

B3.3N Site, CMK Development Brief



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and Ownership

- 1.1.1 This Development Brief relates to a site within Block B3 of Central Milton Keynes (CMK). The site extends to approximately 0.63 ha (1.56 acres). The site is strategically located, fronting onto Midsummer Boulevard (see figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The site is in the ownership of Milton Keynes Development Partnership* (MKDP).

1.2 Purpose of the Development Brief

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to provide planning and design guidance for the development of this site in CMK. This will aid the development process, by allowing developers to submit informed proposals that respond to Council (MKC), landowner and other local stakeholder expectations for the site, and respect the requirements of MKC planning policy.
- 1.2.2 The Brief has been prepared to help deliver the Council's Corporate Plan Themes and Outcomes as well as the Core Strategy.
- 1.2.3 The consultation process associated with the preparation of this development brief is intended to give all interested parties full opportunities to set out their aspirations for the site and to identify constraints that need to be accommodated.
- 1.2.4 The Development Brief has been prepared to accord with current Planning Policy – a key aim though is to contextualise the policy for the site covered by the Brief. The Brief cannot formally

change current policy, however there may be material considerations that suggest variations of current policy may be appropriate. Where this is the case, the Brief will state what they are and what the preferred use and/or variation in policy is. This will be weighed against the current policy when determining a planning application for the site.

1.2.5 Once approved by Milton Keynes Council Cabinet, the guidance contained within the Brief will be a material consideration in helping determine planning applications for the site.

*MKDP is a limited liability partnership set up by Milton Keynes Council to facilitate Milton Keynes's continued growth and economic success by promoting the development of land assets transferred to the council from the Homes and Communities Agency, in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and Economic Development Strategy. MKDP take a commercial and entrepreneurial approach to sell and develop these assets with third party developers and investors, whilst ensuring full community and stakeholder engagement in the preparation of development briefs for the sites.

It is a requirement on the MKDP that an adopted Development Brief must be in place before they commence marketing or developing any of their larger sites. This is intended to enable the Council, following consultation with all interested parties, to set clear expectations for the nature of any future development on the site; but also to assist the MKDP in marketing the site and to give potential bidders/development partners a degree of confidence about the parameters within which they should develop their proposals.

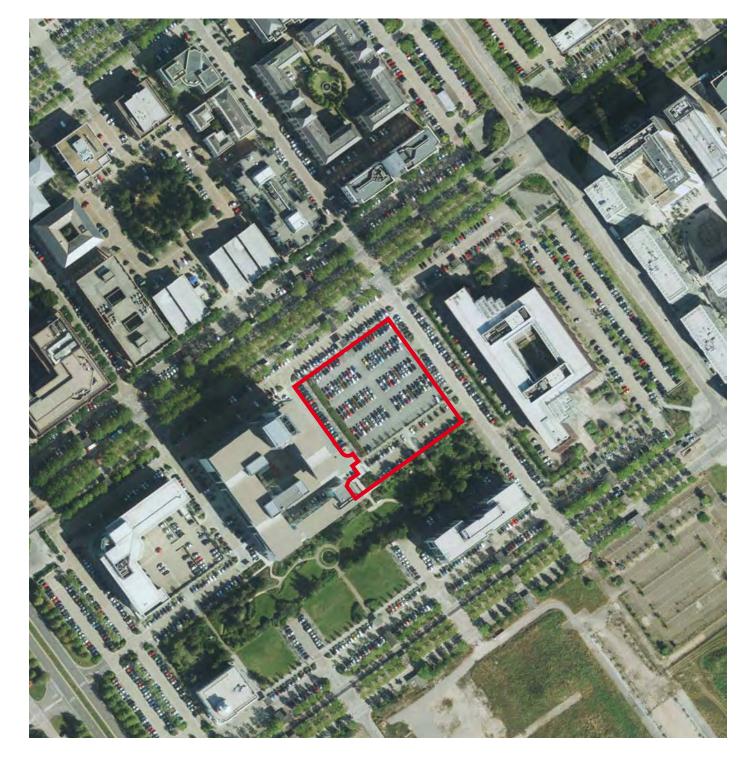


Figure 1: Site Location

1.3 Structure of Brief

The Brief is divided into five sections:

Section 1 outlines the purpose of the brief, and its location and ownership.

