park alongside the Community Centre is often full and whilst it borders unused brownfield land on the railway works site, it is not in itself an under-used asset. The location of the car park makes it feel quite “on the edge” of the Town Centre, so the potential for this site to reinvigorate the town is limited.	-	The Town Hall car park is heavily used by visitors to the Library and Town Council, so does not represent an under-used resource. It is at a major gateway into the Town and so locating the market would support a change in the way that Wolverton is viewed by visitors to the town. It is not, however, in the heart of the Town Centre, and it could be argued that people do not need to be attracted to this location, which they already use. Locating the market more centrally in the Town centre would have the advantage of encouraging footfall from the Town Hall to the central retail area.		Development of the car park will result in more efficient use of the brownfield site on Church Street, and should go some way to encouraging a renaissance in the town centre.	+	Development of the railway lands is likely to radically alter the character and appearance of this part of the Town centre. As the “shopfront” to Wolverton, any changes to Stratford Road are likely to be transformational in terms of how Wolverton is seen by those who “pass through”, so will have a major impact on the urban renaissance of the town.	+

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets – continued**

Key		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6						
-	Negative impact	Street market takes place in The Square	Impact	Street market takes place in Church Street	Impact	Street market takes place in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco	Impact	Street market takes place in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road	Impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport		The Square is 2 minutes from the central Agora bus stop on Church Street, and which proper signage bus users could easily do their shopping and walk back to the bus stop. The market also has the potential to attract people who live, but may not currently shop, in the town, reducing car journeys, and promoting sustainable modes of travel.	+	If the market was located on the highway to the Eastern end of Church Street road closures would have to be instigated, and would create issues with bus routes. Given that the market has the potential to attract more people into the town by bus, this location would be contrary to promoting sustainable modes of travel.	-	The Community Centre car park is located alongside a number of bus stops, and this location would therefore have the advantage of attracting people who travel more sustainably.	+	The Town Hall car park is close to the bus interchange on Church Street, so with proper signage it would be possible to attract people from the bus stops to the market. At a major road junction, this location is also clearly seen by bus passengers, people walking to the railway station and cyclists.		Development on Church Street has the potential to deliver the comprehensive improvement scheme that local people favour, allowing for bus interchange facilities to be created, pedestrian and cycle access to be improved.	++	Development on the Railway lands on the other side of Stratford Road should help realise further bus infrastructure, including new pedestrians and cycle links into the town centre. If local aspirations for a sustainable development not based around the car can be realised, then the potential impact on modal shift could be significant. However, with the detail behind such a development uncertain, it is difficult to be certain that the potential for a positive benefit to transport in and out of the town centre will be realised.	?
Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal		A new, regular market held in the traditional "market square" of the town will make a positive contribution to the town's heritage, and could be the vehicle for exploring Wolverton's links with its rural hinterland.	+	Use of Church Street for a regular produce market has no historical basis, so there will be few opportunities to enhance the town's heritage.	0	Income from renting out the car park for a regular market could be used to preserve the Old Bath House.	+	The Town Hall is located in what used to be the "Market Hal" for Wolverton, so locating the market in the car park will help to enhance this aspect of the Town's heritage.		Redevelopment of the car park with buildings which are more sympathetic to the heritage of the town has the potential to enhance the conservation area. However, without development of the Agora building itself it will be difficult to fully resolve the impact of the 1970's development on the	+	There is a local aspiration for any development of the Railway lands to result in the preservation and conservation of the existing heritage assets. The principle issue for Stratford Road will be the extent to which the railway works wall remains intact or have "openings" through it into any new	?

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Street market takes place in The Square	Impact	Street market takes place in Church Street	Impact	Street market takes place in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco	Impact	Street market takes place in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road	Impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
										town centre.		development. Without easy access to the shops and services on Stratford Road, the impact of development on the site is unlikely to have a regenerative impact on Stratford Road.	
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	A regular market held in The Square will improve the viability of existing businesses by attracting new people to visit this part of Wolverton. Many of the businesses have struggled for many years because of the location of The Square behind the Agora, and the lack of direct links with Church Street and Stratford Road.	+	Locating a market on Church Street may detract rather than enhance the vitality of the town centre, by adversely affecting parking and bus traffic into the town.	-	Use of the car park at the community centre for a regular market will impact negatively on the parking available to community centre users, although it is possible to use the Tesco car park. Although not officially used by shoppers to Stratford Road and local traders, the car park does get heavily used, and the knock-on impact of a car park closure may adversely affect the vitality of neighbouring businesses.	-	Use of the car park on a weekday for a regular market may have a negative impact on the ability of people to use the Town Hall and Library, which may adversely affect the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. This location also fails to draw people into the heart of the town centre, so fails to fulfil the requirement to support existing businesses in the town.		Redevelopment of the car park is likely to negatively affect businesses in the short-term, with parking and access to shops difficult during the construction phase. In the longer term, more people living in the centre of Wolverton will increase footfall to local retailers, improving the viability of the town centre.	+	Development of the Railway lands has the potential to promote development of new shops and businesses on Stratford Road, thereby improving the overall vitality of this part of the town centre. Access to and from the site will dictate whether or not this positive impact will extend to other parts of the town.	?
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		The assessment has shown that locating a market in The Square has the potential to reinvigorate this forgotten part of the Town Centre, using an under-utilised public space on a weekly basis and supporting the use of local shops and services.	++	The assessment has demonstrated that a Church Street location for the market raises a number of significant problems, not least closure of the highway with the knock-on impact on buses and parking.	-	Although there are advantages to the community centre location, the fact that the site is on the edge of the existing town centre, and that there are already conflicts over use of the car park mean that it is not the ideal location.	?	The Town Hall car park has been shown to work as a location for the Farmers Market, but this is at the weekend, and therefore has limited impact on use of the Town Hall and Library. Regular use of the car park during the week is likely to have a far		The assessment shows that development of the Agora car park is likely to have a positive impact on Church Street, promoting wider regeneration and development on this key shopping street. The impact is likely to be more positive if the	+	The assessment has shown that although development of the Railway lands should ultimately be positive for the regeneration of Stratford Road, it is dependent upon the extent to which the new development is physically linked to the existing town centre.	?

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W5 – Supporting Street Markets – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Street market takes place in The Square	Impact	Street market takes place in Church Street	Impact	Street market takes place in the Community Centre car park alongside Tesco	Impact	Street market takes place in the Town Hall car park off Stratford Road	Impact	Development on Church Street only (linked to the development of the car park)	Impact	Development on Stratford Road only (linked to the development of part of the Railway Works site)	Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
								more profound effect on use of the facilities in the Town Hall, which makes this location potentially difficult to achieve.		Agora building was also redeveloped.		This will be unknown until a development framework has been prepared for the site. Without clarity on access issues between the site and the town centre it is difficult to tell if the overall impact of the development will be positive.	

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**Policy W6 – Supporting and promoting small, independent trade**

This policy enables the provision of small units (which could include lockable units) of up to 50 square metres (gross):

**Opportunities will be sought through:**

- A planning consent/section 106 planning obligation linked to any major redevelopment.
- The conversion of existing larger retail units.

**A. Provision through major development**

In the case of provision through a major development, the following requirements shall apply:

- For schemes involving over 1,000 square metres of development the provision of small shops will be required subject to viability, with the number of units relative to the size and scale of the development.
- Once provided in a new development, planning permission would be required for any proposal to combine smaller units into larger units.

**B. Conversion of existing larger units**

Planning applications for conversion of existing retail premises into small affordable shops/lockable units should include:

- A detailed internal floor-plan identifying the floorspace for small premises.
- The maximum size of each unit within the proposed development.

**C. Affordability**

Subject to viability, a proportion of the small shops provided through this policy should have affordable rents to support start-up businesses and encourage local entrepreneurship.

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**Assessment Matrix – Policy W6 – Supporting and promoting small, independent trade**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
		The public sector runs and manages a small business incubator facility including small shops	Impact	The Agora remains and is marketed as start-up accommodation for new businesses	Impact	Provision of small shops as part of a major development	Impact	Provision of small shops by conversion of larger units	Impact	Small shops units provided through the policy have affordable rents	Impact	Small shops units provided through the policy have market rents	Impact
-	Negative impact												
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	The provision of small business space in the town is unlikely to have a direct impact on housing construction, other than making Wolverton an attractive place to live for those who want to start a business	0	The re-branding of the Agora as start-up retail space is unlikely to have a direct impact on housing construction, other than making Wolverton an attractive place to live for those who want to start a business	0	Any major redevelopment in the town centre is likely to result in new housing being constructed, alongside new retail and commercial premises.	+	There is a finite number of larger shop units in Wolverton which it would be possible to convert into smaller units, but if this were to take place it may also be possible to refurbish or create living accommodation.	+	Affordable business premises may attract people to live in Wolverton, but are unlikely to promote housing development.	0	Small shops units in the town centre may be one of the reasons people chose to live in Wolverton, but are unlikely to promote housing development.	0
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton's services and facilities	A business incubator facility is likely to include businesses which are providing services alongside retail shops. This may help close the gap in terms of services available in the town, such as printing.	+	If changes were made to the Agora as part of the re-branding process, it is possible that new services and facilities could be provided within the by start-up businesses. However, it is questionable whether the current owners would make any decision to invest in the building whilst redevelopment is being supported by Milton Keynes Council.	?	Major development in the town centre which results in new housing, retail and commercial premises is likely to draw more people into the town, who can then make use of the services and facilities the town has to offer.	++	Conversion of larger premises into smaller premises will result in more businesses being located in the town, potentially offering new services and facilities.	+	Small, independent shops with affordable rents may attract businesses that have the potential to provide a new services and facilities to the local community. Without affordable rents these businesses may never develop.	+	Small, independent shop units may attract businesses that have the potential to provide new services and facilities to the local community. It could be argued that if the business is robust enough to pay a market rent it will make more of a long-term impact on the provision of a service to the local community.	+
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton's environmental assets through brownfield sites	If the business incubator unit could occupy empty premises in the town centre it may go some way to enlivening the high street and encouraging the much sought after regenerative process. However, it would very much depend on how the scheme is delivered, marketed and managed, and the public sector may not be best placed to deliver what entrepreneurs	?	It is questionable whether re-branding the Agora in this way would result in any more efficient use of the land, since such units could be provided with much less space. If the Agora remains in Wolverton, the town is unlikely to undergo comprehensive regeneration.	?	Any major development in the town centre would have to be located on brownfield and underutilised land on the Agora site. Redevelopment of the Agora would transform the centre of town and encourage an urban renaissance.	++	When the Agora was threatened with closure a number of years ago, several businesses decided to relocate to premises on the high street which they shared. This arrangement enabled both businesses to be retained in the town whilst making efficient use of a shop unit	++	Wolverton has already benefitted from new businesses developing in the town due to the relative affordability of the rents. With major development a risk that, unless specifically protected, affordable premises will no longer exist. This will discourage local people and people	+	Wolverton has already benefitted from new businesses developing in the town due to a range of unit sizes being available. Smaller units are mostly cheaper even if the market rent applies. With major development a possibility, making Wolverton a more desirable place to do	-

