

# Plan:MK Strategic Development Directions Consultation

January 2016



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Plan:MK



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# Section 1 Introduction

## Section 1 Introduction

### Introduction

Milton Keynes is on a journey to create a new Local Plan - we call it Plan:MK. This document is part of that journey, looking at ideas for the longer term growth of Milton Keynes that have come out of a series of workshops that took place in Spring 2015.

Before we go into detail about those ideas, this section looks at what a Local Plan is and why we need to have one; what the starting point is for preparing Plan:MK; the process we will go through as we move forward; and the work that has been done so far.



Following this introduction, Section 2 'How to Comment' sets out details of the consultation period for this document and how you can send us your views on the questions posed in this document. Section 3 'Longer Term Vision and Opportunities' discusses ideas of what Milton Keynes might be like in the future, and Section 4 'Development Directions' looks at a series of strategic, spatial options for how that could be delivered. Section 5 'Next Stages' covers what happens at the end of this stage in the process, how your comments will be used as we move forward, and what else we will be doing in order to prepare Plan:MK. Finally, Section 6 'Links and

References' provides you with details of where to go if you want to find out more about any of the issues we cover in this consultation document or look at any of the documents referred to.

### What is a Local Plan? What is Plan:MK?

As mentioned above, Plan:MK will be the new Local Plan for the Borough of Milton Keynes, covering a period of around 15 years from the date of adoption<sup>(1)</sup>.

A Local Plan will usually set out a Vision and Development Strategy for the whole of the Borough, and include policies that will guide developments of all sizes so that they help to deliver that Vision. This includes the high-level, strategic policies that all development proposals would need to meet, and also the more issue- or area-specific policies that would be used when we determine the detail of a planning application. The Local Plan will also allocate sites for different types of land uses, including areas for residential, employment, leisure, retail, education or community uses.

Plan:MK will help to provide certainty for local people, developers and other stakeholders about what will happen as Milton Keynes grows and changes over the coming decades. Plan:MK will also provide the strategic context for Neighbourhood Plans, prepared by Town and Parish Councils.

All Local Plans have to be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>(2)</sup>, which sets out the Government's policies for development.

When adopted, Plan:MK will form the key document in our Development Plan. The documents that together form the Development Plan set out the policies we use when we determine planning

- 1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, paragraph 157), suggests that Local Plans, like Plan:MK should "be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date".
- 2 National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF, <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk>

applications. This includes other planning policy documents prepared by Milton Keynes Council and also Neighbourhood Plans that are produced by Town and Parish Councils<sup>(3)</sup>. Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local communities to address specific planning issues in their local area, and they must go through a process of consultation and examination. They also have to comply with the NPPF and with the strategic policies in the Development Plan.

Underlying any Local Plan, there also needs to be a robust evidence base of background information documents and research papers, outlining the facts and figures about the Borough, what might be expected to happen into the future and the reasons for those projections or conclusions, for example population forecasts or the need for new homes. We also need to take account of what is happening in neighbouring areas and the evidence being prepared to support the development of their plans. This evidence base will be used to provide justification for the policies in Plan:MK.



### Where are we starting from?



The Development Plan for Milton Keynes currently includes two sets of policies that will be reviewed and replaced by Plan:MK.

Firstly, there is the Core Strategy that was adopted in July 2013 which sets out the strategic planning policies currently used to guide development in the Borough<sup>(4)</sup>. The Core Strategy was prepared during the recent recession when it was impossible to predict how the Borough would eventually be affected by the downturn in the economy. When the Core Strategy went through the Examination stage, the Inspector required that we made a commitment to undertake an early review of the Plan in the form of Plan:MK<sup>(5)</sup>. The Inspector also determined that we should allocate some small- to medium-sized housing sites to make sure we had a flexible supply of land to meet our housing target in the Core Strategy, in case the delivery of some of our larger sites is delayed. The Site Allocations Plan is being prepared to meet that need<sup>(6)</sup>.

- 3 You can find out more about the Development Plan and the documents that are part of it on our website at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy). In particular, you can read about the progress we are making with our Site Allocations Plan and our Minerals Local Plan.
- 4 You can look at the Core Strategy at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013)
- 5 See Core Strategy Policy CSAD1 "Review of the Core Strategy"
- 6 Progress with preparing the Site Allocations Plan is covered at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan)

# Section 1 Introduction

The other set of policies that Plan:MK will review and replace is the remaining saved policies of the existing Milton Keynes Local Plan which was adopted in 2005<sup>(7)</sup>.

Generally these policies are the more detailed, development management type policies that are used when we determine planning applications (alongside the Government's planning policies in the National Planning Policy Framework).



In preparing our new Local Plan we will also consider the policies for areas covered by Neighbourhood Plans. This might involve cross referencing to existing Neighbourhood Plan policies for specific areas, or we could include those policies in the relevant chapter of Plan:MK. The Neighbourhood Plans that are currently being prepared have to follow the strategic policies in the Core Strategy. Since Plan:MK will replace the Core Strategy, this might lead to the need to review some of the existing Neighbourhood Plans so that they fully reflect any new strategic policies. We will

work closely with communities who have prepared and are preparing Neighbourhood Plans on this.

We also need to prepare Plan:MK in the context of plans being developed in adjacent areas. In particular, emerging plans in Aylesbury Vale<sup>(8)</sup> and Central Bedfordshire<sup>(9)</sup> are important factors we need to keep up-to-date with, and officers are in regular contact with colleagues in those authorities and also meeting more formally through the Duty to Cooperate.

## What is the process for preparing a Local Plan?

The process for preparing a Local Plan is set out in statutory regulations<sup>(10)</sup>. In summary, the key stages in the process that we are following is set out below:

- Develop, refine and publish the evidence base underlying the Local Plan. Work on the evidence base continues throughout the plan-making process.
- Develop and consult on the issues, constraints and opportunities that need to be taken into account in the Plan. We did this through our Topic Papers consultation<sup>(11)</sup> between October and December 2014.
- Develop and consult on options for the Plan's Vision and Development Directions for future growth. This is the stage we are currently at, and the purpose of this consultation document. The Development Directions show where and how future growth could be accommodated. The details will be set out more clearly after this consultation and will lead on to the Preferred Option.

