

- 6.23 The Alliance's strategy is to transform this area to become a driver of a much wider spread of economic, social and cultural activity, through a number of interventions:
- » To diversify the retail offer with independent traders and small shops;
 - » To create a covered market hall as a centre of excellence for specialist small traders who would benefit from agglomeration;
 - » To expand community and cultural facilities;
 - » To promote the development of more hotels and some apartment living; and
 - » To create opportunities for a wider range of commercial leisure.
- 6.24 The Plan encourages continuing investment in large retail units, meeting the requirement of national and international chains. Significant growth is provided for in the MK Council's adopted *Core Strategy*. However this will need to be carefully planned to be outward facing as part of an integrated, interesting and enticing city centre, rather than just another out-of-town centre that happens to be downtown.

- 6.25 A study by the British Council of Shopping Centres (June 2007) highlighted the importance of smaller units to accommodate independent retailers, which contribute to creating vital and differentiated places. Through workshops and online comments during the preparation of the *CMKAP*, a number of respondents also highlighted this need. Whilst planning cannot control the occupiers of buildings, it can influence the size of units. In order to improve the vitality and diversity of the retail offer in the city centre, the provision of small retail units within new retail development will be encouraged.

- 6.26 Retailing that cannot be accommodated within the Primary Shopping Area will be encouraged to spill into the remaining Blocklets in Blocks D and E; along Midsummer Boulevard West; and around the Station End.



Independent and specialist trading in the proposed covered market hall will further enhance CMK's retail offer