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W6 – Supporting and promoting small, independent trade – continued**

Key		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6						
-	Negative impact	<b>The public sector runs and manages a small business incubator facility including small shops</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>The Agora remains and is marketed as start-up accommodation for new businesses</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Provision of small shops as part of a major development</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Provision of small shops by conversion of larger units</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Small shops units provided through the policy have affordable rents</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Small shops units provided through the policy have market rents</b>	<b>Impact</b>
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
		require.						which was too large for their needs and budget.		from outside the area to start businesses in Wolverton.		business, it is possible that the market rents even for small units will increase substantially, discouraging local people and people from outside the area to start businesses in Wolverton.	
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	If the business incubator space provides goods and services not already on offer in the town, it may prevent residents from using the car to access services elsewhere. This would support a modal shift.	+	If a rebranded Agora provided goods and services not already on offer in the town, it may prevent residents from using the car to access services elsewhere. This would support a modal shift. However, it is questionable whether the current owners would make any decision to invest in the building whilst redevelopment is being supported by Milton Keynes Council.	?	Major development is likely to have a positive impact on the willingness of local people to shop locally and on the bus, cycle and pedestrian links in the town centre.	++	More businesses operating in the town from existing, converted premises will provide more services to local people and support local shopping by sustainable means.	+	If affordable rents enable the provision of new goods and services in Wolverton town centre which local people can walk or cycle too, they may prevent car journeys outside of Wolverton. However the nature of the services provided are crucial in effecting this change.	?	If small shop units provide new goods and services in the town centre which local people can walk or cycle too, they may well prevent car journeys outside of Wolverton. However the nature of the services provided are crucial in effecting this change.	?
	Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	Any building refurbished by the public sector as an incubator space is likely to meet all the required standards and enhance the conservation area.	+	Even with investment, the Agora building will continue to detract from the Conservation Area and undermine the contribution of listed buildings to the local environment.	-	Any major redevelopment of the town centre will be guided by planning policy and advice from Milton Keynes Council which will ensure that it is in keeping with the Conservation area.	++	Owners willing to convert larger premises for small, independent businesses maybe more inclined to invest time and energy in creating an attractive environment for shoppers and visitors alike. With appropriate support and guidance such conversions may well enhance the Conservation area.	+	The affordability of a shop unit is unlikely to impact upon the conservation area other than by enabling those occupying the unit to have more funds available to maintain it to a higher standard.	+	With higher rents and potentially lower profits, the ability of small shop owners to look after their shop premises may be constrained.	?

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W6 – Supporting and promoting small, independent trade – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	<b>The public sector runs and manages a small business incubator facility including small shops</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>The Agora remains and is marketed as start-up accommodation for new businesses</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Provision of small shops as part of a major development</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Provision of small shops by conversion of larger units</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Small shops units provided through the policy have affordable rents</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Small shops units provided through the policy have market rents</b>	<b>Impact</b>
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	Public sector investment in the town may encourage the private sector to invest, thereby increasing the vitality and viability of the town. However, it may have the opposite effect of indicating that the town is “in need” of support and so not a worthy place to invest.	?	It is unlikely that the Agora – even refurbished and with a new direction – could contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre, since it has (over many years) detracted from both.	-	Redevelopment of the Town centre, including the provision of small shop units which will potentially attract niche independent businesses will do much to enhance the vitality and viability of Wolverton Town Centre. A development which comprised only large retail units may not have the same attraction to shoppers, and wouldn’t provide an opportunity for local entrepreneurs to develop their business ideas.	++	More businesses will hopefully create more footfall and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. Small, independent businesses often offer specialist services which are a positive draw to local people and visitors.	+	Affordable small shops provided through major development or conversion of larger units will provide a “springboard” from which businesses can start and grow. This in turn will stimulate the local market for larger business units, improving the vitality of the whole town centre.	+	It could be argued that if a business is robust enough to pay a market rent it will make more of a long-term impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. However, with 4 out of 5 start-ups failing in the first year it could be that rents are only one of the many factors affecting success. The key to the vitality of many town centres is a range of unit sizes and costs which enable entrepreneurs to start, grow and prosper. If the market rent for small units is too high for start-ups the development of local businesses may be curtailed.	-
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		Although the provision of small shops through public sector investment is in theory possible, it is unlikely with current cuts to resources that this could be achieved. It is also uncertain whether such investment would signal success or failure in market terms, and whether units could be delivered of sufficient quality to match the requirement of the market.	?	The assessment has shown that even if the Agora was re-branded offering small retail space to aspiring entrepreneurs, the building would still detract from the Conservation Area, and represent an inefficient use of a brownfield asset.	-	The assessment as shown that the provision of small retail units as part of any major redevelopment of the Wolverton Town Centre will enhance the sustainability of the town.	++	The assessment shows that the conversion of larger shop units to offer small affordable shops offers sustainable way forward for some property owners and businesses.		Affordable rents will support the development of new start-up businesses in the town centre, providing new services to local people, and stimulating the vitality of the retail market in the longer-term.	+	Small shop units with market rents may be at risk of becoming unaffordable to start up businesses if development of the Agora site and Railway works site results in gentrification of the town.	?

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**Policy W7 – Shopfronts Design, Advertising and Security****A. Shopfront Design**

The design of a shopfront will take into account the wider relationship with the surrounding built environment. Proposals for shopfront design (including refurbishing existing shopfronts) will

- 1 Be appropriate in proportion, materials and details to maintain and reflect the style and characteristics of the Conservation Area and neighbouring properties.
- 2 Enhance the buildings character and compliment adjacent shop fronts.
- 3 Retain original ornamental mouldings and architectural details – cornices, fascia's, pilasters, mullions, and stallrisers – which provide visual interest.
- 4 Avoid large unbroken areas of glass in favour of vertically subdivided areas based on the character of the existing building and local/Victorian/Edwardian architectural styles.
- 5 Recess the entrance door back from the edge of the pavement, and have an appropriate style of door serving upper floors if this is part of the original shopfront.
- 6 Avoid canopies and blinds where they obscure architectural features, and where in numbers they can have a disruptive effect on the street scene.

**B. Signage and Advertisement**

Signage and advertisements will be

- 1 Respectful of the character of the building and Conservation area.
- 2 Located at fascia level.
- 3 Respectful of the architectural features of the building including first floor windows and shop front details.
- 4 Designed using a style of materials and lettering appropriate to the character of the building, whilst accommodating the branding needs of the business.

Be lit through discrete external lighting. Any hanging and projecting signs should be located at fascia level and should not harm the appearance of the rest of the shop front. Brackets and arms should suit the character of the building. Projecting signs need to respect the walking space and provide sufficient vertical clearance.

**C. Security**

Security shutters should be:

- 1 Link or lattice type and contained inside the shop so that the shop front and contents are still visible after the shop is closed.
- 2 The colour of the shutters should not detract from the character of the building or the area.
- 3 Security glazing is an alternative which can be unobtrusive and effective.

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**Assessment Matrix – Policy W7 – Shop Fronts**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
		Shop Fronts remain unchanged	Impact	Original shop fronts are protected and guidance introduced for signage and security	Impact	Shop Fronts are subject to piecemeal change by owners without any controls	Impact	Funding is secured for grants to support the retention of original fronts but without any planning policy in place	Impact		Impact		Impact
-	Negative impact												
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
SA objectives	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	The poor appearance of the town centre is partly created by the neglect of original shop fronts and addition of modern shop fronts, and has a negative impact on the local housing market.	-	Retention of original and historic shop fronts will help to create a more distinctive and attractive town centre, which we expect to be a key driver in promoting housing development in the Wolverton area.	+	There are many examples within the town centre and across Wolverton of shop premises which have been converted into housing. Some of these examples – especially in the town centre – are of very poor quality. It is not clear whether the Conservation Area status alone is sufficient to protect shop fronts from piecemeal change if they are converted into housing.	?	With funding in place to support the retention of original shop fronts it will be easier to ensure that the conversion of shops to housing is done in a sympathetic way. However, when the grants run out it is not clear whether Conservation area status alone is enough to protect shop fronts.	?				
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities	No particular change from status quo would occur	0	Putting further controls in place to address the poor appearance of shop fronts in the town centre will potentially promote more visitors to the town, who would be able to take advantage of the services and facilities available.	+	The more attractive a town centre is, the more shoppers it will attract and the more likely it is to be a hub for services and facilities. Piecemeal change to historic shop fronts will undermine the quality of the local environment, put shoppers off and have a negative impact on the accessibility of services and facilities.	-	A town that shows signs of investment will be a more attractive place to visit and shop and will be the chosen location for services and facilities. An example of this is when Nationwide Building Society decided to close their Wolverton branch and keep their branch in the attractive market town of Stony Stratford open. Grants for improvements to shop fronts will give an initial boost to the appearance of the	?				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W7 – Shop Fronts – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Shop Fronts remain unchanged	Impact	Original shop fronts are protected and guidance introduced for signage and security	Impact	Shop Fronts are subject to piecemeal change by owners without any controls	Impact	Funding is secured for grants to support the retention of original fronts but without any planning policy in place	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
								town centre, but the turnover of properties and the finite resources available through a grant scheme will not be enough to sustain this change.					
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites	Neglected shop fronts exacerbate the decline in the urban environment and the inefficient use of assets and land.	-	Having a mechanism to encourage shop owners to maintain their shop fronts will support an urban renaissance in Wolverton Town Centre, making it a distinctive and attractive place to shop and visit.	++	Changes carried out in a piecemeal way are unlikely to transform Wolverton’s fortunes and promote a sense of urban renewal. Original shop fronts have much to contribute to the character of the town, and unless looked after properly represent untapped assets for the owners and local community.	-	A grant scheme designed to support owners of shops to improve the quality of their shop fronts will support Wolverton’s regeneration process, and ensure valuable assets are secured for future generations. However, the grant scheme would need to facilitate ongoing care and maintenance by shop owners to be successful in the longer term.	?				
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	The current appearance of the shop fronts in the town centre is unlikely to have a positive or negative impact on modal shift.	0	Creating a more distinctive and attractive town centre will potentially have a negative effect on modal shift, by creating more car-based traffic. However, Wolverton is fortunate to have good public transport connections, and efforts will be made to encourage visitors to travel to the town	?	An unattractive town centre will result in local people choosing to travel elsewhere to shop, potentially increasing unsustainable modes of travel.	-	An attractive town centre will do much to encourage local residents to shop locally, reducing car journeys through a shift to walking and cycling. However, upkeep of premises – without grants – is key to keeping people shopping in the town, and it is difficult to tell if owners would	?				