7 The existing Local Plan is available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005)  
8 [www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/planning-policy](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/planning-policy)  
9 [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/planning-policy.aspx](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/planning-policy.aspx)  
10 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/made)  
11 All of the Topic Papers are available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

- Develop and consult on the Preferred Options for the Local Plan. This includes the preferred way forward on the Vision and Spatial Development Strategy and an outline of the policies that will be needed to implement and deliver the Plan. This stage will take into account the feedback on this current consultation and the Topic Papers, plus the outputs of the Evidence Base and a Sustainability Appraisal which will help to make sure Plan:MK is giving due consideration to the social, environmental and economic impacts of its policies.
- Develop and publish for comment the Final Draft Plan, which will be the version that we intend to submit to the Secretary of State for a Public Examination. This stage will also be supported by the next iteration of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- Submit the Final Draft Plan, any comments we receive during the publication period and our background evidence and supporting documents to the Secretary of State. An independent Planning Inspector will be appointed to examine the Plan and anyone who has commented on the Final Draft will have the opportunity to submit further evidence or speak at the Examination hearing sessions.
- Receive the Inspector's Report at the end of the Examination process and consider any changes that need to be made to the Plan in response to his or her recommendations.
- Adopt the final Local Plan, incorporating any changes made in response to the Inspector's recommendations.



As we move through the plan-making process, the draft Local Plan will gain increasing weight and will become a material consideration when we determine planning applications.

Throughout the plan-making process, we must also work with neighbouring planning authorities and other bodies on strategic issues as part of the Duty to Cooperate (DtC)<sup>(12)</sup>. These discussions will be documented as part of the DtC Statement that will show how we have worked with these partners through the plan-making process.

12 You can read more about the Duty to Cooperate in the Planning Policy Guidance [planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/duty-to-cooperate/](https://www.planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/duty-to-cooperate/)

# Section 1 Introduction

## What has been done so far?



As mentioned as part of the process above, we have already done some work to think about the sorts of policies that will be included in the Plan by asking stakeholders to consider questions around some issues, constraints and opportunities that Plan:MK will need to cover in a series of Topic Papers. These papers were consulted on between September and December 2014. We had a great response to those papers, with around 2,000 comments from more than 260 individuals and organisations. Those responses will be used alongside other sources of information and evidence, when we start drafting the detail of our Plan:MK policies for consultation (which is planned for consultation later in 2016) to prepare the Preferred Options document. You can look at the Topic Papers, the Consultation Statement and the responses we received at

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK).

We have also been working to prepare a robust evidence base to help understand some of the issues Milton Keynes is facing. This evidence base includes studies like the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Economic Growth and Employment Land Study. These studies, and others, can be viewed on our website at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-policy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-policy).

We have also been thinking about the overall vision for Plan:MK, and what Milton Keynes might be like in the longer term. This is particularly apt as the city will be 50 years old in 2017 so it is timely to reflect on what has been achieved over the last 50 years and how we can build on that moving forward. By thinking now about

what MK will be like in the future, we can make sure that developments happening over the next decade or so fit in with those longer term goals, and do not prevent them being achieved. This document is an opportunity to share your thoughts on those long term issues and how Milton Keynes could develop in the future.



## What is this consultation about?

This document tells you about some ideas for the longer term growth of the Milton Keynes area which have come out of a series of workshops that took place in the Spring of 2015. We would like your views on these ideas, so we have included a number of questions throughout this document which we'd like your feedback on. Comments made on this document will, together with the feedback we received previously on the Topic Papers and further detailed evidence and studies and working with our neighbours and other partners, help to inform the development strategy of the new Local Plan.

The workshops were attended by stakeholders from many different backgrounds and areas of interest and expertise. The intention of those workshops was to understand those stakeholders'

priorities and ambitions for Milton Keynes, and then to talk through spatial options for where development could take place in the future to help deliver those priorities. We asked the participants to 'think big' and we encouraged them to draw their ideas on maps. There was a wide range of interesting views put forward and a good amount of consensus with some themes coming up several times.

A report of those workshops has been prepared which explains the process we went through, who was involved and what the outputs were<sup>(13)</sup>. Section 3 'Longer Term Vision and Opportunities' of this document sets out the priorities and ambitions for Milton Keynes in the longer-term identified by participants at the workshops. The Development Directions in Section 4 reflect the results of the workshop discussions about how and where Milton Keynes could grow in the future. There are questions within each Section so that you can tell us what you think about the outputs from the workshops and how you think MK should grow.



### MK Futures 2050

Alongside work on Plan:MK, the Council is also exploring the future of Milton Keynes in a wider context, as a UK city and economy of increasing importance. The MK Futures 2050 Commission process is running alongside Plan:MK, with the two activities interlinking and sharing information. The Commission will be considering this Strategic Development Directions consultation document, and will think about how outputs of the Vision Workshops discussed here relate to the economic future of the city. Similarly, the Plan:MK process will use the outputs from the MK Futures 2050 Commission as part of the evidence base moving forward, to ensure the plan maximises opportunities for the future of Milton Keynes. The timetables for these two processes have been programmed to take full advantage of the links between them. You can find out more about the MK Futures 2050 work on their website<sup>(14)</sup>.

13 The Vision Workshops report is available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

14 You can find out more about the MK Futures 2050 Commission at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/MKFutures2050Commission](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/MKFutures2050Commission)

## Section 2 How to Comment

### Section 2 How to Comment

We welcome your comments on the questions posed in this consultation document. Your input will help to prepare the development strategy for Plan:MK, and will be really important in determining how Milton Keynes grows and develops in the future.

To help encourage debate around the issues raised in this document, and to talk to a wide range of stakeholders and groups about Plan:MK, there will be a series of consultation and engagement opportunities including public meetings, presentations and drop-in sessions over the coming months. You can keep up-to-date with what we are doing through our website at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK), or follow us on Twitter at [@mkccouncil](https://twitter.com/mkccouncil).

Your Parish or Town Council is also likely to be discussing their comments on this consultation document. Please contact them directly to find out at what meeting it will be considered, and how you could get involved.



### Consultation Dates

The consultation on the Strategic Development Directions will run for a twelve-week consultation period, between **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January and Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016**. All comments must be received by 5pm on the closing date. All comments will be made publicly available later in 2016, so we are unable to keep your comments confidential.

### How to respond

You can respond to the questions in this consultation document in various ways.

We would encourage you to respond **online** through our consultation portal at <http://miltonkeynes-consult.objective.co.uk>

Alternatively, you could send us your comments by **email** to [PlanMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:PlanMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk), preferably in a word format, or a pdf that we can copy and paste from, in order to help us process your comments more efficiently.

Finally, you can send your comments by **post** to the address below:

Development Plans Team  
Milton Keynes Council  
Civic Offices  
1 Saxon Gate East  
Central Milton Keynes  
MK9 3EJ

### Further information

If you need more information, please have a look at our **website** at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK), drop us an **email** to [PlanMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:PlanMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk), give us a **call** on 01908 252358, or come along to one of our **consultation events**.

# Section 2 How to Comment



## Section 3 Longer Term Vision and Opportunities

### Section 3 Longer Term Vision and Opportunities

#### Why have a Long-Term Vision?



A key part of any Local Plan is to set out a long-term vision for the area. Normally, a Local Plan, which will be concerned primarily with spatial issues, will have a 15-year horizon<sup>(15)</sup>, and the Development Strategy in the Plan will focus on delivering a Vision in that timescale.