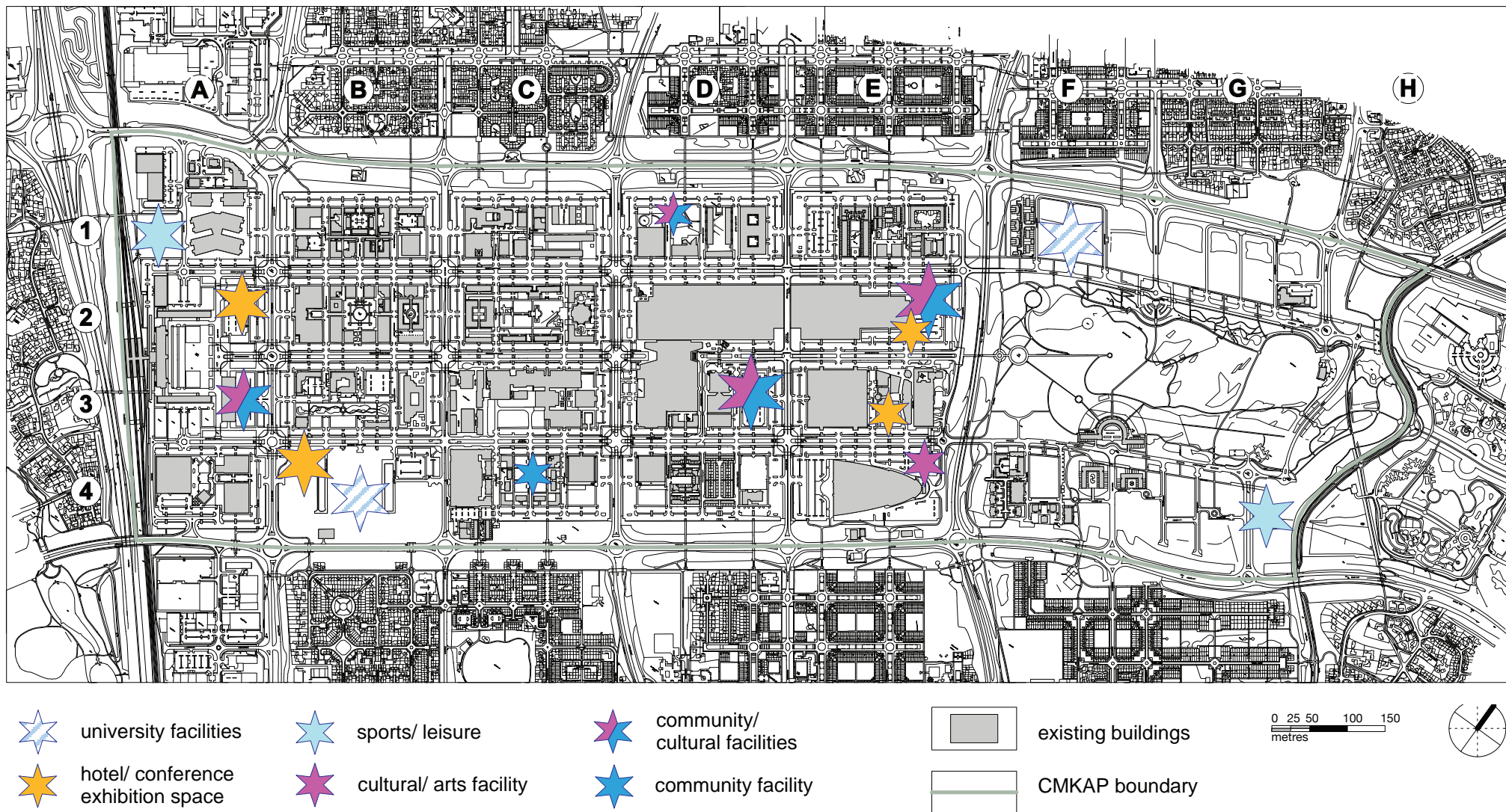


Figure 6: Proposed Culture, Community and Leisure

Residential Use Across the City Centre

- 6.27 The Plan seeks to create a living city centre, not only in response to demand but also to increase animation and encourage a sense of security through natural surveillance from doors, windows and balconies. Thus the Plan promotes housing development across CMK, whilst remaining sensitive to potential environmental problems such as noise and nuisance. Although there is a proposed concentration of housing sites around Campbell Park, housing elsewhere in CMK is encouraged. Preferred sites are located around the perimeter of the city centre and are set back from the frontages of Boulevards and Gates, to avoid excessive noise disturbance.
- 6.28 An appropriate mix of types, sizes and tenures across the area will be promoted with an emphasis on dwellings that meet the needs of younger and older households without children. Essential facilities and services are required so that CMK is seen to be a good place to live long term, not transiently.
- 6.29 In order to accommodate the requirements of MK Council's *Core Strategy*, densities of

residential developments will generally be 250 dwellings per hectare between the Station End and Marlborough Gate, and 100 - 200 around Campbell Park, with the objective of providing around 5,000 additional dwellings across CMK in the plan period. The Alliance has received assurances that the market for that scale of development will exist, probably as housing for private rental and the scale of provision has been confirmed in the adopted *Core Strategy*.

Offices: Quantity and Diversity

- 6.30 The Plan's indicative land proposals exceed MK Council's *Core Strategy* aspirations for office employment growth, because the Alliance considers it necessary to have a choice of investment sites available to the market at any one time and also has an ambitious vision for CMK, seeing it become a major regional centre for investment in office development in the plan period. Evidence suggests that nationally, occupiers are increasingly seeking city centre locations over out-of-town business parks to satisfy the demands of staff for access to better public transport and more facilities and more socialising out of office hours; in Milton Keynes,

which has lacked some of the advantages of city-centre working, migration to out of centre grid squares has undermined office values. The intention of the *CMKAP* is to reverse this trend and dramatically expand the office stock in CMK.

- 6.31 Associated with the expansion in office accommodation will be an increase in the number of hotels in CMK linked to conference facilities, one of which might be a more substantial international conference or congress hall with associated exhibition space.