Section 2 describes the planning policy context of the site.

Section 3 provides a site analysis of the site itself and the surrounding area. A thorough understanding of this will have an important bearing on the key design principles and parameters.

Section 4 outlines what the Brief is seeking to deliver in terms of land uses

Section 5 represents the Key Design and Development Principles, that should inform any development proposals. The accompanying Parameters Plan spatially illustrates the design principles.

Appendix A highlights the key utilities in proximity to the site.

SECTION 2: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 2.1.2 The following sections of the NPPF are of particular relevance to this site:
 - Building a strong, competitive economy
 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
 - Promoting sustainable transport
 - Requiring good design
 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
 - Promoting healthy communities

2.2 Milton Keynes Local Plan

- 2.2.1 The principles for the development of Central Milton Keynes are set out in the Milton Keynes Local Plan (adopted December 2005). The following Local Plan policies have been 'saved' by the Secretary of State. They remain in force until superseded by policies in other development plan documents, e.g. CMK Alliance Plan 2026 (see para 2.4) Plan and Plan:MK.
- 2.2.2 B3.3N lies within the Central Business District. Local Plan policy CC11 (Central Business District) states that "New development or redevelopment in the Central Business District (CBD) should reflect the following principles: (i) Consolidate the CBD as the main business centre in CMK

(ii) Provide high quality business space to accommodate a broad variety of new businesses and other uses

(iii) Develop buildings of at least 8 storeys in height on sites fronting or adjacent to Midsummer Boulevard

(iv) Provide a mix of uses including residential accommodation together with shops, business services and cafes/restaurants at ground floor level

(v) New residential accommodation should be developed at a net density of 175-275 dwellings per hectare as part of mixed use schemes(vi) Include a landmark building at the Grafton Gate/Portway gateway to CMK".

- 2.2.3 The site also lies along Midsummer Boulevard which is identified as the main route or "spine" through the City centre linking the Railway Station to Campbell Park. Policy CC7b sets out a number of principles for development along Midsummer Boulevard, including:
 - Create a high density built form of high quality design
 - Make Midsummer Boulevard the main focus for pedestrian, cycling and public transport activity in CMK
 - Narrow Midsummer Boulevard and reallocate existing car parking space for redevelopment with alternative parking provided mainly in multistorey car parks and with limited provision on street or within new development (however, see also para 2.5.2 - CMK Development Framework promotes retention of existing surface level car parking)

^{*}Plan: MK is the new local plan for Milton Keynes. It will eventually replace the Core Strategy and the remaining saved policies in the Milton Keynes Local Plan.

- Create a high quality public realm with activity focal points and landmark buildings connected to existing and proposed public open spaces and centres of activity
- Create active ground floor frontages contributing to a lively street scene
- Feature public art as an integral part of the public realm with pavilions and kiosks in areas of public open space
- Facilitate the introduction of a high quality public transport scheme linking the railway station up to Campbell Park and its extension beyond.
- 2.2.4 Policies CC8 and CC9 of the Local Plan provide guidance on the design and layout of new development and the design of new buildings within CMK. Key requirements of these policies include the need for development proposals to:
 - Make a positive contribution to the public realm, including provision or improvement of open space
 - Incorporate covered walkways on the frontages of all buildings facing Gates and Boulevards
 - Interact with, and contribute positively, to their surroundings at street level, encourage pedestrian activity, and contribute to a sense of place and vitality
 - Generally, have a minimum height of five to six storeys with taller buildings in prominent locations
 - Use a high standard of facing materials
 - Provide safe, attractive and convenient pedestrian through routes within or between buildings
- 2.2.5 In addition to the policies mentioned above, the following Local Plan Policies are relevant:
 - Transport policies T1-T6, T10-T11, T15
 - D1-D2a (design), D4 (sustainable construction)