As part of our thinking on Plan:MK, we want to take a longer term view to think about what sort of place Milton Keynes could become, how big the different settlements within the Borough might grow and what it might look like further into the future. That way, we can make sure that the developments we plan and create now through Plan:MK, fit with that longer term vision and do not prevent it from being achieved in the future.

This is similar to the way that the original plan for Milton Keynes from 1970 looked forward over several decades, so that new developments fitted with the overall aims for the future of the city. So while the Vision will cover the longer term future, the policies in Plan:MK will just focus on what will happen in the first 15-year period.

A Local Plan like Plan:MK is typically reviewed every five years or so and future iterations can adjust or modify the development strategy where appropriate to make sure the long-term vision is being achieved.

#### Preparing a Vision

The draft Vision for Plan:MK will be developed by looking at a range of different inputs, including what has made MK a successful place and what works here; using feedback from the MK Futures 2050 Commission process as mentioned in Section 1 'Introduction'; from the previous consultation on the Topic Papers; as well as from the range of stakeholders who attended our workshops in Spring 2015. We have also looked at the previous Visions for Milton Keynes from, for example, the original Plan for Milton Keynes from 1970 and the existing Core Strategy<sup>(16)</sup>.



The Vision Workshops provided an excellent opportunity to understand what people's priorities are for the future and more detail about them and the outputs from them is included in the Workshop Report<sup>(17)</sup>. As mentioned in Section 1 'Introduction', we asked a wide range of participants to consider their priorities and ambitions for Milton Keynes in the longer term. Participants were encouraged to express their ideas on maps, which was also used to develop the options in Section 4

- 15 The National Planning Policy Framework suggests that plans have a 15-year horizon, as discussed in Section 1 'Introduction', in Footnote 1.
- 16 You can read about these previous Visions in our "The Way Forward" Topic Paper at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)
- 17 The Vision Workshop Report is available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

## Section 3 Longer Term Vision and Opportunities

'Development Directions'. There was a wide range of interesting views put forward, and from these workshops we have been able to identify a number of commonly recurring issues and themes which could be included in the Vision for Plan:MK. These are set out below and with your feedback, will help us to prepare a new longer term Vision for Milton Keynes to help inform the preparation of Plan:MK.

These commonly recurring issues and themes have been summarised into the bullet points below:

*In the longer term, Milton Keynes could become a place:*

- *That has grown and developed in a sustainable way that respects its original concepts whilst embracing innovation and change.*
- *That provides quality of life through opportunity and choice for all (a place for everyone).*
- *That has succeeded in achieving easy movement and access for all.*
- *That is recognised internationally as a prosperous and competitive economy benefiting from a wide ranging skill base.*
- *That has taken advantage of growth and change to benefit the citizens of Milton Keynes and the surrounding area.*
- *Where infrastructure needs have been met through the smart use of resources and technology.*
- *With an international profile and reputation as an attractive and forward thinking, 'can do' place.*
- *With a variety of people belonging to diverse communities across the urban and rural area.*



### Question 1

#### Workshop outputs for a longer term Vision

Do you agree that these bullet points are a useful starting point to be used alongside other inputs (including the outcomes of the MK Futures 2050 Commission) for a Vision for Plan:MK and Milton Keynes in the longer term?

### Question 2

#### Form of Vision for Plan:MK

When we come to write the Vision for Plan:MK do you think it would work best as a short, bullet point list or would there be value in expanding each aim with some explanatory text to provide more detail about what it covers?

## Section 3 Longer Term Vision and Opportunities

### Other Longer Term Opportunities

In addition to the ideas for what a Vision could include and the Development Directions that follow in Section 4, there were some points raised at the Vision Workshops that we would like your views on, that aren't necessarily tied to a specific development direction. At this stage, no consideration has been given to the viability or deliverability of these proposals, but when looking in the longer term, they may become possible.

How achievable land-use proposals are is an important matter when we come to write Plan:MK. National planning policy

encourages Local Plans to be aspirational but realistic and we would need to be able to demonstrate that our plans and proposals are soundly based and have the backing of any organisations key to their delivery. A number of the ideas below would involve close working with and the agreement of our neighbouring local authorities.

The full list of points raised at the workshops is included in the Vision Workshops report<sup>(18)</sup>, but the following were made more than once, or, we think, may have particular merit.



- An integrated transport system in CMK and beyond, perhaps using the grid roads or considering alternative methods of transport, including light rail, tram or an overhead system.
- Making better links with key destinations which could include linking up CMK with the hospital, the Stadium and Bletchley train station reflecting its future role as an interchange with the East-West Rail Line.
- The development of a logistics hub at Junction 13 of the M1.

18 The Vision Workshops Report is available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

## Section 3 Longer Term Vision and Opportunities

- Maximising the image and identity of Milton Keynes, reinforcing the heritage, landmarks and buildings, and the distinctive character of the city.
- The creation of an urban buzz in CMK, with a 24/7 and 365 days a year economy, with day- and night-time transport, and a CMK that isn't just about the shopping centre.
- Encouraging more independent retailers, restaurants and other businesses, with outlets for creative uses, in CMK and other locations.
- Improved links with Cranfield University, which could develop to become an undergraduate university and could even be a location for a new hospital to serve both Milton Keynes and Bedford.
- Enhanced cultural diversity with arts, sports and environmental facilities in areas across MK.
- Create another 'Home World' type exhibition, showcasing the innovation that MK has been known for.
- Setting high standards for new development, for example Lifetime Homes, meeting the highest sustainability and efficiency requirements, and enabling older buildings to be upgraded and improved too.
- Help to grow the reputation of Milton Keynes through the sorts of things that help make a city an exciting place to be. This could include, for example, a campus university, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a theme park or a festival site.

### Question 3

#### Other opportunities

What are your thoughts on this list of workshop outputs? Do you think there are any that should be considered further through Plan:MK?

### Question 4

#### The next 'big things' for Milton Keynes

What sorts of facilities or opportunities do you think Milton Keynes should try to develop in the future?