Encouraging the 24 hour Economy

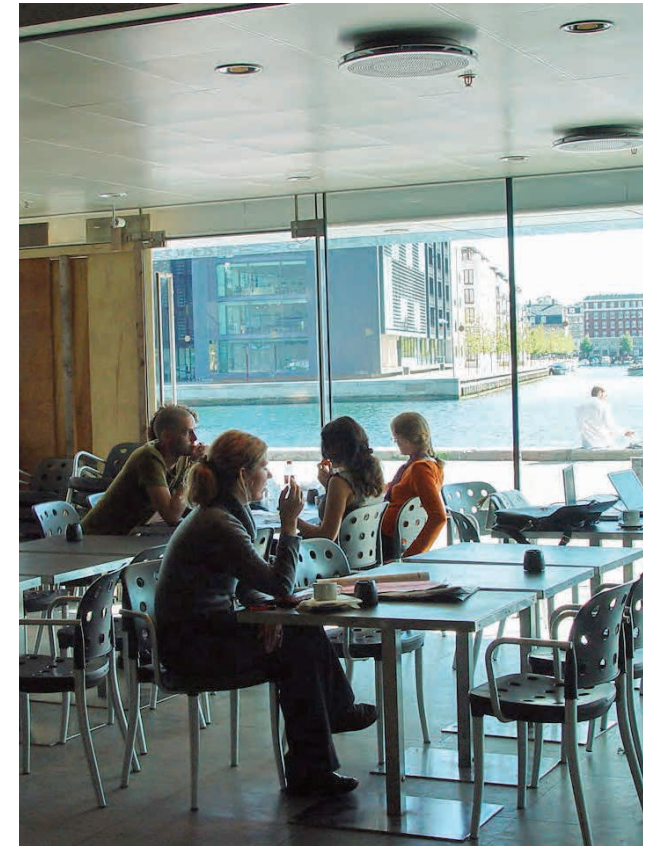
- 6.32 Likewise, the *CMKAP* promotes a considerable increase in commercial leisure provision. This includes: clubs, bars, restaurants, hotels, spas, gyms, sports provision, cinemas, and other cultural and leisure outlets. While additional facilities will cluster in the retail core and Xscape, the mixed use policy encourages leisure uses being located along the Boulevards and Gates, particularly Midsummer Boulevard.
- 6.33 The Plan offers opportunities to expand leisure uses that help create a vibrant night-time economy around the Station End.