 CMK policies CC1 (retail development), CC5 (office development), CC7A (key transport principles) and Policy CC7C (key principles for parking), CC10 (planning obligations)

2.3 Core Strategy

- 2.3.1 The Core Strategy, which forms part of the development plan for Milton Keynes, was adopted in July 2013.
- 2.3.2 Policy CS7 refers to the key objectives for the development of CMK: "1. Achieve higher quality buildings and spaces around them, with greater attention to human scale and more detail and variety of uses within proposals; 2. Promote a higher density of development in appropriate locations; 3. Achieve growing visitor numbers from outside the city to further enhance CMK's status as a regional and national destination for shopping, culture and leisure; 4. Offer a range of travel options which collectively will support an increase in visitor numbers to the city centre and increased travel distances; 5. Develop as an attractive focus for all the residents of the Borough, whilst recognising its role as a District Centre for most of the surrounding estates; 6. Encourage greater access to and within the area by walking, cycling and public transport; 7. Provide more pedestrian-friendly routes and spaces between new and exiting buildings and public areas; 8. Improve integration between the facilities and defined guarters of the area; 9. Accommodate the expansion needs of tertiary Higher Education such as the University Campus Milton Keynes (UCMK); 10. Offer an attractive urban living environment for the residents of current and future dwellings."

2.4 CMK Alliance Plan 2026

- 2.4.1 Under the Government's Localism Agenda, the CMK Town Council, local business leaders and Milton Keynes Council have come together to create an alliance of CMK residents and businesses to prepare a business neighbourhood plan – the CMK Alliance Plan 2026.
- 2.4.2 A draft neighbourhood plan was published for consultation in October 2012. A local hearing was held in December 2013, and the report of the examination of the plan was published in April 2014. The CMK Alliance Plan 2026 is at an advanced stage and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 2.4.3 The neighbourhood plan identifies the site as being suitable for B1 office use. The key principles of the neighbourhood plan are broadly in line with those of the CMK Development Framework.
- 2.4.4 The CMK Alliance Plan 2026 will be the subject of two referendums, one for businesses and one for residents, anticipated to be early 2015. If successful at referendum, the neighbourhood plan will be 'made' by the Council and will form part of the development plan. It will replace existing local plan policies for CMK.

2.5 CMK Development Framework

2.5.1 This Development Framework was adopted in January 2013. Although it replaces the 2002 Development Framework as well as other existing SPG/SPDs in CMK, it cannot and does not replace Local Plan policy. It does however, based on Lessons Learnt from the 2002 Development Framework, provide upto-date guidance which occasionally varies from Local Plan policy. Where this occurs, the Council will welcome proposals that conform with the guidance contained in the Development Framework.

- 2.5.2 Key principles of the Development Framework include:
 - Promotes retention of existing building lines
 - Promotes retention of existing surface level car parking
 - Proposes that new development should provide its required parking within the application site
 - Advises that buildings up to 8 storeys in height will generally be encouraged along the Boulevards and Gates
 - Applications for taller buildings within the Central Business District will be considered if they meet certain criteria
 - Midsummer Boulevard is identified as a key pedestrian route in CMK and therefore development that fronts onto it requires the greatest attention in terms of the creation of frontages that will enliven these pedestrian routes
 - Promotes a mix of uses at ground floor level fronting the footpaths along the boulevards to animate the public realm
 - Advises that main entrances to buildings should address portes-cochere
 - Requires that buildings facing onto Gates and Boulevards must include within these frontages a weather protected walkway

- Promotes a finer grain of development, particularly along the most important pedestrian routes, such as Midsummer Boulevard.
- 2.5.3 The Development Framework identifies a number of character areas within CMK. The site lies within the Central Business District, where the predominant land use should be B1 offices.

2.6 Other Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)/Documents (SPDs)

- 2.6.1 In addition to the CMK Development Framework, the following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) should be considered as material considerations when preparing any planning application for the site:
 - CMK Handbook for Public Realm (2006)
 - Sustainable Construction SPD (2007)
 - Parking Standards (2005)
 - A suite of Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance relating to Developer Contributions.