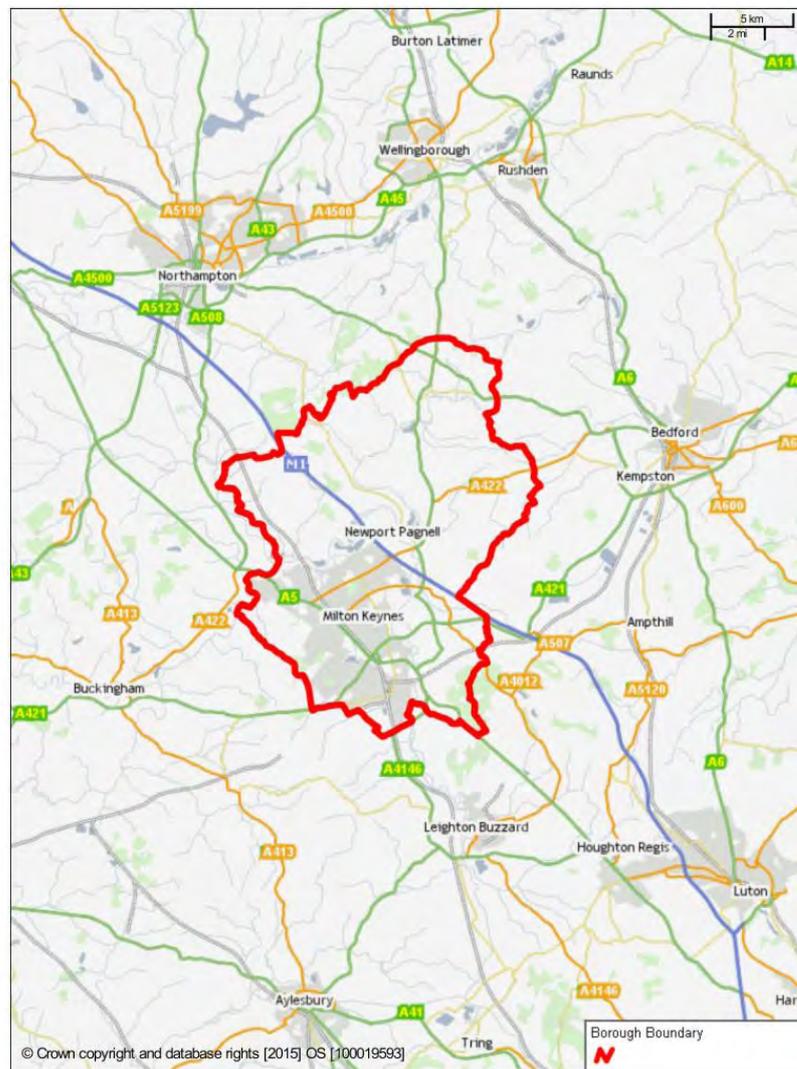
## Section 4 Development Directions

### Section 4 Development Directions

As a New Town, Milton Keynes was future-proofed for growth. This fits well with Government policy in the National

Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires local planning authorities to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area<sup>(19)</sup>.

Figure 1 Context Map



For these reasons, we need to plan to meet our known future housing and economic needs. When thinking about the future growth of Milton Keynes, it is useful to consider where the Borough sits in its wider geographical context. Figure 1 'Context Map' shows Milton Keynes, its transport connections and neighbouring towns. As

we move through the plan-making process, we will work closely with neighbouring authorities and other bodies including Highways England and the NHS, to make sure we are addressing strategic, cross-boundary issues, as part of our Duty to Cooperate.

19 NPPF, paragraphs 11-16, [planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/](http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/)

One of the key tests that will be applied when the Plan is examined by a Planning Inspector on behalf of the Government is whether it has been 'positively prepared'. That means that the Plan has to have taken a proactive approach that embraces the need for growth. If we prepare a Plan that prevents or tries to restrict development then we will fail this test. If that happens, the Planning Inspector would propose what they consider to be an appropriate level of growth and we would lose the opportunity to direct the future of the Borough in a managed and sustainable way.



### Scale of Development

In terms of the overall scale of growth, it is likely that Milton Keynes will continue to need to deliver at least 1,750 dwellings per annum until 2031, which marks the extent of our current evidence on housing need numbers<sup>(20)</sup>. In preparing Plan:MK we will be updating and reviewing that and other evidence and will need to consider how to plan for the level of housing need arising from that work.

Naturally not all space in a new development will be taken up by housing and there is an expectation that roughly half of any large development area would be devoted to the employment, infrastructure, landscaping and open space that would make new developments sustainable and attractive places to live.

Plan:MK will cover around the first 15-20 years of any longer term vision so there will be scope for proposals to change over time.

However, it is useful to look over the longer term when considering the suitability of the development directions and it should be noted that some of these options could take significantly longer than the Plan:MK 15-year horizon to be completed.

### Where have the options come from?

At the workshops we asked the participants to be bold in their ideas, without too much focus on constraints or the political challenges that might come with cross-border growth. Ideas were also encouraged to be 'spatial' wherever possible. 'Spatial' means that they can be mapped and expressed as a physical proposal rather than just a concept.

Hundreds of suggestions were recorded at the meetings and you can read more about them in the Vision Workshops report. While some suggestions may not have been hugely visionary, some were not spatial, and others clearly contradicted each other, there was a wide range of interesting views put forward and a high degree of consensus with some themes coming up several times. With the input of independent facilitators, all ideas were looked at and distilled into a set of discrete options that represent recurring ideas from across the different sessions. These four possible directions for future development are mapped on the following pages and it is these that we are seeking public feedback on.



20 Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents)

## Section 4 Development Directions

### Context and Constraints

As we have explained above, the four directions that follow are the result of the workshops that took part earlier in 2015 rather than options being suggested by the Council. No decisions have been made, and the Council has no view or preference at this stage, as to which (if any) of these directions might eventually form part of the Development Strategy for Plan:MK, so your comments are very important. The directions are numbered to make it easier to refer to them. **The numbering does not confer any priority or preference to the respective approaches.**

Before any decision can be taken as to what the Development Strategy of Plan:MK should comprise, we will need to gather a wide range of detailed evidence to enable us to fully understand the implications and deliverability of possible direction options. Areas where further evidence might be needed could include transport modelling and landscape character and these are discussed in the commentary for each individual direction. This evidence, together with your comments on this consultation and the feedback we received previously on the Topic Papers will help to inform whichever approach is chosen which may be a combination of parts or all of two or more of these possible directions of growth.

It is important to be aware that at this early stage we have not yet ascertained if landowners affected by these options would be willing to consider having their land included in a development area. The longer term scope of the proposals, however, would give the opportunity for ownership issues to be explored and resolved. Similarly, as some of the potential development areas are outside of Milton Keynes, any potential cross-boundary

growth would need to be reflected in the planning policy documents for those adjacent areas which will also take time. Ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions will explore this in more detail. There is also scope to deliver development areas in combination with one another; the potential for which we would also be keen to receive feedback on.



There are also a number of ongoing work areas such as the RegenerationMK programme and the development of small- to medium-sized sites through the Site Allocations Plan which will have a bearing on the future pattern of development in parts of Milton Keynes<sup>(21)</sup>.

Additionally, it is assumed that the developments already coming forward in the Eastern and Western Expansion Areas, Oakgrove, Tattenhoe Park, the Strategic Land Allocation and Central Milton Keynes are built as planned in each of these approaches, with the exception of Direction of Growth 4 which assumes CMK to have a greater amount of development than currently envisaged. The directions that have arisen from the workshops would not preclude the development of small or infill development sites in the rural area or windfall sites in the urban area.