A Mix of Cultural, Sporting and Community Uses

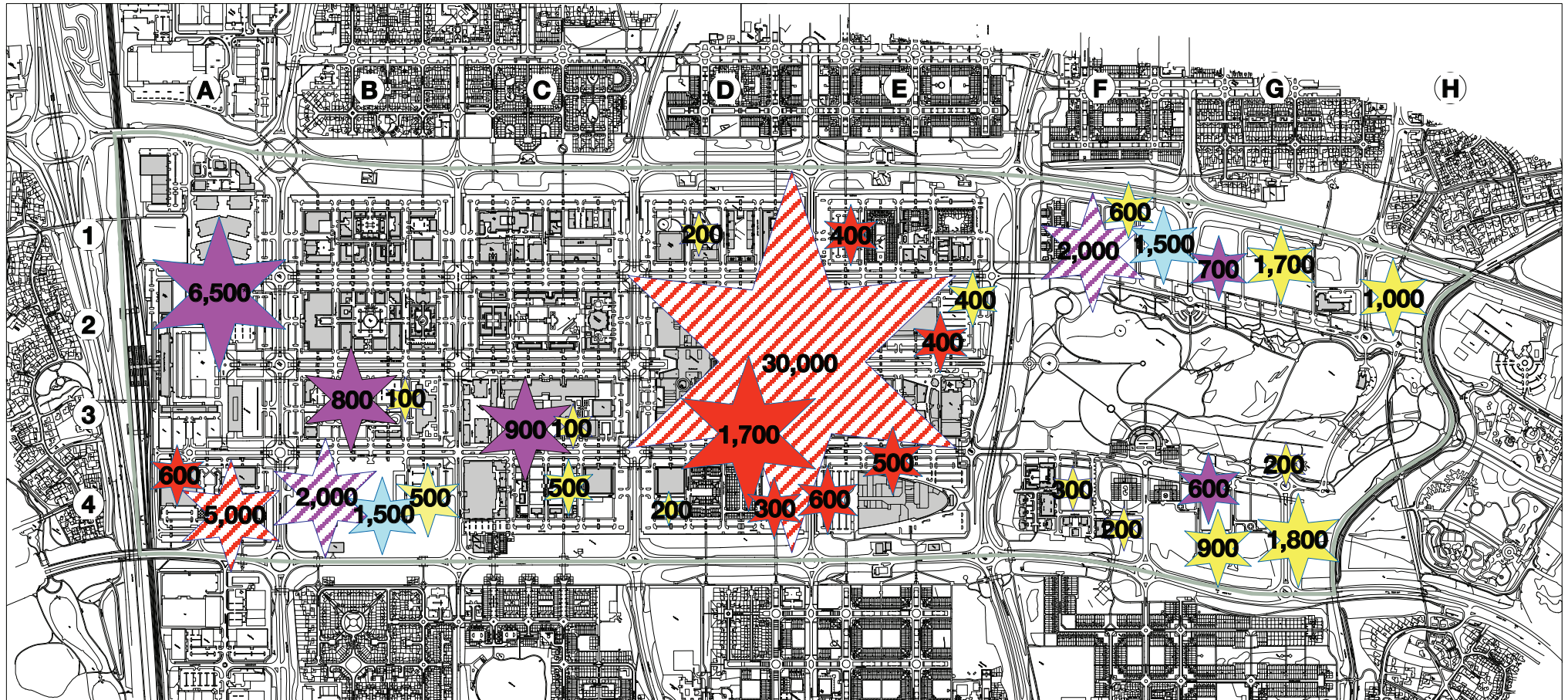
- 6.34 A wide range of cultural, sporting and community facilities enrich the quality of life in a city centre: they are major contributors to the prosperity of the centre by making it a more interesting and sociable place to live and work in, thus making it a more attractive place in which to invest.
- 6.35 CMK falls short in the range and number of facilities that are found in a regional centre, which include:
- » **Sports:** indoor sports centres, swimming pools, urban sports facilities, exercise trails;
 - » **Performing and visual arts:** small theatres, concert halls, dance studios, dance venues; galleries for temporary and permanent exhibitions and the sale of art work, sculpture gardens, artists' studios;
 - » **Culture and civic:** crown court, museums, civic rooms, churches and places of worship for different religions; and
 - » **Community and voluntary sector:** meeting rooms, drop-in centres, community cafés and shops.
- 6.36 The indicative land use proposals plan and schedule includes sites for the following uses and facilities (as illustrated in Figure 6):
- » Accommodation for Milton Keynes to grow a major university centre with associated lecture theatres, faculties and student accommodation;
 - » Sports and leisure space: a major urban sports centre; dance studio, etc;
 - » Cultural spaces, for performing arts, a major concert hall, a city museum, and a much expanded city gallery;
 - » Community space: meeting halls and civic rooms; offices and other provision for the voluntary sector; space and facilities for young and old people;
 - » A community medical centre; and
 - » Visitor facilities associated with Campbell Park.
- 6.37 When regeneration takes place, existing provision for the voluntary sector is to be retained or relocated with equivalent or improved provision, such as:
- » The ice rink in the redevelopment of the Leisure Plaza; and
 - » Voluntary sector facilities currently located in the Food Centre.
- 6.38 On the indicative proposals plan and schedule, provision for cultural, sporting and community activities are either shown on sites for which the facility is the sole use, or around the Primary Shopping Area, on sites where the facility is integrated with commercial provision.
- 6.39 The contribution a development makes to the provision of these facilities is either as required under the planning obligations, or where integrated, the provision of accommodation as shown on the indicative schedule and in accordance with policy *CMKAP* SS4.
- 6.40 This strategy will be to the benefit of both commercial and cultural developments, attracting visitors and offering them diverse activities. It is essential that this provision is actively pursued.



A variety of facilities are needed, CMK isn't just about shopping



Community facilities encourage people to congregate and feel part of the neighbourhood



- ★ new office-jobs * includes Network Rail
 ★ new retail jobs
★ new residents
 existing buildings
- ★ towards end of plan period
 ★ new visitors
★ university students & staff
 CMKAP boundary

0 25 50 100 150 metres



Figure 7: Additional Workers (per day), Visitors (per day), and Residents in 2026

7. Access, Transport & Parking Strategy

7.1 Ease of movement and access by all modes - including walking, cycling and public transport - was one of the founding principles in the design of Milton Keynes. Anticipating the need to plan for the comfort and convenience of private cars in modern life led the designers of CMK to design the grid road system and to incorporate generous quantities of free, highly visible surface car parking spaces. These special features have been critical to the success of CMK over the past 40 years and despite the introduction of parking charges, the ease of car access and parking remains a major competitive advantage over ordinary town and city centres.