2.7 Planning Summary

2.7.1 Policies in the adopted Local Plan, supplementary guidance in the CMK Development Framework (February 2013) and emerging policy in the CMK Business Alliance Plan 2026 (Draft for Examination) are material planning considerations. These policies support a mixed use development with B1 office as the predominant use.

SECTION 3: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 It is important to understand the existing site and surrounding area and their features, as this informs the layout and design principles for any redevelopment of the site. Figures 2 and 3 provide an analysis of the site and its context.

3.2 Surrounding Area

Land Uses

3.2.1 To the west of the site is the Pinnacle development, a major office scheme with a small retail element. To the east of the site is Witan Gate House, an office development. To the south of the site is Grafton Park.

Public Realm

3.2.2 To the north of the site is existing public surface level parking, consisting of a double row of right-angled spaces.

- 3.2.3 Lower 3rd Street and Lower 4th Street form the western and eastern edge of the site (respectively). They are typical of the third level of streets below Gates and Boulevards in CMK and include parallel parking bays on each side of the street.
- 3.2.4 Pedestrian access to the site is provided:
 - along and across Midsummer Boulevard via portes-cochere;
 - along Lower Third Street and through Grafton Park;
 - along Lower Fourth Street.

Existing Infrastructure

- 3.2.5 The site fronts Midsummer Boulevard, and consequently is served by the typical boulevard infrastructure: existing surface level parking, transport access, servicing, pedestrian routes, landscaping and utilities.
- 3.2.6 Appendix A highlights the key utilities in proximity to the site.



Porte cochere across Midsummer Boulevard



Grafton Park lies to the south of the site.

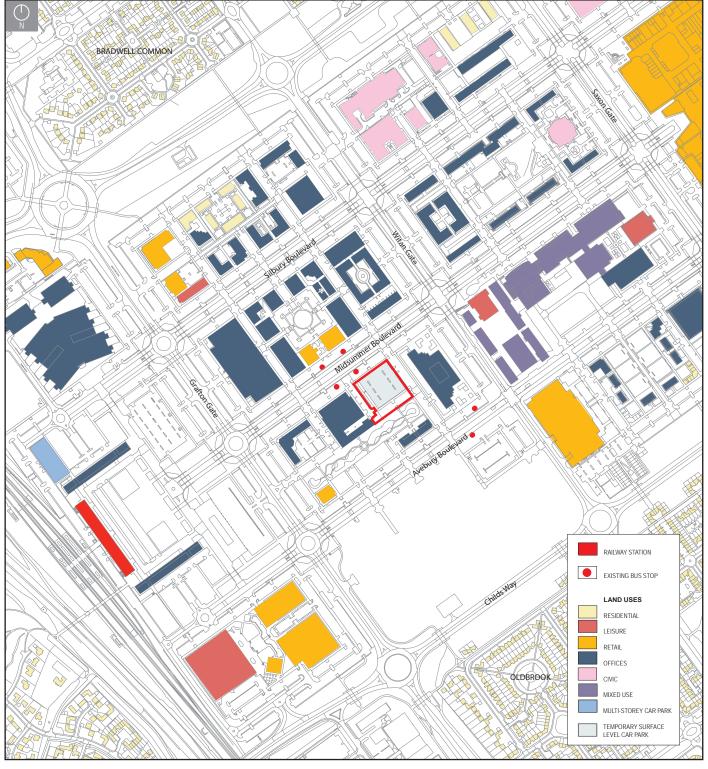
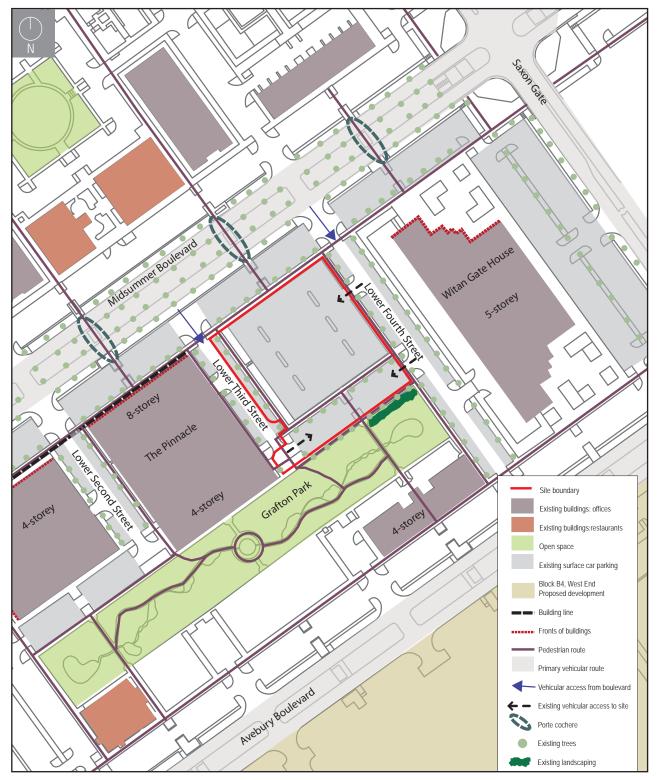