21 The Site Allocations Plan is being prepared to top up the short- to medium-term supply of housing sites. The intention of the document is to provide flexibility in our land supply position by identifying non-strategic sites. You can learn more about the Site Allocations Plan [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan).

## Section 4 Development Directions

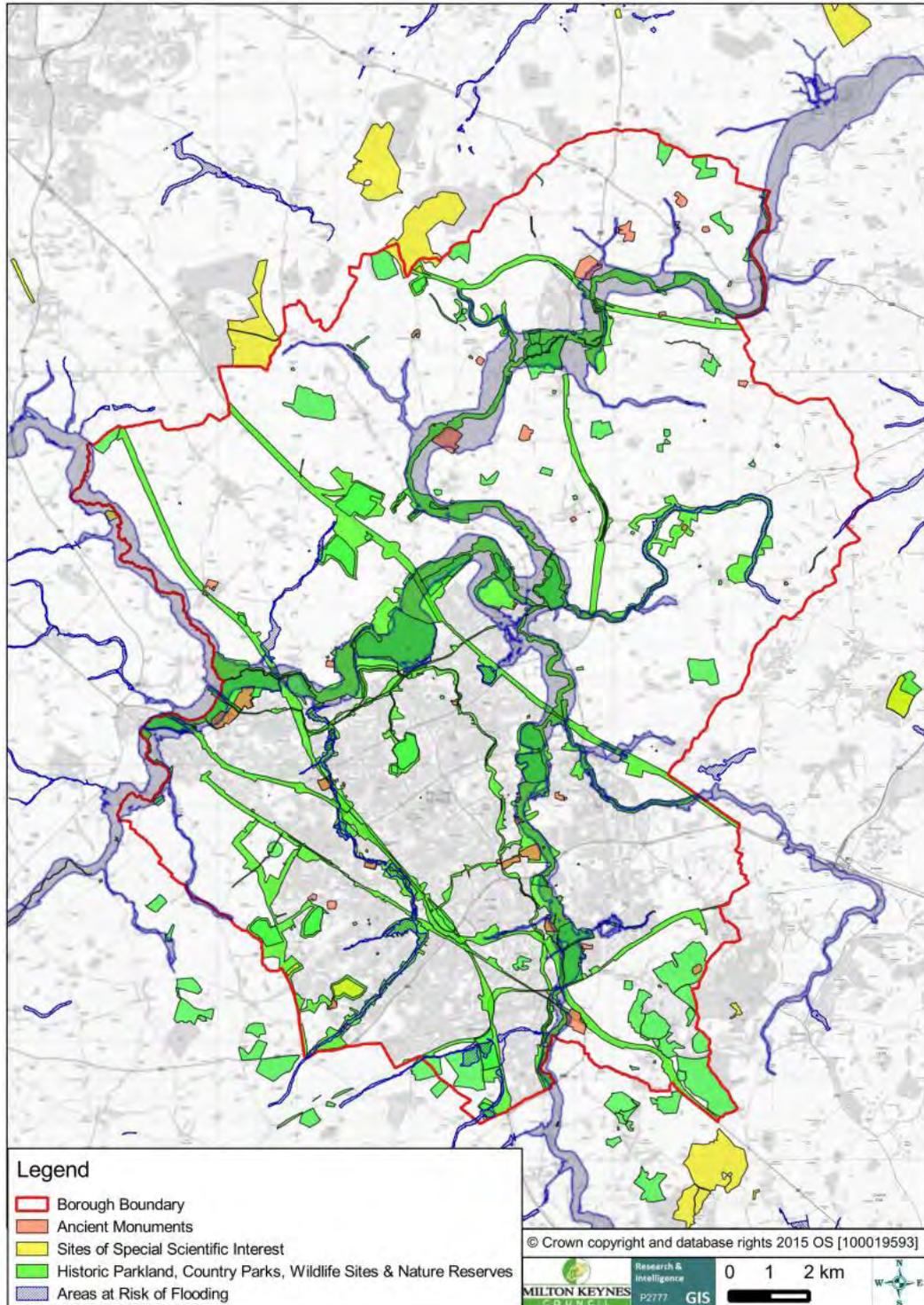
As well as the availability of land and existing planned developments, there are a number of physical constraints that affect some or all of the directions of growth. Some of these constraints are shown on the maps for each individual direction in this section, for example the strategic green infrastructure network and linear parks, and existing infrastructure such as railways, the M1 motorway and the Bedford to Milton Keynes waterway route.



There are also a range of constraints that may restrict growth or require mitigation. These include, for example, areas at risk of flooding and wildlife sites, and are shown on Figure 2 'Development Constraints'. Their impact and implications for future development will be investigated further as work on Plan:MK progresses.

# Section 4 Development Directions

Figure 2 Development Constraints



### Working with partners

In the longer term, growth is likely to have implications for key strategic public services, notably al capacity. Decisions on future health provision are not taken by Milton Keynes Council but are the responsibility of NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning Group and we are working very closely with these organisations as we prepare Plan:MK.



Along with the capacity of health services, the capacity of existing schools and the need for new school places to meet the demand generated by new development is the largest area of concern. The scale of new development is envisaged to be such that a significant number of new schools will be needed and we are still learning lessons from what has happened in the existing major development areas in terms of pupil yields and how we can ensure that the provision of new school places keeps pace with growth.

The Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service are currently (2015) carrying out a consultation on their future provision within the city which includes enhanced cooperation with Thames Valley Police. Plan:MK will have to take into account the outcomes of this consultation which is causing concern in some areas of the city.

More locally we will work with the Parks Trust on the delivery and maintenance of parks and open spaces associated with new development.

We realise that the idea of future development and change can cause worry and concern within communities that might potentially be affected. As we have explained, at this stage the directions of growth shown in this consultation document are the results of the discussions that took place at the Vision Workshops in early 2015 and do not represent the views or preferred options of the Council at this stage, and much more work needs to be done before any decisions are taken. In order to be able to take any of these directions forward, we would be working with Town and Parish Councils, neighbouring Local Planning Authorities, local communities, landowners, utility providers and other stakeholders as part of working up any proposals.

We emphasise that nothing has yet been decided and that there will be a number of further opportunities for consultation before any decisions are reached.



## Section 4 Development Directions

### **Direction of Growth 1 - Development to the west, south west and/or south east of the city**

#### **What does this direction of growth entail? What are the main features?**

This direction, shown below in Figure 3 'Direction of Growth 1 - Development to the west, south west and/or south east of the city', entails the delivery of growth through an arc of urban extensions around the western, south-western and/or south-eastern edges of the Milton Keynes urban area, extending beyond the existing boundaries of the Eastern and Western Expansion Areas and including land beyond the administrative boundary of Milton Keynes to the south and west around Newton Longville and Whaddon in Aylesbury Vale, and to the south east in Central Bedfordshire.