7.2 However, CMK was designed to meet the needs of 250,000 people in MK and more in the wider catchment. The current population of Milton Keynes is now approaching the originally planned size, and the *Core Strategy* expects the city to grow a further 25% (to 300,000) by 2026 or soon thereafter. In addition, as an emerging regional city centre, the number of workers and visitors attracted to CMK from beyond the Borough is also

expected to increase. MK Council's adopted *Core Strategy* identifies CMK for more intense and larger scale development over this period in order to accommodate many of the new jobs that will be required to support the expected growth (see Figure 7)¹¹. So present movements from within MK to the city centre are projected to increase, as well as flows of people to CMK from the wider region.

7.3 The adopted *Core Strategy* addresses the need to retain ease of movement across the city as the growth unfolds, transforming the public transport system to provide attractive, fast, frequent, convenient and efficient movement in the city and together with the *Local Transport Plan* sets out transport objectives for CMK, from which we distinguish two key goals, in our words:

- » To offer a range of travel options which collectively support an increase in visitor numbers to the city centre; and
- » To encourage greater access to and within the area by walking, cycling and public transport.

7.4 One of the key challenges for the Alliance Plan is to address the significant increase in the number of journeys to CMK (particularly journeys to work) and to avoid ever-increasing demands for space for car parking and the congestion that follows, and the need to make public transport, cycling and walking the superior choice for as many people as possible. The challenge is several-fold:

- » In the next plan period the grid network of City Roads surrounding CMK will be reaching its originally-planned capacity for vehicle movements (i.e. to serve a population of 250,000); and
- » The adopted *Core Strategy* has set ambitious targets for the future growth of CMK - increasing the number of jobs and visitors by 50% and more than doubling the number of CMK homes during the plan period.

¹¹ Numbers calculated using DCLG's employment densities (e.g. jobs per NIA of office or retail space). For visitor numbers, TRICS data for retail shopping malls have been used for trip generation with a 40% 'Parker Factor' reduction for cross-purpose trips.