Figure 2: Surrounding Area





Building Heights, Setbacks and Edge Conditions

- 3.2.7 The Pinnacle is 8 storeys where it fronts Midsummer Boulevard dropping down to 4 storeys where it faces Grafton Park. Witan Gate House, to the east of the site, is 5 storeys in height.
- 3.2.8 The Pinnacle is set at the back of the pavement.Witan Gate House is set back 13m from the edge of the pavement.
- 3.2.9 All four boundaries of the site are open.

Public Transport Access

- 3.2.10 The site is located within walking distance (approximately 500 metres) of the Central Railway Station via a direct footpath link.
- 3.2.11 There are bus stops on both sides of Midsummer Boulevard in front of the Pinnacle.



The site viewed from Midsummer Boulevard



Colonnade to front of the Pinnacle



Bus stops on Midsummer Boulevard

3.3 The Site

- 3.3.1 The site comprises the northern portion of blocklet B3.3. The site slopes downwards from north-east to south-west.
- 3.3.2 The majority of the site is currently used as a temporary 172 space surface level car park. A public footway, with a line of street trees, runs along the southern boundary of the temporary car park.
- 3.3.3 The southern part of the site comprises a double row of right-angled parking spaces.
- 3.3.4 The site is currently served by Lower 3rd Street, which connects to Midsummer Boulevard, and Lower 4th Street which runs between Midsummer and Avebury Boulevards. The temporary car park and the parking in the southern part of the site is served from Lower 4th Street.



The Pinnacle







Existing access to site from Lower Fourth Street

3.4 **Opportunities and Constraints**

- 3.4.1 The preceding sections of the development brief provide an appraisal of the site's existing character and context.
- 3.4.2 The site is relatively unconstrained and is situated in a highly accessible location in CMK.
- 3.4.3 The site has three street and one public footway frontages which need to be addressed. It is served by existing public realm, transport and utilities infrastructure.
- 3.4.4 The site is currently served by Lower 3rd Street, and Lower 4th Street.
- 3.4.5 The southern edge of the site borders Grafton Park.
- 3.4.6 The site is within close proximity of bus stops and Milton Keynes Central railway station.
- 3.4.7 Planning policy supports a mixed use development with B1 office as the predominant use.
- 3.4.8 The opportunities and constraints have served to underpin the rationale behind the approach and principles of this Brief and the Parameters Plan, outlined in section 5.



View of site from Grafton Park



View of site from Lower Third Street



View of site from Lower Fourth Street

SECTION 4: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 Development Opportunities

4.1.1 The planning policy context as outlined in Section 3 highlights that a mixed use development with B1 office as the predominant use is appropriate.

Offices

4.1.2 A predominantly office based development would best fulfil the planning requirements for this site.

Small-scale retail

4.1.3 Small-scale retail uses (A1 shops, and A3 restaurants and cafes) at ground floor level will be encouraged in order to create an active frontage to Midsummer Boulevard.