**Assessment Matrix – Policy W7 – Shop Fronts – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Shop Fronts remain unchanged	Impact	Original shop fronts are protected and guidance introduced for signage and security	Impact	Shop Fronts are subject to piecemeal change by owners without any controls	Impact	Funding is secured for grants to support the retention of original fronts but without any planning policy in place	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
				more sustainably. The policy is partly about encouraging the large number of people from the outlying rural villages and neighbouring Milton Keynes estates to stay longer in the town and spend more money.				continue to look after their premises after the grants had run out					
	Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	It is unlikely that any significant improvements will be made to conserve and enhance shop fronts or the conservation area with the current planning policies in place.	-	The focus of the shop fronts policy is conserving and enhancing historic shops and other buildings in the conservation area. By safeguarding what is left of the distinctive architecture of the town centre we expect to reinforce the character of Wolverton and support the strong identity the town already has as a the first purpose built Railway Town.	++	Piecemeal change is unlikely to have a positive impact on the conservation area.	-	Improvements to shop fronts achieved through a grant scheme will initially have a positive impact on the conservation area. However, ongoing repair and maintenance of the shop fronts is unlikely to take place without ongoing financial support unless owners are required to do so by planning policy.	?				
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	The current poor appearance of most of the shop fronts detracts from the vitality and viability of the town centre.	-	A high standard of shop fronts and advertisements creates an enjoyable environment for visitors and shoppers, which is good for the vitality of the town centre and commercial success.	++	Piecemeal change to shop fronts is unlikely to improve the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.	-	Sustainable improvements to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre will not be delivered by a short term grants scheme, although there may be a superficial improvement depending on the	-				

**Assessment Matrix – Policy W7 – Shop Fronts – continued**

Key		Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
-	Negative impact	Shop Fronts remain unchanged	Impact	Original shop fronts are protected and guidance introduced for signage and security	Impact	Shop Fronts are subject to piecemeal change by owners without any controls	Impact	Funding is secured for grants to support the retention of original fronts but without any planning policy in place	Impact		Impact		Impact
?	Uncertain impact												
0	Neutral impact												
+	Positive impact												
<b>CONCLUSION</b>								number of businesses that agree to participate and improve their shop fronts.					
		The distinctiveness of the Conservation Area will continue to be lost if unsympathetic changes continue to be made to shop fronts and modern, inappropriate shop fronts installed. This will have a negative impact on the attractiveness and commercial success of the Town Centre.	-	The assessment shows that introducing a policy to protect original shop fronts, promote a high quality of design in modern shop fronts and provide guidance on signage and security will have a positive impact on the town centre. Incentivising owners to make improvements through clear guidance and financial support will be key to the success of the policy, and will form part of the delivery section of the Plan. Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy will also be crucial.	+	The assessment has shown that piecemeal change led by the owners of shop premises in the town will not support sustainable development of the town centre.	-	A grant scheme available to shop owners to improve their premises may deliver some initial benefit to the town, but the assessment has shown that it is unlikely to be a sustainable solution to the long-term conservation and preservation of original shop fronts in the town.	?				

## Summary of the assessment process

5.32 Having looked at the sustainability implications of each policy in turn, the table below summarises the cumulative impact of the plan policies on the sustainability objectives. The summary illustrates that overall the policies have a positive impact on the sustainability of Wolverton Town Centre by:

- Facilitating the development of new housing which meets local housing needs and improves the viability of the town centre.
- Improving the sustainability of town centre services and facilities through the creation of new links and new amenities.
- Bringing forward redevelopment of key brownfield sites which facilitates regeneration and sustainability outcomes.
- Promoting sustainable modes of transport through the development of new cycle and pedestrian links.
- Establishing clear urban design criteria and promoting high quality new buildings which complement the Conservation Area.
- Promoting the regeneration and sustainable development of the local retail and business offer.

5.33 Table 3 is followed by Table 4 that summarises the changes made to each plan policy as a result of the sustainability appraisal process.

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Assessment Matrix – Summary		Policy							Summary of impact
		W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	
<b>Key</b>		The Agora site redevelopment	General Town Centre improvements	The Railway Works site	Town Centre Diversity – Ground Floor Uses	Supporting Street Markets	Supporting and promoting small, independent trade	Shopfronts Design, Advertising and Security	
-	Negative impact								
?	Uncertain impact								
0	Neutral impact								
+	Positive impact								
<b>SA/SEA objectives</b>									
Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home		+	?	+	+	0	0	+	+
Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities		+	++	+	++	+	+	+	+
Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites		++	0	++	++	+	++	++	++
Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport		+	+	0	?	+	+	?	+
Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal		++	+	+	+	+	+	++	+
Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre		++	++	++	++	+	+	++	++

Table 3: Assessment Matrix Summary

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**Summary of Mitigation Measures**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W1	Agora Site Policy	<p>The extent of development that should take place on the Agora car park has been an issue of discussion during the plan making process, and an issue considered through the appraisal process. Following the pre-submission consultation, when a minority of people were keen to see the Agora retained, the option of retention and part development of the current building was appraised together with the idea of retaining the building as a leisure-only venue.</p> <p>Following the adoption of the Agora Development Brief, the Agora Site policy was amended to ensure references was made to the planning and design principles in the brief.</p> <p>Finally, the risk of the building not being redeveloped despite attempts to bring forward a redevelopment was also considered during the appraisal process.</p>	<p>Policy W1 now clarifies the extent of the development along Church Street and which references the Agora Development Brief throughout.</p> <p>All options for the site have been fully appraised and redevelopment found to be the most sustainable option.</p>

**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W2	Town Centre Developments	<p>This policy initially included had an “improvement” rather than “development” focus, which has changed during the course of the plan-making process.</p> <p>The pre-submission consultation draft included a policy on refusing permission for further hot food takeaway use on Stratford Road.</p> <p>As a result of the support expressed by local people for this part of the policy, and wider concerns expressed about the mix of retail in the town, this element was removed from W2 and a new policy – Town Centre Retail – was devised.</p> <p>Following external advice received in May 2014, further changes were made to the policy to ensure a focus on development and land-use issues.</p> <p>In making these changes, the relative merits of development taking place in the four different areas of the town centre – Church Street, The Square, Stratford Road and Glyn Square – was appraised.</p> <p>This process helped clarify that development in all parts of the town centre was likely to improve the overall sustainability of the town.</p>	<p>Policy W2 now has a focus on development rather than a focus on improvement, and relates to issues of land-use not management.</p> <p>The appraisal process has demonstrated that development in all areas of the town is likely to contribute to the sustainability of Wolverton town centre.</p>



**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W3	The Railway Works Site	<p>Community concerns about the extent of the development on the Railway Works site have been the focus of the appraisal process, together with issues regarding the nature of the development, for example whether or not the site remains for employment use only or is a mixed-use development.</p> <p>Changes made to the policy have sought to clarify the process which will be used to masterplan the site, and this has involved consultation with both the landowner, planning agent acting on their behalf and Milton Keynes Council.</p> <p>Other changes to the policy have been largely presentational, with a series of themes identified to ensure greater clarity.</p> <p>Final changes were made to the policy during the Autumn of 2014 to reflect the beginning of the St Modwen led masterplanning process.</p> <p>These changes have focussed on ensuring a comprehensive approach to the regeneration of the site is achieved, whilst acknowledging the timescale the developer is working too.</p>	<p>Policy W3 includes a clear aspiration for a comprehensive master planning process for the site, which may include the preparation of a Development Framework for the site.</p> <p>The policy is focussed around five clear themes: Linkages and movement Conservation, Public amenity, New development and Infrastructure.</p>

**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W4	Town Centre Diversity	<p>Following the Pre-submission consultation in June 2013, a policy was devised to meet community concerns about the mix of retail, protection of small shops and aspiration for a vibrant street market. Initially called the Town Centre Retail Policy, it went out to consultation in November 2013.</p> <p>The community welcomed the policy addition, but concerns were expressed by Milton Keynes Council regarding deliverability.</p> <p>External advice was sought between April and May 2014 and the policy was further amended, and split into three parts.</p> <p>The evidence base for Town Centre Diversity policy was also strengthened and wording of policy simplified.</p> <p>Concerns over the complexity of the policy and deliverability were once again raised by Milton Keynes Council during the pre-submission consultation in July/August 2014.</p> <p>External advice was sought, and further evidence gathered. The tables within the policy were also split and simplified.</p>	Policy W4 is a deliverable percentage based town centre mix policy which is based upon a reasoned justification and clear evidence-base.