The land to the south-east and south-west of the urban area was proposed for development as part of the South East and South West Strategic Development Areas in the now withdrawn South East Plan. Landowners and developers with interests in these areas have promoted development in these areas before. There are also current planning applications for land at South West Milton Keynes and Eaton Leys.

The growth area would be well located to take advantage of the East-West rail route (which will connect Oxford and Cambridge) and the area to the south-eastern side of Milton Keynes would have access to the proposed Bedford to Milton Keynes waterway and the recreation and leisure benefits that would provide.

As with the other directions, consideration needs to be given to how existing villages affected by the growth could be sensitively treated, for example through the creation of landscape or green buffers.

#### **What are the possible benefits associated with this direction?**

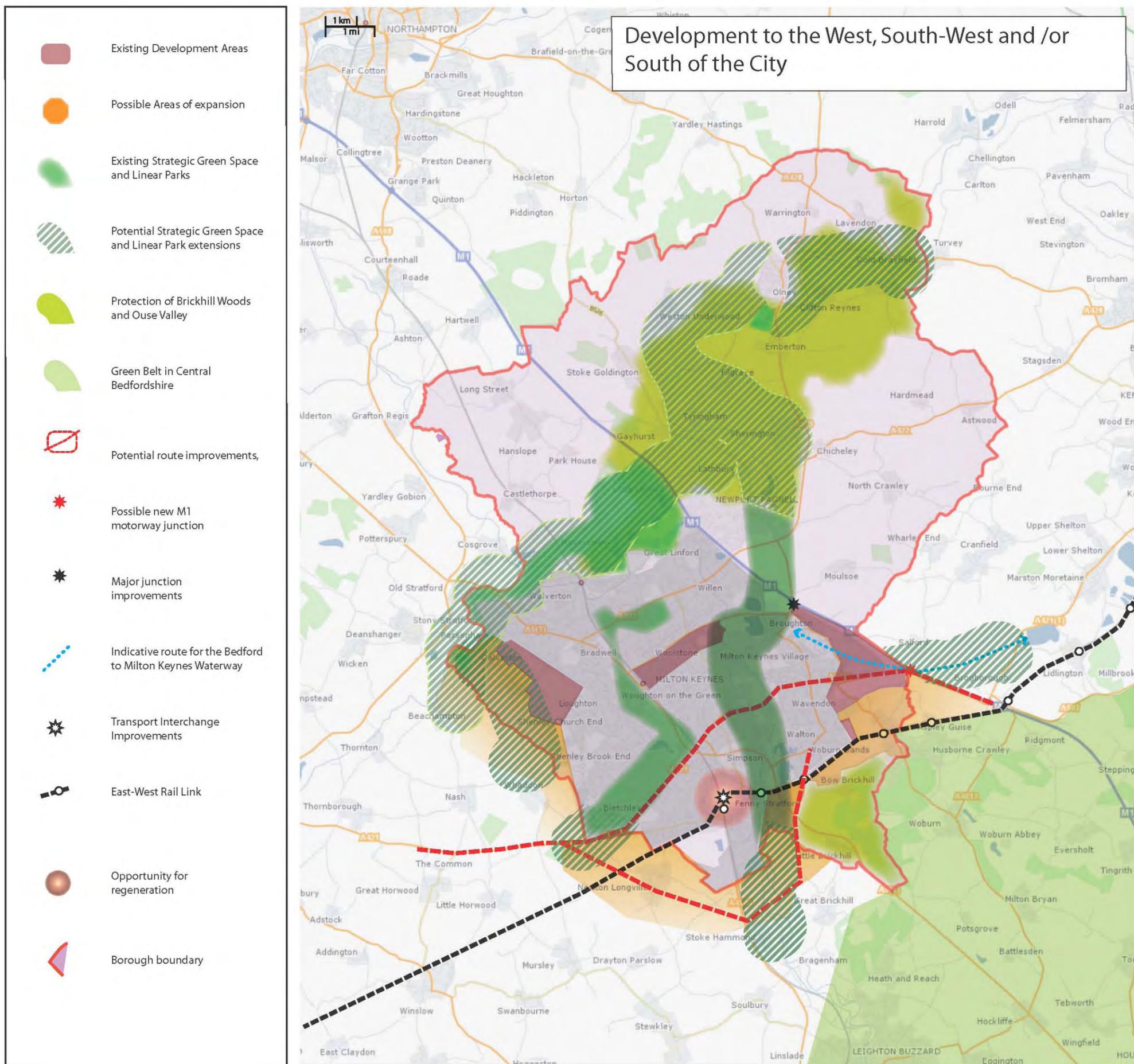
The southern focus of the growth arc presents an opportunity for the regeneration of Bletchley as a potentially important service and employment centre meeting the needs of new residents.

The growth envisaged in this direction takes the form of extensions to the existing urban area. This form of development has advantages in that it could be relatively straightforward to strengthen connections to the existing transport corridors and services within Milton Keynes whilst still being large enough to provide the additional facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of residents. This form of expansion would continue the development approach that has been followed in the 2005 Milton Keynes Local Plan and the 2013 Core Strategy of concentrating growth in major urban extensions at the edge of the city.

This direction also benefits from opportunities afforded by the East-West rail route which would run through the south and south-west parts of this area. That will allow rail users to travel westwards towards Oxford with links to the Chiltern Rail line to Marylebone; eastwards to Bedford and ultimately Cambridge; and along the West Coast Mainline from Bletchley.

The growth arc could potentially help to deliver a Bletchley southern by-pass relieving some of the pressure on the east-west A421 route through the city.

Figure 3 Direction of Growth 1 - Development to the west, south west and/or south east of the city





### What are the possible risks associated with this direction?

**Transport:** The concentration of development in the southern part of the Milton Keynes urban area could place additional pressure on the A421. There is an existing pressure point at the Tattenhoe Roundabout on the A421 (H8 Standing Way) as this is the first roundabout at which traffic from the west (from the Buckingham direction) can disperse into the grid road network. A previously considered solution to the pressure on the Tattenhoe Roundabout was a new 'V0' north-south grid road although this would require significant capital investment to deliver and would be likely to involve the use of land within the Aylesbury Vale District Council area. Further junction improvements would be needed and the feasibility of a Bletchley southern by-pass would need to be examined again.

On the south eastern side of Milton Keynes, the main road connections are limited to the A421 (towards Bedford) and the A5130 (towards Woburn), so further consideration would need to be given to junction improvements and the need for, and feasibility of, new road links.



The possible growth area as shown in Figure 3 'Direction of Growth 1 - Development to the west, south west and/or south east of the city' extends across the route of the East-West railway line and consideration will need to be given to how this barrier could be dealt with. Network Rail are currently looking at the existing level crossings along the route. If not properly

resolved, the railway line would be a considerable obstacle to the creation of a well-connected urban extension to Milton Keynes.