Residential

- 4.1.4 Apartments will be appropriate at upper floor levels and/or in the southern portion of the site overlooking Grafton Park.
- 4.1.5 It is expected that 30% of the total housing will be provided as affordable housing, as outlined in the Council's Affordable Housing SPD adopted in 2013.

SECTION 5: PLANNING & DESIGN PRINCIPLES

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section outlines the principles relevant to the design and development of the site. A Parameters Plan accompanies the principles which serves to spatially represent the key design principles.

5.2 Layout

5.2.1 Development should follow perimeter block principles so that there is a clear public front with entrances and a clear private back. Built form should come up to the back of the existing footways along Midsummer Boulevard. The layout should not result in ambiguous space that is not clearly public or private (such as alleyways) or public space that is not properly addressed.

5.3 Building Lines and Frontages

Building Lines

5.3.1 New development should adhere to existing building lines and be located behind the existing surface level parking and public footpaths along the Midsummer Boulevard frontage.

Frontages

5.3.2 All public open space and streets must be overlooked by development. In this regard, care must be taken to avoid layouts and building footprints that result in blank elevations that front a public street or footpath.

- 5.3.3 As all four sides of the site face the public realm, it is important that development frontages, particularly at ground floor level, are carefully considered.
- 5.3.4 An active frontage* is to occur along the Midsummer Boulevard frontage in recognition of it being on the most heavily utilised pedestrian route.
- 5.3.5 Animated frontages** should be provided where possible along Lower 3rd and Lower 4th Street. Site constraints may mean that not all sides of the building can achieve animated frontages. However, the length of street taken up by servicing should be kept to a minimum and included on the side that is least significant in terms of impact on the public realm. Servicing must not occur off Midsummer Boulevard and should be designed to be as discreet as possible to avoid any negative impact of the building frontage onto the public realm.
- 5.3.6 An animated frontage should be provided along the Grafton Park edge of the building.
- 5.3.7 The development should provide a weather protected walkway within the building envelope, with a depth of at least 2 metres, along the

*Active frontage - A building facade that responds positively to the street and particularly at the ground floor includes uses, entrances, and windows that generate activity, which then improves surveillance of and safety on the street.

**Animated frontage - A building facade that responds positively to the street and at the ground floor provides visual activity into and out of the building and potential for overlooking but with no requirement for direct access onto the street.

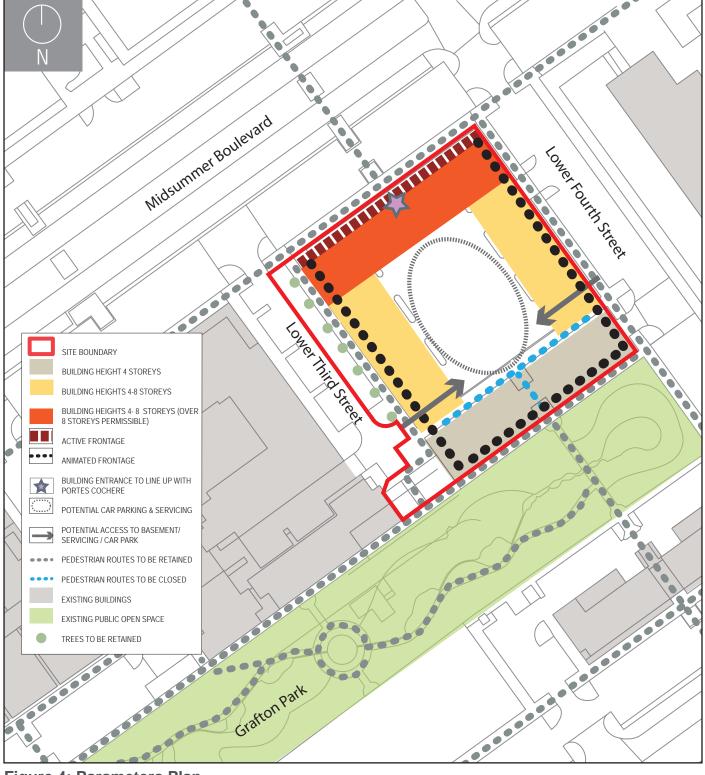


Figure 4: Parameters Plan

Midsummer Boulevard frontage, behind the existing footpath. The design of weather protection features can be a lightweight, high quality canopy without numerous supports, that allows for good visibility of ground floor businesses.