**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W5	Supporting Street Markets	<p>Support for street markets was not explicitly included in the first draft plan that went out to consultation in the summer of 2013. However, the feedback from this consultation was that establishment of a vibrant street market was important to the community.</p> <p>This led to general support for street markets being included in the Town Centre Retail policy drafted in the Autumn of 2013. Re-drafting of this policy in the Spring of 2014, led to the decision to split off that part of the retail policy which dealt with support for street markets into a separate policy.</p> <p>This decision was made to reflect the community's desire to see a vibrant street market return to the town, and to emphasize the importance of the policy.</p> <p>At the time the policy became a stand-alone part of the plan, appraisal work was carried out to assess the various for a location of the market.</p> <p>This helped to clarify the most sustainable location for a market which could be implemented pre-major development.</p>	<p>Policy W5 enables the necessary infrastructure to be provided to support the establishment of a street market in The Square.</p> <p>The policy has wide community support, and can is not dependent upon major redevelopment taking place, making it a quick-win for the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W6	Supporting and promoting small, independent trade	<p>Support for small shops was not explicitly included in the first draft plan that went out to consultation in the summer of 2013. However, the feedback from this consultation was that support for small shops was an important issue to the local community. This led to it being included in the Town Centre Retail policy drafted in the Autumn of 2013.</p> <p>Re-drafting of this policy in the Spring of 2014, led to the decision to put support for small shops into a separate policy</p> <p>The appraisal work carried out at this time helped to clarify the various mechanisms for delivering small shops, and to explore the issue of affordability.</p> <p>Further evidence was also obtained about size of retail units in the town, and this helped strengthen the policy, ensuring that the ambition of affordable start-up premises were proportionate and subject to viability.</p>	<p>Policy W6 provides guidance on the provision of small shops as part of a major development or conversion.</p> <p>It is based upon community desires to support independent traders and evidence of existing data about the availability of different sized retail units in the town.</p>

**Summary of Mitigation Measures – continued**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes made during plan-making process</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
W7	Shopfronts Design, Advertising and Security	<p>The shopfronts policy was included in the plan as a result of concern expressed during the pre-submission consultation process about the loss of historic shopfronts in the town centre. It was initially included in the Town Centre Retail Policy, but split into a separate policy in the Spring of 2014 to ensure that it had a greater weight within the plan.</p> <p>The re-drafting process did involve some consideration being given to development of a Supplementary Planning Document being prepared specifically on shopfronts, but this option was rejected following advice from Milton Keynes Council.</p> <p>The appraisal process enabled a number of other options to be considered, including the proposal to secure grant funding to support shopfronts improvement but without having any planning policy in place.</p> <p>The appraisal process helped to demonstrate that the most sustainable option for conserving shopfronts was to provide clear advice and guidance on shopfront design, advertising and security.</p>	<p>Policy W7 provides clear guidance to businesses operating in the town around design, signage and security of their shopfronts.</p> <p>The appraisal process has demonstrated that it is a proportionate response to the loss of a heritage asset and is helping to preserve the integrity of the conservation area.</p>

Table 4: Summary of Mitigation Measures

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## 6. MONITORING FACTORS

- 6.1 As outlined in the scoping report, a series of monitoring factors have been identified which will be used to monitor and review achievement of the SA/SEA objectives and plan objectives and policies.
- 6.2 Some of the monitoring factors have been chosen because the data is already collected as a matter of course by Milton Keynes Council, for instance the number of completed housing units per site allocation.
- 6.3 Other data is very specific to Wolverton Town Centre and will need to be collected regularly by the Town Council via the Town Benchmarking Survey which was completed for the first time in 2012.
- 6.4 The focus for monitoring is on the Agora site and the general Town Centre improvements. There is little specific detail included for the Railway Works site as the detail of the redevelopment will not be known until the planning application is submitted in late December 2014.
- 6.5 Full details of the proposed monitoring targets are in Appendix 3.

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## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The sustainability appraisal process has supported and strengthened the Neighbourhood Development Plan, helping to ensure that the policies and projects which form part of the plan support the aspirations of the community for sustainable redevelopment of the town centre.
- 7.2 Concerns expressed by a minority of the community, that it would be better to retain and refurbish the Agora building, have been addressed through the appraisal process, with the preferred policy of redevelopment also being appraised as the most sustainable option.
- 7.3 General town centre development, especially those designed to improve ease of movement and routes for pedestrians and cyclists, have been shown to have the potential to strengthen an already “walkable” town, future-proofing Wolverton and preparing the community for a time when reliance on the car may no longer be an option.
- 7.4 The sustainability implications of redeveloping parts of the Railway Works has also been carefully assessed, with conservation of the Victorian/Edwardian buildings on the site being highlighted as both a community and sustainability priority. The outcome of the assessment has also provided reassurance that the site has the potential to contribute to the sustainability of the town rather than detracting from it.
- 7.5 Supporting a diversity of uses within the town centre through planning policy has been shown to be the most effective and sustainable way to improve the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. The assessment process has also demonstrated that the provision of small retail units as part of any major redevelopment will enhance the sustainability of the town centre. By enabling the establishment of a street market in The Square, the Neighbourhood Plan promotes more frequent use of a much liked public space, enhancing footfall and supporting the sustainability of businesses in this forgotten part of the town centre.
- 7.6 Finally, the assessment process had demonstrated that protecting historic shopfronts in the town centre and promoting a high quality of design in modern shop fronts will have a positive impact on the attractiveness and commercial success of the town centre.

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**Appendix 1****Timetable of plan development**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stage of process</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
February 2011	Application submitted to be a Fronrunner Neighbourhood Plan area.	Application submitted by Wolverton Steering Group (Neighbourhood Forum)
May 2011	Notification that Wolverton's bid to be a Fronrunner had been successful.	
September 2011	Support secured from The Princes Foundation	Funded by DCLG
November 2011	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee established.	Led by Neighbourhood Forum
January 2012	Meeting with major landowners	Constraints established
January/ February 2012	3 day Neighbourhood Planning workshop takes place led by The Princes' Foundation	
April 2012	Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council became the relevant body for the Neighbourhood Plan and Steering Committee Terms of Reference modified to recognise it reports to Town Council.	Neighbourhood Planning Regulations come into force
May 2012	Application submitted by Town Council for plan area designation followed by a six week consultation carried out by Milton Keynes Council	
July 2012	Community consultation takes place on options for the Agora site and ideas for improvements to traffic movement in the town centre.	
September 2012	Neighbourhood Plan area designated by Milton Keynes Council.	Figure 1 shows the extent of the plan area boundary.
December 2012	Neighbourhood Plan survey launched to clarify preferred options and secure support for draft objectives.	
January 2013	SEA Scoping report prepared based upon work to-date.	
February to March 2013	Responses to SEA Scoping report inform drafting of SA/SEA.	
March to April 2013	Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan written.	
May – July 2013	Pre-submission consultation takes place on the (first) draft plan	
August to October 2013	Revisions made the draft plan following the consultation	
October to November 2013	Additional consultation takes place on the retail policies added to the plan	

**Timetable of plan development**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stage of process</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
January to March 2014	Changes made to the retail policies to reflect the statutory and community feedback	
April 2014	Independent planning consultant advice sought on the retail policies	
May 2014	Healthcheck carried out by independent consultant on the plan and SA	
June 2014	Revisions made to the plan and SA based on consultant advice	
July 2014	Town Council agree to further six week period of pre-submission consultation on the revised plan	
August 2014	Responses to consultation collated.	
September	Changes to the Neighbourhood Plan and SA made	
October 2014	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee meets to discuss revisions to Policy W3 which are subsequently agreed by the Town Council	
October 2014	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee meets to discuss revisions to Policy W4. which are subsequently agreed by the Town Council.	
23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014	Town Council agree to submit the final plan and SA subject to minor changes being made and further evidence being added to support Policy W4.	
November 2014	Final Plan and accompanying documents submitted to Milton Keynes Council.	

*Table 5: Timetable of stages leading up to submission to Milton Keynes Council*

**Appendix 1****Timetable of plan development**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stage of process</b>
November 2014	Final Neighbourhood Plan to be published by Milton Keynes Council for consultation.
January 2014	Examination of plan
February 2015	Receive Examiner's report
March 2015	Modifications agreed to the plan following examination and delegated decision to agree referendum.
April 2015	Lead-in time for referendum
May 2015	Referendum
June 2015	Neighbourhood Development Plan adopted by Milton Keynes Council

*Table 6 Indicative timetable for remaining stages that will need to be completed before the plan is formally adopted by Milton Keynes Council*

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**Appendix 2****Development of Policy W4**

The following documents illustrate how policy W4 – Town Centre Diversity – was developed with the support of the sustainability appraisal process.

The first version of the policy was in the original pre-submission consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Plan, and included an aspiration for a policy to restrict hot food takeaway use on Stratford Road.

The appraisal of the impacts of this policy (from April 2013) is included after the policy.

The second version of the policy is the Town Centre Retail policy which was developed in September 2013 in response to the pre-submission consultation. At this point, the policy has developed into a wider percentage based use class policy covering the whole of the town centre. It also included an aspiration to support smaller shops and street markets.

The appraisals carried out at this time (October 2013) illustrate that a percentage based town centre use class policy would support the development of a greater mix of retail uses. It also showed that the sustainability impact of more national brands on the town centre was unclear.

Between January and May 2014, the Town Centre Retail Policy was rewritten and separated into three separate policies which are now included in the plan.

The appraisals for the new policies W4, W5 and W6 are included in the main part of the Sustainability Appraisal.

**Development of Policy W4****General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)****Policy W2 – General Town Centre Improvements**

*(as in original pre-submission consultation version)*

**All improvements within Wolverton Town Centre should:**

- A. Improve the movement of pedestrians and cyclists around the town centre, and promote sustainable travel to the railway station and canal by improving bus interchange facilities.
- B. Improve the public realm, such as streets, pavements, signage, and street furniture as specified in the Public Realm Design Manual. This should include design that helps manage surface water when it rains heavily.
- C. Improve access to social, leisure and cultural facilities and promote the development of a visitor and night-time economy, including the provision of 24 hour access to public toilets.
- D. Promote the use of flats above shops to increase the town centre population and improve the viability of the local economy.

**All new development within the Town Centre generally should:**

- E. Promote active frontages such as shop or office windows and doors, and/or entrances and windows to housing at the ground floor.
- F. Enhance views of the listed St George's Church and other key buildings such as The Wesleyan Chapel and Creed Street Arts Centre.
- G. Provide parking on street or in landscaped car parks to the rear of properties.
- H. Provide new zero carbon development which is designed for climate change and served by district heating.

**Proposals in the following specific locations within the Town Centre will be supported:**

- I. In The Square, combining of ground floor shop units for larger premises in particular café uses and local offices.
- J. In Glyn Square, changes to the road layout and car park to create a more traditional street with active shop frontages.
- K. In Stratford Road, support and promote use of flats above shop units.
- L. In Stratford Road, to refuse permission for further conversion to hot-food takeaway use.