**Landscape implications:** Development on the western side of Milton Keynes would take development over the Shenley Ridge which is a significant feature on the skyline when looking north-east from the Whaddon area. Although buildings within the Milton Keynes urban area are now visible in places along that skyline, wholesale expansion over the Ridge has been resisted in the past as it would introduce urban development into the rural Whaddon Chase. Due to the slope, opportunities to screen or limit the impact of development on views from the west would be limited. The Western Expansion Area has been deliberately designed to minimise the impact of development on the open countryside to the south and west and on the Wealds, Calverton and Whaddon.

Care would also be needed in the location and design of any development to the south of Milton Keynes around the Brickhill villages in order to respect the sensitive landscape of the Brickhills.

**Impact on areas outside Milton Keynes:** This option includes land outside the administrative boundary of Milton Keynes; in Aylesbury Vale to the west and south-west, and in Central Bedfordshire to the east. Development outside of Milton Keynes can only proceed with the co-operation of the neighbouring Local Planning Authorities, Parish Councils and communities. The process of planning for a development such as this can take time and there is potential for the delivery of any development in these locations to be subject to delay. Land to the south west of Milton Keynes is currently being considered as a possible growth option by Aylesbury Vale District Council as part of their work on their new local plan.

## Section 4 Development Directions

**Impact on existing villages:** The intention is that the character and integrity of any affected settlements would be protected by surrounding them with a green buffer<sup>(22)</sup>, although the extent and exact nature of this has not yet been determined. So while the existing settlements would be afforded some protection from the impact of growth, residents would also be able to access and take advantage of the new infrastructure and facilities delivered alongside the development.



### Question 5

#### Continued outward expansion of Milton Keynes urban area (Direction of Growth 1)

Do you think that continuing the outward expansion of the Milton Keynes urban area in this direction is the best way to accommodate new development in the longer term?

### Question 6

#### Sensitivity of areas on the edge of Milton Keynes to new development (Direction of Growth 1)

Are some areas on the edge of Milton Keynes identified in this direction more sensitive to new development than others? If so, which? Are there some areas identified in this direction that you think are more suitable?

### Question 7

#### Final extent of outward expansion of Milton Keynes (Direction of Growth 1)

If Direction of Growth 1 were to proceed, should we define an eventual 'final extent' of development? If so, where should this be?

### Question 8

#### Treatment of existing settlements in Direction of Growth 1

Is a green buffer the best way of protecting the character and integrity of the existing settlements that lie within the areas of new development identified in Direction of Growth 1? Or would you prefer to see them integrated in a similar fashion to the villages in the existing urban area, for example Great Linford and Loughton?

22 A green buffer could be provided by retaining existing fields or by creating a landscaped parkland or setting around the existing village. There is no set width for a buffer; this would need to be considered on a site by site basis.

### Direction of Growth 2 - Development East of the M1 motorway

**What does this direction of growth entail? What are the main features?**

A considerable number of the ideas emerging from the Vision Workshops suggested growing Milton Keynes eastwards across the M1 motorway, as shown in Figure 4 'Direction of Growth 2 - Development East of the M1 motorway'. Recognising how Milton Keynes has grown over the last 50 years, some participants envisaged a 'mirror image' of the new city east of the M1 delivering longer term growth. The idea of development crossing the M1 motorway is not new, but has been resisted in the past due to concerns that the M1 represents a barrier to growth which makes effective connections difficult.

In the longer term, the development area identified on Figure 4 'Direction of Growth 2 - Development East of the M1 motorway' could deliver in the region of around 26,000 homes together with associated infrastructure and facilities.

This direction involves development outside of Milton Keynes Borough into Central Bedfordshire. For this direction to proceed, there will need to be agreement and co-operation with Central Bedfordshire Council and the affected Parish Councils and residents and this will be discussed further with those groups and organisations should such a proposal be pursued.

It is intended that where new development grows around the existing villages, that the integrity and character of these villages will be protected. This could be by way of a landscape or green buffer or some other method of preserving the character of the settlement as was done for the many villages that are now embraced within the Milton Keynes urban area.

To be truly successful, the transport connections between any growth area on this scale to the east of the M1 and the existing Milton Keynes urban area need to be seamless and fully integrated, and will need to deliver effective, good quality road and public transport routes. Figure 4 shows that these connections would need to be put in place, but as yet we haven't done the work to identify how and where those would need to go, or how many would be needed, so the crossings shown on the map are purely indicative and illustrative at this stage and are not intended to show proposed locations.

**What are the possible benefits associated with this direction?**

This development direction could provide a focal point for longer term growth and a critical mass of residents which would help it sustain a full range of land uses, services and facilities including schools, leisure, a large local or district centre incorporating primary health care facilities, and employment opportunities. The size of development envisaged would enable the creation of a new growth area that could be relatively self-sufficient. There is potential that the scale of development in this location could even extend beyond that shown on the diagram if it was considered sustainable or desirable in the future.



## Section 4 Development Directions

New road connections would need to provide efficient and effective connections for public transport as well as for car borne traffic and there may be opportunities to incorporate new technologies and modes of personal transport to make the link between the old and the new as seamless as possible.

The south-eastern extent of the potential growth area as shown on the diagram is within Central Bedfordshire. This part of the development would provide access to the East-West rail route that will run between Oxford and Cambridge and this presents opportunities for travel by rail, and also a possible rail freight interchange that could even be linked to a new junction on the M1.

There could also be opportunities to take advantage of the area's proximity to the route of the Bedford to Milton Keynes waterway, which would provide additional leisure activities and could enhance property values for land adjacent to the waterway.