5.4 Detailed Design Appearance

- 5.4.1 Buildings must be of exceptional contemporary design quality, should enhance their surroundings and be constructed from high quality, durable materials.
- 5.4.2 Particular attention should be paid to the Midsummer Boulevard frontage, which occupies a key location for portraying the image of Milton Keynes as a modern, innovative and 21st century city.
- 5.4.3 New buildings within B3.3N need to be carefully integrated with the existing porte-cochere on Midsummer Boulevard. The main entrance to the building should address this pedestrian crossing point.
- 5.4.4 Building heights along Midsummer Boulevard of between 4 and 8 storeys will be encouraged. Proposals for buildings over 8 storeys will be considered where they offer outstanding economic benefits, enhance the skyline and create a landmark. Buildings facing Grafton Park should be 4 storeys.

5.5 Access and Movement

Vehicular Movement

5.5.1 Vehicular access to the site will be provided from Lower 4th Street.

Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

- 5.5.2 Pedestrian movement around all edges of the site will occur along existing footpaths.Pedestrian links into Grafton Park should be retained and, where appropriate, enhanced.
- 5.5.3 Provision should be made for cycle parking and, within commercial development, facilities for cyclists (changing rooms, showers, lockers etc.), in order to encourage greater cycle usage. Proposals should provide as a minimum the cycle parking standards adopted by Milton Keynes Council.

5.6 Parking

- 5.6.1 Car and powered two wheelers parking requirements shall be in accordance with Milton Keynes Council's Parking Standards (www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/ streets-transport-and-parking/parking/ parking-standards).
- 5.6.2 It has long been the practice to restrict the amount of required parking provided on site as part of a development to 30%. However, due to the lack of development of peripheral multi-storey car parks as well as a lack of areas within CMK to build new surface level parking, this is not viewed as a practical way forward in terms of the provision of a new development's car parking.

- 5.6.3 A development's parking requirement will therefore normally be provided within the development site, or where this is not possible, it will be provided elsewhere in an agreed location at the developer's expense.
- 5.6.4 Car parking could be provided in the form of surface level, basement or undercroft parking. If surface level parking is provided on the site, it should be internalised or located at the southern end of the site adjacent to Grafton Park. Basement or undercroft parking shall not be located so as to impinge on the frontage along Midsummer Boulevard.
- 5.6.5 The site is currently used for car parking, of which 172 spaces are within the temporary car park, 50 spaces within the southern car park and 24 spaces on Lower Third Street. Development will result in the loss of the spaces in the temporary car park and also, potentially, in the southern car park. Therefore, there will be a requirement to provide replacement parking on a 1:1 basis. If the replacement parking cannot be provided on the site, the developer will be required to contribute to the cost of the



Integrated Parking Structure: The Pinnacle



Integrated Parking Structure: Vizion development

replacement parking elsewhere in CMK at a rate of £2,500 per space.

5.7 Public Realm and Landscaping

- 5.7.1 There is existing street tree planting within the footways immediately beyond the site's boundaries, which must be protected during construction work. Street trees in the footway on the north-eastern side of Lower Third Street, which is within the site, should be retained.
- 5.7.2 If built form is extended to the southern boundary of the site, the public footway within the site can be closed and the street trees within the footway removed.

5.8 General Planning Requirements

Safety and Security

5.8.1 The developer must consult with the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at an early stage in the design process: initially, regarding design and layout and subsequently, regarding any additional physical security or community safety requirements. The Council will seek to design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour following best practice guidance in 'Secured by Design'.

5.8.2 Most importantly, the layout of the development should avoid the creation of areas of public realm that are 'leftover' and not overlooked by any development, as they can become areas of anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, there should be no ambiguous space in terms of ownership.