**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		No policy on takeaways	IMPACT	Controls on Stratford Road only	IMPACT	Controls covering the whole of the Town Centre	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
<b>SA objectives</b>	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	Without a policy on takeaways there will continue to be an impact of noise, late night opening and smells on areas of the town centre. This is likely to deter property owners from convert empty flats above shops in the town centre into residential properties.	-	Some additional flats above shops could result as a consequence of restrictions on takeaway, making Stratford Road more attractive to residential development.	+	By extending the controls on takeaways to the whole of the Town Centre, there is more likely to be a incentives for landlords to develop and let flats above shops throughout the Town Centre	++
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities	When vacant premises currently arise in the Town Centre, more often than not a hot food takeaway will take occupation. This is restricting the opportunity for a wider range of businesses to develop in the town centre, thereby restricting access to	-	Controls on Stratford Road alone would improve the likelihood of other businesses moving into commercial properties. Since Stratford Road is used by many people who “pass through” Wolverton this would increase accessibility of services and facilities to visitors and residents alike.	+	Extending controls on takeaways to the whole of the town centre will mean there is more chance of a wider range of businesses moving into the whole of the town, with a knock-on effect of improving access to services and facilities across	++

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		No policy on takeaways	IMPACT	Controls on Stratford Road only	IMPACT	Controls covering the whole of the Town Centre	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
		services and facilities.				the town centre.	
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites	An over-supply of any one business type such as takeaways is an unlikely basis for encouraging urban renaissance, which it could be argued, is partly based upon a element of “not knowing what you will find” when you visit a Town centre, and being pleasantly surprised at the mix of businesses.	-	Restrictions on takeaways on Stratford Road would hopefully begin to change the character of the area, from somewhere you stop quickly to pick up a takeaway and then leave, to somewhere you wander and look at what is on offer.	+	If Wolverton is to address the poor image it has within Milton Keynes and experience an urban renaissance, it needs to control the number of takeaways and develop a wider retail offer. This will have a knock-on effect of attracting visitors and residents alike to do more shopping in the town, increasing footfall and becoming a more sustainable local economy.	++
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from	An over-supply of takeaways in the Town results in an increase in	-	Restricting takeaways on Stratford Road has the potential to reduce the	+	Restricting the number of takeaways across the Town	

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		No policy on takeaways	IMPACT	Controls on Stratford Road only	IMPACT	Controls covering the whole of the Town Centre	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
	Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	car traffic both picking up and delivering food.		amount of car traffic in the Town.		Centre will ensure that Church Street as well as Stratford Road do not experience excess car traffic related directly to this business type.	
	Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and canal	Most of the takeaways in the Town are located within the Conservation area in Victorian commercial premises which are not necessarily suited to the modern requirements of ventilation and extraction. There are also issues with the Victorian sewerage system dealing with large quantities of cooking fat. This has a negative	-	Controlling any further conversion to takeaways premises on Stratford Road will help preserve the integrity of the Victorian commercial premises and prevent an adverse impact on the Stratford Road area of the Conservation Area.	+	Controlling the number of takeaways across the Town Centre will increase the extent of the Conservation Area which is protected from further unsuitable development of Victorian commercial properties.	++

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		No policy on takeaways	IMPACT	Controls on Stratford Road only	IMPACT	Controls covering the whole of the Town Centre	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	Continued uncontrolled development of takeaways will have an adverse effect on the vitality and viability of Wolverton Town Centre, and will not meet the shopping needs of local people/visitors.	-	The viability and vitality of Stratford Road would be improved if controls on the number of new takeaways were introduced.	+	A greater range of businesses in the Town Centre will improve Wolverton’s image, improve the retail offer and increase the vitality and viability of the Town centre.	++

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		No policy on takeaways	IMPACT	Controls on Stratford Road only	IMPACT	Controls covering the whole of the Town Centre	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		If no action is taken to limit the number of takeaways, they will continue to have an adverse effect on the vitality of the town centre, a negative impact on the conservation area. If every vacant shop becomes a takeaway other businesses will not get a chance to set up in Wolverton, and the opportunity to regenerate the town centre through an interesting mix of shops will be lost.	-	Putting controls on takeaways into place for Stratford Road only will have a positive impact on Stratford Road. However, there may be a risk that other areas of the town centre would become dominated by takeaways instead.	+	Extending the control on takeaways to the whole of the town centre will mean that no one area will become dominated by this particular use class. This will mean that the whole of the town centre will benefit from improved vitality, a greater mix of shops and protection of the conservation area.	++

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## Development of Policy W4

### Options for Town Centre Retail

#### **Policy W4 – Town Centre Retail**

*(as in retail policy pre-submission consultation version July/August 2013)*

#### **A. Supporting the shopping function of the town centre and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses.**

Planning permission will be granted for non-retail uses in the town centre if they satisfy the following criteria:

1. The general restrictions on the location and proportion of non-retail uses set out in Tables 2 and 3 below.
2. They do not create a continuous frontage of two or more units in non-retail use within a primary frontage.
3. They would not have a significant adverse effect on any nearby residential property.

Consent will not normally be granted for development which results in the number of ground floor premises in retail use falling below the specified percentage per frontage in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Where the number of retail premises in a frontage is already less than the minimum requirement no further loss of retail should be permitted.

Where an application is made for a non-retail use which can be shown to be beneficial to long term viability and vibrancy of the town centre then permission may exceptionally be granted but consideration should be given whether it should be on a personal basis and/or that any permitted development rights are withdrawn so that there is control on subsequent changes.

There are no locations within the town centre which are considered appropriate for uses as an amusement centre as it would be located close to housing and several places of worship.

Consent will not normally be given to large supermarkets (2,500 sq m or above) to introduce, within store, any new retail services such as banking, pharmacies, dry cleaners, opticians, health services, crèche facilities or education and training centres.

When adopted, this policy will effectively replace Local Plan policy TC11 and TC18 in relation to Wolverton.

Note: This policy could not and does not affect any existing permitted uses within the town centre.

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**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**Options for Town Centre Retail**

Key		Option 1 – Current retail mix remains unchanged	IMPACT	Option 2 – Retail and non-retail is mixed with attractive street markets and independent and small businesses	IMPACT	Option 3 – Retail mix changes to include more national brands	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
<b>SA objectives</b>	Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	A failing town centre continues to have a negative impact on the local housing market.	-	A more vibrant and successful town centre is expected to be a key driver in promoting housing development in the Wolverton area, with housing developers more able to market housing sites and house purchasers attracted to living in a town which has a distinctive and commercially successful town centre.	+	Whilst the presence of well-known national brands may attract housing development in the Wolverton area, it is questionable whether housing developers and house purchasers are more likely to be attracted to a town which has a distinctive town centre with specialist and independent shops. This is especially so in Wolverton given the relative proximity of national and regional brands in Central Milton Keynes.	?
	Improve accessibility to Wolverton’s services and facilities	No particular change from status quo would occur	o	Controlling uses which have a negative impact on the town centre, and positively promoting a mix of uses including community facilities will improve access to services and facilities for residents and visitors.	+ +	The location of more national and regional brands in Wolverton may have a negative impact on the accessibility of services and facilities which could be “squeezed out” by corresponding rises in land price and property values.	?

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		Option 1 – Current retail mix remains unchanged	IMPACT	Option 2 – Retail and non-retail is mixed with attractive street markets and independent and small businesses	IMPACT	Option 3 – Retail mix changes to include more national brands	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
	Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton’s environmental assets through brownfield sites	A decline in the urban environment and inefficient use of property assets and land will continue unchecked.	-	Encouraging use of land and property for a mix of retail and community uses will support an urban renaissance in Wolverton Town Centre, making it a distinctive and attractive place to shop and visit.	+ +	It could be argued that urban renaissance would be supported by the location of more national brands in the town centre, but this would need to be balanced by a range of small and independent shops. Whilst brands may support renaissance they are unlikely to be the primary reason for it.	+
	Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	There will be little impact will on modal shift if the mix of retail remains unchanged.	o	Creating a more distinctive and attractive town centre will potentially have a negative effect on modal shift, by creating more car-based traffic. However, Wolverton is fortunate to have good public transport connections, and efforts will be made to encourage visitors to travel to the town more sustainably. The policy is partly about	?	The location of national and regional brands in the town centre is likely to have a negative impact on modal shift, by creating far more car-based traffic.	-

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		Option 1 – Current retail mix remains unchanged	IMPACT	Option 2 – Retail and non-retail is mixed with attractive street markets and independent and small businesses	IMPACT	Option 3 – Retail mix changes to include more national brands	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
	Conserve and enhance the town’s heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and the canal	It is unlikely that any significant improvements will be made to conserve and enhance the conservation area with the current mix of retail.	-	A wider mix of uses in the town centre is likely to have a positive impact on the historic shops and other buildings in the conservation area, with independent and small businesses and community-based services more inclined to invest more time and energy in creating an attractive environment for shoppers and visitors alike.	+	It is likely that regional and national brands would need a larger, modern shop unit rather than re-using or enhancing an existing shop unit. Whilst a modern shop, designed well, could contribute positively to the Conservation Area, signage will need to be carefully considered.	?
	Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	The current mix of uses will continue to detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre.	-	With a mix of independent retail, community uses and streets markets, Wolverton Town Centre will become a place where shopping is just	++	An increased presence of national and regional brands in the Town Centre may add to the variety of shopping in Wolverton and encourage	?

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		Option 1 – Current retail mix remains unchanged	IMPACT	Option 2 – Retail and non-retail is mixed with attractive street markets and independent and small businesses	IMPACT	Option 3 – Retail mix changes to include more national brands	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
				one small part of a rich mix of activities. The right mix of social, culture, health, and wellbeing and creative and learning uses will help to create a town centre that is vibrant and attractive, and which has the capacity to develop and sustain new and existing businesses.		more people to visit the town, improving the viability and vitality of the town. However, it could be argued that Wolverton already has a number of key attractors, and that a sustainable balance of key attractors alongside local independent shops is likely to have the greatest positive impact on the vitality of the town. It should be noted that there is a strong community resistance to further national and regional brands.	