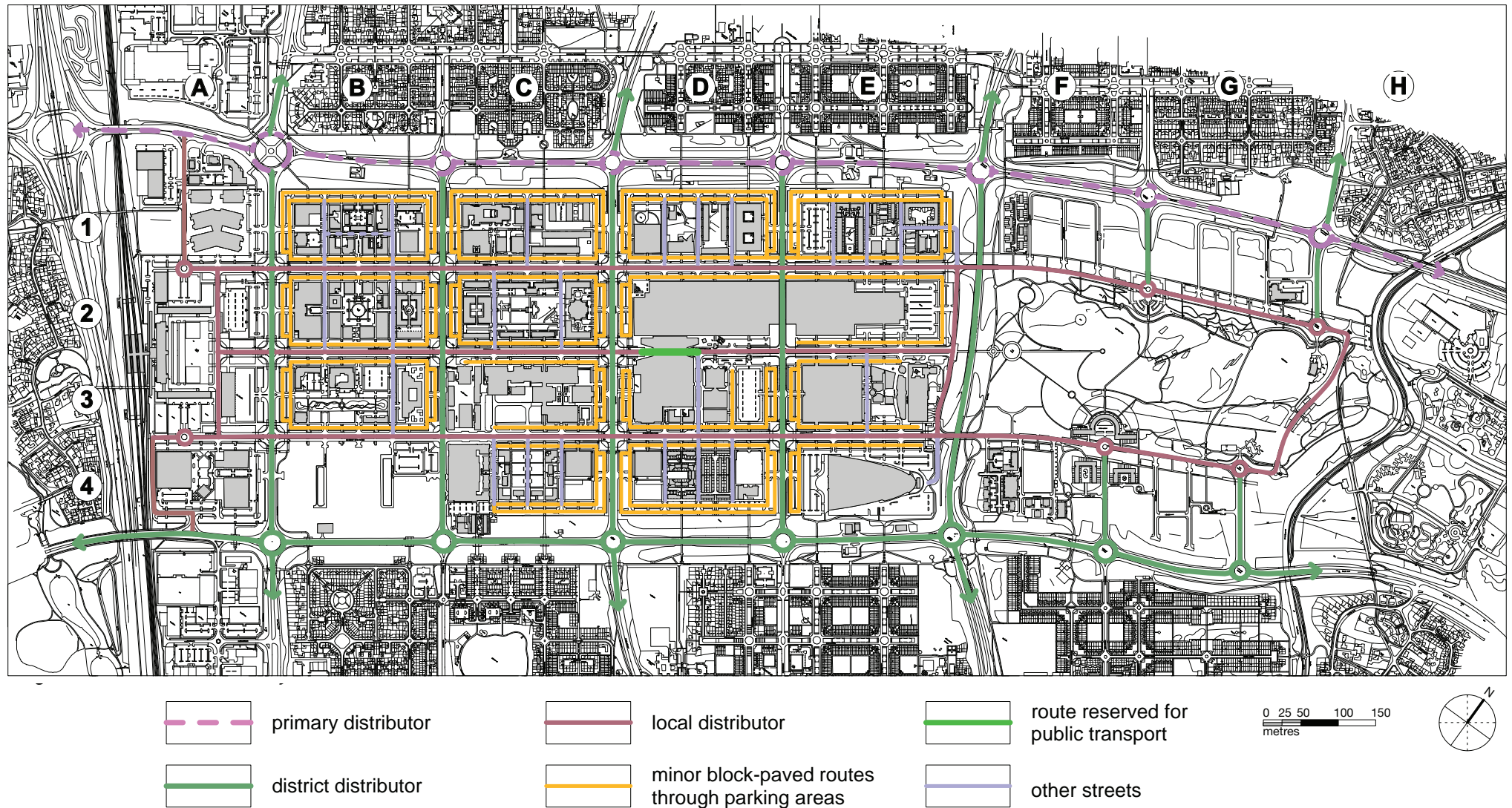


Figure 8: CMK Road Hierarchy

- 7.5 The Plan promotes public transport, cycling and walking as the preferred mode of choice for more people coming to and enjoying CMK. About 10% of journeys into CMK are currently made by bus, and the Plan, in line with previous MK Council transport studies¹², assumes that this can be increased to 20-25% by the end of the Plan period. Part of this shift could also be made by other interventions such as car share, working from home, cycling and walking, staggered work times, and park & ride on the edge of the city. This is an ambitious target, at the limits of what's considered feasible.
- 7.6 The shift to 20-25% of peak period journeys by public transport by 2026 still requires nearly 60% of journeys to be made by car, which even then will only achieve the 70:30 modal split on which the transport design of the original CMK plan was predicated. To put this plainly, use of public transport to get to CMK has to be greatly increased even to reach the expectations of the early 1970s.

- 7.7 The starting point for the transport strategy for CMK is therefore to acknowledge that good provision for cars remains a competitive advantage for CMK, which is of regional importance. In the pursuit of sustainable development, it's important not to 'discourage' car users with higher parking charges and fewer parking spaces, but to *encourage* people, where possible, to switch to public transportation, walking and cycling through improving the attractiveness of such choices with better infrastructure and greater convenience. We must also acknowledge that people will continue to come to CMK from many more directions and at more varied times of day than could ever be served by public transport alone, and from distances that are beyond the reach of cycling and walking.
- 7.8 Second, the transport strategy for CMK will evolve - transport solutions that work today for a population of 250,000 - 300,000 may not work forever. Our strategy must provide the flexibility to 'transition' to new transport choices, rather than trying to design and build 'permanent' solutions to these challenges.

It's important to future-proof transport in CMK by protecting the movement corridors that keep options open for different transport solutions in the future

- 7.9 With this understanding in mind, the Alliance's strategy for access, transport and parking has these strands:
- » Enhance highways and car parking capacity for future growth and development;
 - » Transform public transport to provide attractive high quality, greater capacity, flexibility and choice;
 - » Encourage walking and cycling through better public realm - safer and more attractive streets and Redways; and
 - » Restrain car parking provision while shifts to alternative transport modes take place – but it serves no purpose to restrain the car if there is no convenient and attractive alternative way for people to move around.

¹² 2007 MKP Transport Strategy Review