Public Art

5.8.3 Any potential redevelopment shall include an element of public art, in line with the Council's policy.

5.9 **Development Requirements**

Servicing, Waste and Utilities

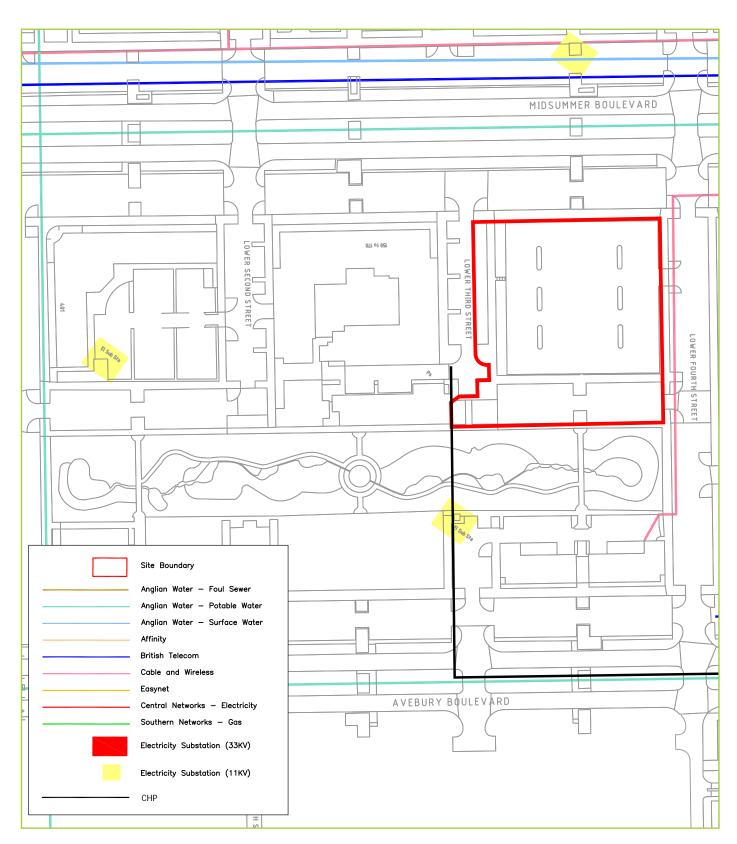
- 5.9.1 The layout and design of the building(s) shall accommodate requirements and access for servicing, waste storage and collection and utilities equipment.
- 5.9.2 Methods of dealing with, and integrating servicing, waste storage and collection shall reflect the city centre location and be part of the building envelope, with no separate enclosures. Service yards should not dominate any elevation and should not occur along the Midsummer Boulevard frontage.

- 5.9.3 Utilities equipment electricity sub-stations, gas governors, telecoms cabinets shall be located in accordance with the CMK Handbook for the Public Realm.
- 5.9.4 The Council's Local Plan Policy D4 and the Sustainable Construction SPD set sustainability standards that will have to be considered as part of the overall design process.
- 5.9.5 The CHP network supplies the Pinnacle and runs adjacent to the site (see Appendix A existing utilities). Links into the existing CMK combined heat and power (CHP) system should be made, if feasible and viable. CHP is the means by which the heat produced during the generation of energy is used to produce hot water for heating. CHP is most efficient when there is a mix of uses near the plant that create a balanced need for the heat during the day and night such as residential, schools, retail and offices. The CHP system is connected to the mains power grid, providing additional security of electrical supply.
- 5.9.6 Connection into the Central Milton Keynes CHP system will enable the development to fulfil the low carbon/renewable energy requirement which forms part of the Council's planning policy on sustainable construction. The policy currently requires a minimum of 10% of carbon dioxide emissions from the development to be offset specifically through the use of low/carbon renewable energy technologies.

Drainage

- 5.9.7 Where Anglian Water requires the diversion of, or any other works to adopted sewers within the site, the developer is responsible for all works and costs incurred in meeting their requirements.
- 5.9.8 The sewers shall be constructed in accordance with the current edition of 'Sewers for Adoption' irrespective of their future adoption status.

APPENDIX A: EXISTING UTILITIES





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