**Appendix 2**

**Development of Policy W4**

**General Town Centre Improvements – options for policy W2 (K)**

Key		Option 1 – Current retail mix remains unchanged	IMPACT	Option 2 – Retail and non-retail is mixed with attractive street markets and independent and small businesses	IMPACT	Option 3 – Retail mix changes to include more national brands	IMPACT
-	Negative impact						
?	Uncertain impact						
0	Neutral impact						
+	Positive impact						
<b>CONCLUSION</b>		This assessment shows that there is a negative impact on the regeneration of the local economy by leaving the current mix of retail uses in the town centre unchanged. Over time the cumulative impact of these factors is likely to lead to further decline.	-	The commercial success and vitality of Wolverton Town centre is supported by a greater mix of retail and community uses which together have the potential to create a more reasons to visit the town and greater overall footfall. The impact on modal shift remains unknown, but with efforts to provide more long-stay parking and measures which mitigate against traffic problems, the overall impact of the policy is positive.	+	Whilst the assessment shows that there are some positive benefits to more regional and national brands locating within Wolverton Town Centre, the overall impact of this option is uncertain. This conclusion is made against a backdrop of structural change in the retail industry, and much debate over the future role of town centres. Whilst a further key attractor, multiple or regional retailer may assist the regeneration of the town centre, a different mix of local shopping and better street markets may be the better long-term solution.	?

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**Appendix 3****Comments from environmental bodies****Comments on Scoping Report**

<b>Issues raised</b>	<b>Response to issue</b>
<b>Natural England</b>	
Appreciate area is constrained, access to green infrastructure could be emphasised more and considered under biodiversity and human health topics	Noted in the assessment.
May want to make reference to Natural England's accessible natural greenspace standards	Noted. Standards are left to Milton Keynes Local Plan/Core Strategy
<b>English Heritage</b>	
Welcome objectives, suggestions on refining detail	Noted. The content and impact of the plan is locally focused and the objectives suit this purpose.
Listed buildings should be noted in the baseline	Listed buildings included in baseline
Conservation Area Review 2009 could be referenced	Review included in baseline
NPPF historic environment (paragraph 17) could be referenced	Reference added to baseline
<b>Environment Agency</b>	
Recommend consideration of sustainable drainage systems as an opportunity when developing brownfield sites to reduce the risk of flooding, improve water quality, habitats and amenity	Noted in the assessment. Planning applications will consider these issues against Milton Keynes Local Plan/Core Strategy.
Site not within source protection zone. Plan area adjacent to Grand Union canal	Noted.
Requirements for planning applications are suggested (for example contamination)	Noted. Planning applications will consider these issues against Milton Keynes Local Plan/Core Strategy.

**Appendix 3****Comments from environmental bodies****Comments on July 2013 pre-submission consultation version of plan**

Issues raised	Response to issue
<b>Natural England</b>	
Neighbourhood plans and proposals may provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural and built environment, use natural resources more sustainably and bring benefits for the local community, for example through green space provision and access to and contact with nature.	Noted
Opportunities to incorporate features into new build and retro fitted buildings which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes should also be considered as part of any new development proposal.	Noted
<b>English Heritage</b>	
<p>Policy 1: The Agora Site</p> <p>The demolition of the Agora is of course the key issue presented by the Plan. The Agora is one of a number of civic/shopping buildings that were commissioned by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation in the late 1970s to be inserted into existing small towns and villages that were to become the local centres of the new town. Some of these, such as Cofferridge Close, Stony Stratford are quite highly regarded both architecturally and due to the way they were integrated into the existing urban grain. The residential element of Cofferridge Close has been listed and the commercial element would have</p>	



**Appendix 3****Comments from environmental bodies****Comments on July 2013 pre-submission consultation version of plan**

<p>been had it survived intact.</p> <p>The Agora was, like Cofferridge Close, designed by Milton Keynes Development Corporation Architects with Wayland Tunley as lead architect. These two buildings, together with the village centre development at Neath Hill were Tunley's main contributions to the new town.</p> <p>The Agora is certainly a striking building and illustrates how MKDC architects were striving to create something very modern and different but at the same time respect the historic character of the town. It dramatically breaks with the Victorian layout of the town centre whilst the use of red brick, robust and careful detailing and its low height demonstrate sensitivity to context. It therefore is of historical value in that it tells part of the story of Milton Keynes as a new town.</p> <p>This is not simply a story about Milton Keynes town centre itself but about how an innovative approach was taken to expanding the local centres.</p> <p>The building's unorthodox design and the way in which it was intended to combine retail, leisure and community uses in a single building that formed a new heart to the town also speaks eloquently of the idealism and bravery of its designers.</p> <p>This said the building was not an unqualified success when built and is certainly not successful now. In townscape terms the way in which it separates the two main parts of the central shopping area is unhelpful and the diamond shaped plan creates underused and unattractive public realm</p>	
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<p>around the building. Architecturally it is not a beautiful building externally, the large areas of brick walling makes the exterior rather forbidding and the interior is very dark: it does not live up to the promise of the exciting 3D visualisations drawn up when was being planned. For these reasons, and unlike some of MKDC's buildings, the Agora does not appear to be well regarded by local people. Commercially the building is struggling, with many vacant shops whilst leisure and community uses have never fully taken off.</p> <p>Given the Agora's legacy to Wolverton and the significance of the conservation area is mixed, interesting historically but problematic in terms of allow good place making, we accept the case for redevelopment. The difficulties that would be encountered in transforming the existing building into a thriving commercial centre, which would be significant also count against retention. We are therefore broadly content with Policy W1.</p>	Noted.
<p>We welcome the recognition of the town's important railway heritage in the Vision and Objectives 2: Heritage and 3: Environment and Design. We also welcome requirements B, F and G of Policy W2.</p>	Noted.
<p>We welcome the recognition of the historical significance of the railway works and the substantial local support for the retention and re-use of the historic buildings, ideally with heritage uses.</p> <p>However, this recognition and support</p>	Wording changed to read "conserve

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<p>does not really appear to be carried through to Policy W3, where requirement E is only “seek to preserve” – we would prefer “Conserve and enhance the historic buildings on the site, informed by further investigative work as part of the development framework for the site and promote heritage uses”.</p>	<p>and enhance”.</p>
<p>In addition, requirement D of Policy W3 is self-contradictory: The express purpose of the wall along Stratford Road was to separate the works from the town. Indeed, the “abrupt distinction” between the two is one of the key features that helps to define Wolverton’s special interest as identified in the Conservation Area Review 2009. Its integrity cannot be retained if it is opened up.</p>	<p>Some limited sections of the wall may need to be removed to facilitate development. We do not expect the sections to be extensive, and suspect that the section of the wall affected is most likely to be at the town centre end of the wall.</p>
<p>In paragraph 3.49 it should be noted that the historic buildings are of significance in their own right, not just for their contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Amendment made.</p>
<p>Sustainability Appraisal – In Appendix 2, the comments we submitted on the draft SEA are summarised, and it is stated that listed buildings, the Conservation Area Review 2009 and the section of paragraph 17 of the NPPF have been included in or added to the baseline. However, this does not appear to be the case.</p>	<p>Changes made.</p>
<p>In the Assessment Matrix for Policy W3, the adverse effect of opening up views through the wall along Stratford Road should be noted against Objective 5.</p>	<p>Changes made.</p>

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<b>Environment Agency</b>	
We welcome the inclusion of some of our previous comments at section 3.5 in the Sustainability Appraisal with regard to site constraints and sustainable drainage.	Noted
<b>The Coal Authority</b>	
As you will be aware the Wolverton and Greenleys Town Centre area is outside of the defined coalfield and therefore The Coal Authority has no specific comments to make on the Neighbourhood Plan. It will not be necessary for the Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council to provide The Coal Authority with any future drafts or updates to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.	Noted with thanks.

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Issues raised	Response to issue
<b>Natural England</b>	
<p>Natural England believe that there are still opportunities for Green Infrastructure provision in certain parts of the plan policies – for instance there is likely to be a big opportunity under Policy W3 – The Railway Works site – to provide good additional linkages between different elements of the Green Infrastructure network within Wolverton. That potential new development could also of course provide new SUDS for all new development.</p>	<p>GI part of W3 policy strengthened and SUDS added to W1 and W2.</p>
<p>It is noted that the Grand Union Canal runs nearby and is of moderate ecological value – this should be promoted and where possible public access to and along the canal should be promoted. This would help achieve targets around biodiversity gain and will of course have public health benefits for local residents and those who work on the Railway works site.</p>	<p>Point added to emphasize the value of the canal as an amenity for local people.</p>
<p>There could be more added to take account of the number of planning applications granted with green roofs or walls for instance and there could be a number of hectares of new open space created as part of new development.</p>	<p>Monitoring targets now include number of green roofs and walls, and the number of hectares of new open space created.</p>
<b>English Heritage</b>	
<p>English Heritage welcomes and supports the recognition of the town's important railway heritage in the Vision and Objectives 2: Heritage and 3: Environment and Design. We also welcome paragraph 3.25 on the Wolverton Conservation Area and the recognition of the historical significance of the railway works in paragraphs 3.74, 7.2 and 7.3.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>We welcome the community's principle that new development in the town centre should not obscure or detract from important heritage assets and listed buildings (which are heritage</p>	<p>Noted</p>

## Appendix 3

## Comments from environmental bodies

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<p>assets as well) in the town centre, as set out in paragraph 6.4.</p> <p>We also particularly welcome requirements B, F and G of Policy W2</p>	
<p>We also welcome the substantial local support for the retention and re-use of the historic buildings, ideally with heritage uses and are pleased to see this reflected in principle F of Policy W3 (although we would prefer <i>“Conserve and enhance the historic buildings on the site, informed by further investigative work as part of the development framework for the site, and promote heritage uses”</i>).</p>	<p>Wording of Policy F of W3 changed as per EH’s recommendation</p>
<p>Policy W3</p> <p>We have previously expressed the view that requirement E (formerly D) of Policy W3 is self-contradictory: the express purpose of the wall along Stratford Road was to separate the works from the town. Indeed, the “abrupt distinction” between the two is one of the key features that helps to define Wolverton’s special interest as identified in the Conservation Area Review 2009 (as noted in paragraph 7.16). Its integrity cannot be retained if it is opened up.</p>	<p>Noted but development of the site may require some limited breaches in the wall. Safeguards have been added to the policy to ensure that where small sections of the wall are removed they are replaced by structural features which reflect the industrial heritage of Wolverton.</p>
<p>In paragraph 7.19 it should be noted that the historic buildings are of significance in their own right, not just for their contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Amendment made to the wording to reflect the significance of buildings in their own right.</p>
<p>We generally welcome the monitoring targets for Objective 2, although it would be helpful if the baseline included the condition of all heritage assets in the Plan area.</p>	<p>Monitoring factor added to include a baseline on condition of heritage assets.</p>
<p>SA – In Appendix 3, the comments we submitted on the Scoping Report are summarised, and it is stated that listed buildings have been included in the baseline. However, whilst there are references to listed</p>	<p>Reference added to listed buildings on the sustainability baseline section of the plan (4.12).</p>

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buildings in the Appraisal there is no such reference in the sub-section in the Sustainability Baseline on cultural heritage.	
In the Assessment Matrix for Policy W3, the adverse effect of opening up views through the wall along Stratford Road should be noted against Objective 5.	Point added to assessment matrix.
Anglian Water	
<p>Anglian Water promotes the use of water efficiency measures and we would be keen for this to be included within the document.</p> <p>The used water flows from future growth will have an impact on the existing used water network. The used water infrastructure requirements will be dependent on the location, size and phasing of the development. All sites will require a local connection to the existing sewerage network which may include network upgrades. Upgrades will be funded by developers through the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991 and will not be required to form part of the CIL provisions.</p>	Noted – added to policy W1, W2 and W3
All developments should seek to reduce flood risk and incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). We would wish to see that all developments should adhere to the surface water management hierarchy outlined in Part H of Building Regulations with disposal to a surface water sewer seen as a last resort. Under no circumstances will surface water be permitted to discharge to the public foul sewerage network.	SUDS added to W1 and W2
Any brownfield sites marked for redevelopment must take the opportunity to completely remove or significantly reduce any surface water flows currently discharging to the surface water network. The demolished site should be, where practical, treated as if it was greenfield.	Point added to W3

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Brownfield sites must still follow the surface water management hierarchy to determine whether infiltration techniques or a connection to a watercourse can be utilised prior to the consideration of a connection to a public surface water sewer.	
<b>Network Rail</b>	
There is a small section of Network Rail land within the area (shaded in green on the attached plan). The land is a lease for special train shed at the maintenance depot, Wolverton.	Noted



## Monitoring Targets

SA/SEA Objective	Monitoring factors	Baseline (as of November 2014)	Target for 2025	Neighbourhood Plan Objective(s)
Opportunity to live in an affordable, sustainably constructed home	Annual completion of new homes in Wolverton town centre	0 units	6,000 to 9,000 sq m residential developed as part of Agora site redevelopment (81 – 121 units) (Source: Agora Development Brief, Milton Keynes Council, April 2013) 250-300 new dwellings of up to four storeys with approximately 750 related car parking spaces (Source Environmental Scoping Report For St Modwen Development Ltd Railway Works, Wolverton September 2014)	Objective 3
	Number of new homes developed which meet specified local needs	0 units	1,500 to 2,500 sq m age specific accommodation developed (Source: Agora Development Brief, Milton Keynes Council, April 2013)	
	Affordability of new homes (relative to other parts of Milton Keynes)	The average price for a three bedroom house in Wolverton Ward is £161,100, compared to £187,600 across the Milton Keynes. This indicates values locally at around 14% lower. Source: Home Track: Local Housing Analytics System September 2012-2013	To aim to maintain an affordability differential.	
	New development in the town centre with renewable energy technologies included	0 units	Planning consents	
	New development that meets zero carbon standards	0 units	Planning consents	
	New development served by a district heating	0 units	Planning consents	
Improve accessibility to services and facilities	Percentage of people who use the town centre and access services	Currently 11% of people using the town centre access services <sup>14</sup> (Source: Wolverton Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Gradually, to increase the number of people accessing services to the national average (Current national average 16%: Wolverton Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5
	Number of new town centre businesses and organisations providing new services and facilities	Town Council operates advice services run by the Citizens Advice Bureau and Age UK.	Town Council to extend range of services offered.	
		Foundation House offers services from Swan Credit Union, Brook Advisory Service and Connexions.	Foundation House to extend services to young people.	
		Old Bath House & Community Centre hosts Registrar services & lunch clubs	Old Bath House to maintain current services and attract new users.	
		Kings Church Community Centre now providing some community services and facilities.	Kings Church to develop the range of services and facilities offered.	
No professional services (such as solicitors or accountants within town centre).	At least one professional service within the town centre.			

<sup>14</sup> Financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health and medical services) including estate and employment agencies and betting offices

## Appendix 4

## Monitoring Targets

SA/SEA Objective	Monitoring factors	Baseline (as of November 2014)	Target for 2025	Neighbourhood Plan Objective(s)
	Attendance at cultural, leisure and social activities in the town centre (Note: Much of the leisure provision in Wolverton – including the new Wolverton Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre – is within walking distance of the town centre although not within the plan area itself.)	Currently 3% of people using the town centre for leisure <sup>15</sup> purposes (Source: Wolverton Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Gradually, to increase the number of people using the town centre for leisure purposes to the national average (Current national average 11%: Wolverton Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	
	Amount of publicly accessible open space in Wolverton town centre which can support community events and activities	0.54 hectares of land currently publicly accessible	Increased land available once Agora site redeveloped, by 0.28 hectares (Source: Agora Development Brief, Milton Keynes Council, April 2013)	
Encourage urban renaissance and efficient use of land and Wolverton's environmental assets through brownfield sites	Hectares of brownfield land redeveloped within the plan area (Agora site and Railway Works site)	0 hectares	1.17 ha (0.62 Agora site and 0.55 adjacent car park) (Source: Agora Development Brief, Milton Keynes Council, April 2013) 15 ha on Railway Works site (Discount Foodstore and car parking) (Source Environmental Scoping Report for St Modwen Developments Ltd September 2014)	Objectives 2, 3
	Improvements to existing environmental assets at St George's Churchyard and trees within the town centre	Milton Keynes Council Street Asset Register and Town Council Asset Register	To achieve a good satisfaction rating from town centre users. (Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey)	
	Introduction of new environmental assets such as increased public open space and new assets such as street trees and landscaping areas	Milton Keynes Council Street Asset Register and Town Council Asset Register	To achieve a good satisfaction rating from town centre users. (Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey)	
	Numbers of hectares of new open space created as part of new development	0.54 hectares of land currently publicly accessible	Increased land available for open space once the Railway Works site is available.	
	Number of planning applications granted for development with green roofs or green walls.	0 planning applications	At least 1 application which includes a green roof.	
Support a shift towards more sustainable modes of	Travel to work: Use of sustainable modes of transport to and from work by Wolverton residents	26% of Wolverton residents travel to work on sustainable modes of transport. See Annex 1 for more detailed figures. Source: Office for National Statistics Census 2011 Table QS701ew)	Increase the number of people travelling to work by more sustainable methods, whilst also increasing users from outside (which is likely to increase the number accessing by car)	Objectives 1, 5

<sup>15</sup> Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasium or area for indoor and outdoor sports and recreations

## Appendix 4

## Monitoring Targets

SA/SEA Objective	Monitoring factors	Baseline (as of November 2014)	Target for 2025	Neighbourhood Plan Objective(s)
transport to and from Wolverton town centre, reducing the need to travel by car by improving access for walking, cycling and public transport	Travel to town centre: town centre users modes of travel to and from the town centre	Travel to town centre Car: 35% Cycle: 3% Bus: 15% Walking: 46% (Source: Wolverton Town Centre AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Increase the number of people travelling to the town centre by more sustainable methods, whilst also increasing users from outside (which is likely to increase the number accessing by car)	
	Number of people cycling to the railway station from Wolverton town centre	14% of people gave poor cycle routes and cycle parking as the reason for not cycling to the railway station (Source: Wolverton Station Travel Plan January 2012)	No specific number has been specified for the above, progress to be monitored and reviewed through regular benchmarking.	
Conserve and enhance the town's heritage, particularly the Conservation Area, listed buildings and the canal	Assessment of the condition of all heritage assets and listed buildings in the plan area Conservation of heritage assets and listed buildings within in the town centre.	One heritage building currently undergoing refurbishment (the old Wesleyan Chapel, Church Street) No other conservation work is being carried out on other heritage assets or listed buildings.	Two listed buildings Kings Church Community Centre (formerly Creed Street Arts Centre/MADCAP) and St George's Church are improved. Surveys carried out of the condition of all heritage assets in the plan area, and an action plan devised to remedy any issues. Heritage assets within the town centre undergo improvement through a process of support and encouragement.	Objectives 2, 3
		Survey currently taking place looking at the heritage value of buildings and structures on the Railway Works site.	Redevelopment of parts of the site results in re-use of buildings and structures which have heritage value.	
	Increase the number of original shop fronts conserved in the town centre	Some repair and renovation work carried out on limited number of shopfronts.	10 original shop fronts conserved.	
	Grants available to support conservation of original shop fronts and new security measures	None	Grants made available to 10 shop owners to support preservation of historic shop fronts.	
	Implementation of improvements to streets pavements and the public realm using the Public Realm Design Manual	Milton Keynes Council Street Asset Register and Town Council Asset Register	Comprehensive street improvement scheme implemented for Church Street/Radcliffe Street	
	Improved access to the Grand Union canal	Access generally poor and badly signed	Improvements to current access and signage to the Canal. Asset of the canal exploited through the redevelopment of the Railway Works site	
Improve vitality and viability of Wolverton town centre	Reduce number of vacant commercial units in the town centre	13% of retail units in the town centre are currently vacant compared to a national average of 8% (Source: Wolverton Town AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Reduce vacant units to the national average for small towns	Objectives 5, 6, 4
	Improve the diversity of the retail offer in the town centre	71% of retail is comparison and 23% convenience (Source: Wolverton Town AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Increase comparison retail and reduce convenience retail to the national average	
	Increase the number of new retail/commercial units in the town centre	None	5 new retail/commercial units.	
	Increase the reported profitability of town centre businesses	56% of town centre businesses reported a decrease in profitability from the previous year (Source: Wolverton Town AMT Benchmarking Survey 2012)	Reduce to the national average the % of businesses who report a decrease in profitability	

## Appendix 4

## Monitoring Targets

SA/SEA Objective	Monitoring factors	Baseline (as of November 2014)	Target for 2025	Neighbourhood Plan Objective(s)
	Increase the number of start-up businesses in the town centre	As a result of the condition of the building, the Agora now operates as a tertiary retail location and provides some start up units at low rents and flexible terms.	Business hub and space to support new start-up units provided as part of the Agora site redevelopment.	
	Increase the number of people living in the town centre to improve the overall vitality and viability.	Currently around 400 dwellings in town centre plan area	Increase by at least 80 units as expected as part of the Agora redevelopment	
	Increase the number of market pitches available in Wolverton town centre	Average of 10 market traders (Source: AMT Benchmarking Report 2012)	Average of 20 market traders	

**Appendix 5****Relevant policies, plans and programmes**

<b>Policies, Plans and Programmes</b> <b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic direction</b>	<b>Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan</b>
National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60777/2116950.pdf">www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60777/2116950.pdf</a>	Sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the planning system	<i>Legally the plan should have regard to national policy and guidance</i>
UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005 <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-the-future-delivering-uk-sustainable-development-strategy">www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-the-future-delivering-uk-sustainable-development-strategy</a>	The Government's policy on sustainable development sets out five guiding principles: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance; Using sound science reasonably.	<i>Legally the plan should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.</i>
European Directives on: waste, pollution, natural habitats, birds, water and air quality  Waste <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/">ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/</a>  Habitats <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm">ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm</a>  Water: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/">ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/</a>  Air quality: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing_leg.htm">ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing_leg.htm</a>	The European Objectives set out provisions that have to be implemented nationally by the EU member states. Each of the Directives have individual provisions which are transposed into practice via national law and national and regional policy, which are covered in the following sections.	<i>Legally the plan should not breach, and be compatible with, EU Directives.</i>

**Appendix 5****Relevant policies, plans and programmes**

<b>Policies, Plans and Programmes</b> <b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic direction</b>	<b>Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan</b>
Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2011  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-air-quality-strategy-for-england-scotland-wales-and-northern-ireland-volume-1">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-air-quality-strategy-for-england-scotland-wales-and-northern-ireland-volume-1</a>	The Strategy looks to map out as far as possible ambient air quality in the United Kingdom over the medium term. It sets objectives for protection of human health and the natural environment and provides a framework to help improve air quality.	<i>No Air Quality Management Plan required in Wolverton.</i>
Milton Keynes Community Strategy 2004 – 2034  Only available in hard copy from Milton Keynes Council	Sets out the values that will guide the growth of the borough. It sets out the aim of creating desirable, fun, affordable, safe and accessible places within Milton Keynes. There are four key action areas: <u>Reinventing our City, Places and Spaces</u> – delivering high quality environments for the people of our city and neighbourhoods. <u>Delivering Better Services</u> – Promoting social inclusion and delivering excellent services for the people of our area that are convenient and easy to access. <u>Facilitating Participative Communities</u> – Supporting people and Organisations to be active and enterprising in civic life. <u>Managing Change Together</u> – Implementing and monitoring our community strategy so that it makes a tangible improvement to people’s lives.	<i>Consider objectives for broader community.</i>

## Appendix 5

## Relevant policies, plans and programmes

<b>Policies, Plans and Programmes</b> <b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic direction</b>	<b>Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan</b>
Milton Keynes Local Plan, adopted December 2005  <a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005">www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005</a>	The Local Plan sets out the form of future development in the borough. It aims to provide a high quality of life for all, sustainable lifestyles, choices of transport, a dynamic, knowledge based economy, attractive vibrant, successful town centres, a clean, green environment, diversity and innovation, growth that meets needs and a strengthened role as a regional centre.	<i>Supplement existing adopted policies and proposals with regards to sustainability.</i>
Milton Keynes Core Strategy  <a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-andbuilding/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013">http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-andbuilding/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013</a>	This document will set the future vision and sustainable development needs for Milton Keynes to 2026. It forms the key document in the statutory development plan.	<i>Ensure strategic fit with future adopted policies and proposals with regards to sustainability.</i>
Milton Keynes Economic Development Strategy 2011 – 2016  <a href="http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/business/milton-keyneseconomic-development-strategy-2014">http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/business/milton-keyneseconomic-development-strategy-2014</a>	The overriding objective of the Strategy is to maintain, develop and grow economic development activities in Milton Keynes, ultimately leading to a prosperous economy for Milton Keynes as expressed in the Milton Keynes Long Term Economic Vision. The Strategy is supported by a companion document, the Local Economic Assessment published in January 2011.	<i>To consider proposals to support local retail and employment opportunities</i>
MKC Housing Strategy, 2012 – 2015  <a href="http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/12411/Approved_Hsg_Strat_June_20th_2012_Cabinet(1).doc">http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/12411/Approved_Hsg_Strat_June_20th_2012_Cabinet(1).doc</a>	Aim for sustainable development patterns, in terms of mixed tenures and well-designed places, and sees the ideal neighbourhood as sustaining local shopping, schooling, community activities and public transport.	<i>To consider proposals to support local housing opportunities</i>

## Appendix 5

## Relevant policies, plans and programmes

Policies, Plans and Programmes Data source	Strategic direction	Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan
<p>Transport Vision and Strategy for Milton Keynes, 2011</p> <p><a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streetstransport-and-parking/transport-policy">http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streetstransport-and-parking/transport-policy</a></p>	<p>The Local Transport Plan also looks at how all forms of rural and urban transport across the borough can be improved for all residents, businesses and visitors. This includes walking, cycling, buses, trains, parking and roads. The Local Transport Plan also contributes to the following five national goals for transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting economic growth;</li> <li>• Improving quality of life;</li> <li>• Contributing to better safety, security and health;</li> <li>• Tackling climate change; and,</li> <li>• Promoting equal opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Of significance is the proposal to upgrade Wolverton station interchange facilities to improve services and station safety which has been completed.</i></p> <p><i>To consider local improvements, and locations of new development in relation to public transport linkages.</i></p>
<p>Zero Waste Strategy, 2013 Refresh</p> <p><a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/16823/M13534%20Zero%20Waste%20Strategy.pdf">http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/16823/M13534%20Zero%20Waste%20Strategy.pdf</a></p>	<p>Sets out how Milton Keynes Council will deal with the waste created by residents and businesses in Milton Keynes. The primary objectives of the waste strategy is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by increasing recycling levels and introducing new technologies to treat waste.</p>	<p><i>Strategic issues considered as part of Milton Keynes Council Waste Development Plan Document.</i></p>
<p>Milton Keynes Waste Development Plan Document 2007-2026</p> <p><a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/waste-development-plan-document">www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/waste-development-plan-document</a></p>	<p>Milton Keynes Council is the Waste Planning Authority for its area. The Waste DPD provides the basis for waste planning decisions made by Milton Keynes Council.</p>	<p><i>The plan will not prejudice strategic waste policies.</i></p>



**Appendix 5****Relevant policies, plans and programmes**

<b>Policies, Plans and Programmes</b> <b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic direction</b>	<b>Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan</b>
Bucks and MK Biodiversity Action Plan 2000 – 2010 (revised 2009)  <a href="http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/media/1022633/Intro.pdf">http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/media/1022633/Intro.pdf</a>	The main aim of the Biodiversity Action Plan for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes is to conserve the County's wildlife habitats and associated species as a contribution to conserving the diversity of life on earth.	<i>To consider impacts on a site basis</i>
Flood Risk Management – Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan – Scoping Report November 2005  <a href="http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17808/Great%20Ouse%20Catchment%20Flood%20Management%20Plan%20-%20Summary%20of%20Draft%20Plan%20February%202007.pdf">http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17808/Great%20Ouse%20Catchment%20Flood%20Management%20Plan%20-%20Summary%20of%20Draft%20Plan%20February%202007.pdf</a>	The Plan has 7 aims including, minimising the flood damage to people and property, managing development to meet local and regional targets, protecting and enhancing cultural heritage and the natural environment and where possible improving water quality.	<i>Wolverton is not in a flood risk area.</i>
Market Towns Health Check: A Vision for Wolverton, 2003  Report: <a href="http://futurewolverton.org/wp-content/documents/FutureWolvertonMTHHealthcheck.pdf">futurewolverton.org/wp-content/documents/FutureWolvertonMTHHealthcheck.pdf</a>  Vision: <a href="http://futurewolverton.org/wp-content/documents/FutureWolvertonVision.pdf">futurewolverton.org/wp-content/documents/FutureWolvertonVision.pdf</a>	Residents of Wolverton participated in a visioning exercise to determine what they wanted Wolverton to look like in 20 years time.	<i>Background evidence to the plan</i>

**Appendix 5****Relevant policies, plans and programmes**

<b>Policies, Plans and Programmes</b> <b>Data source</b>	<b>Strategic direction</b>	<b>Relationship with Neighbourhood Development Plan</b>
Wolverton Regeneration Strategy, 2004 <a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-applications-appeals-and-advice/wolverton-regeneration-strategy">www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-applications-appeals-and-advice/wolverton-regeneration-strategy</a>	Commissioned by Milton Keynes Council, English Partnerships, Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council and SEEDA. It focuses on the enhancement of certain Town Centre locations – including the Square, the Station, the Triangle Building, Church Street and Stratford Road	<i>Background evidence to the plan</i>
Wolverton Public Realm Design Manual, 2012 <a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/urban-design-and-landscape-architecture-udla/urban-design-policy">http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/urban-design-and-landscape-architecture-udla/urban-design-policy</a>	Technical guidance. It aims to ensure that public realm in Wolverton provides a vibrant, high quality, well-connected setting for business, commerce, retail and living to flourish, by:  (i) providing guidance for the design, selection, installation and future maintenance of the public realm, street furniture and materials within Wolverton, and  (ii) as a consideration in determining planning applications, formal highway agreements and the discharge of planning conditions	<i>Background evidence to the plan</i>

**Appendix 5**

**Relevant policies, plans and programmes**

<p>MKC Heritage, Museums and Archives Strategy Delivery Plan 2014 – 2023  <a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/19597/Heritage%20Strategy%20NEW%20v4%20FULL.pdf">http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/19597/Heritage%20Strategy%20NEW%20v4%20FULL.pdf</a></p>	<p>The Milton Keynes Heritage, Museums and Archives Strategy (HMAS) 2014 – 2023 and its accompanying documents set out the vision, plan, major programmes and projects that have been identified by stakeholder engagement and public consultation as strategically vital for the future of Milton Keynes, the needs of its growing number of ‘citizens’ and its reputation amongst ever-increasing visitors.</p>	<p><i>Background evidence to the plan</i></p>
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