### **What are the possible risks associated with this direction?**

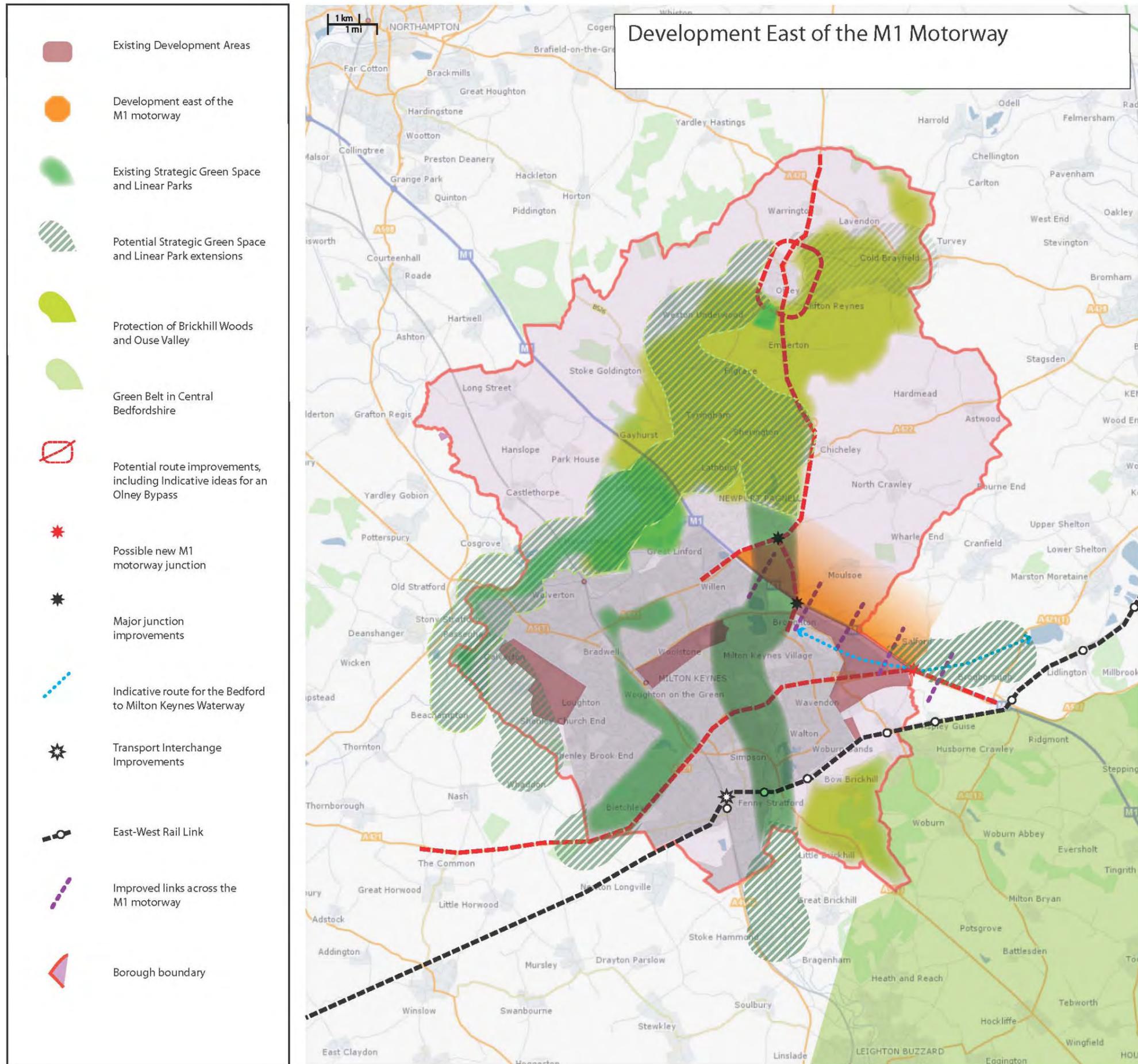
**Infrastructure delivery:** At this stage no work has been done on the details of the primary infrastructure that would be needed to make this option work. The feasibility and viability of creating a number of new or improved transport links across the M1 requires considerable work, in particular to identify suitable locations for where that might be possible. Therefore, while we have highlighted possible infrastructure improvements and links, there are no current plans for these. The Department of Transport has been clear in its response to previous consultations that it has no plans for a new junction on the M1 in the location that the workshops identified, but looking longer term it is possible that the situation may change.

**Speed of delivery:** The planning and delivery of a large growth area, relatively disconnected from the existing urban area, would take longer to get off the ground than building a number of smaller sites within an established urban area. In established urban areas, the main elements of infrastructure (main roads, access to mains water and sewerage and utilities) are already in place. As the delivery of this development option will take time to get off the ground, there is likely to be a need for a hybrid approach which would deliver a mixture of smaller sites and/or redevelopment of sites in the urban area to ensure a short to medium-term supply of new development whilst the larger development areas are planned and brought forward.

**Development funding:** The delivery of this direction of growth will require the provision of a large amount of primary infrastructure up front. Schools and other community facilities need to be provided alongside new homes so that residents do not have to travel for them. We would need to put a new development funding mechanism in place so we can forward fund the early delivery of the critical pieces of infrastructure.

**Cross-boundary development:** This direction would involve development beyond the administrative boundary of Milton Keynes which could only proceed with the co-operation of Central Bedfordshire Council, the Parish Councils and residents in that area. The process of planning for a development such as this can take time and there could, therefore, be a potential delay to the delivery of any development in this location.

Figure 4 Direction of Growth 2 - Development East of the M1 motorway





**Impact on existing villages:** This direction would result in development growing eastwards from the M1 around a number of existing villages and small settlements. We recognise that identifying this as a possible development location in this consultation will result in concern and uncertainty for residents in the area. The intention is that the character and integrity of any affected settlements would be protected by surrounding them with a green buffer, although the extent and exact nature of this would need to be determined. So, while the existing villages would be afforded some protection from the impact of growth, residents would also be able to access and take advantage of the new infrastructure and facilities delivered alongside the development.

### Question 9

#### Scale of development east of the M1 (Direction of Growth 2)

What do you think about the scale of the development suggested for east of the M1 in Direction of Growth 2?

### Question 10

#### Final extent of development east of the M1 (Direction of Growth 2)

If Direction of Growth 2 were to proceed, should we define an eventual 'final extent' of development? If so, where should this be?

### Question 11

#### Treatment of existing settlements in Direction of Growth 2

Is a green buffer the best way of protecting the character and integrity of the existing settlements that lie within the areas of new development identified in Direction of Growth 2? Or would you prefer to see them integrated in a similar fashion to the villages in the existing urban area, for example Great Linford and Loughton?



## Section 4 Development Directions

### Direction of Growth 3 - One or more satellite settlements in the rural area

#### What does this direction of growth entail? What are the main features?

One of the ideas emerging from the Vision Workshops was to look beyond the northern edge of the Milton Keynes urban area and identify a number of 'satellite settlements' in the rural area. In the Workshops, a number of possible broad locations were identified although Figure 5 'Direction of Growth 3 - One or more satellite settlements in the rural area' shades the whole of the rural area demonstrating that there are no specific locations proposed at this stage. We would welcome your views on any locations that you think would be suitable for this kind of development.



As mentioned at the start of this section, it is important to note that the outcome of this consultation process might be that a combination of one or more elements of the individual approaches are chosen as the preferred way forward. For example, were a satellite settlement approach to be chosen, that would not necessarily preclude growth also taking place in existing rural settlements or in the Milton Keynes urban area.

The workshop participants envisaged a number of satellite settlements, rather than one larger settlement along the lines of the Garden Cities promoted by the Coalition Government in 2014. The Government envisaged that each new Garden City would deliver at least 15,000

new homes and would be led by the community. Although a larger, single settlement of this scale did not emerge from the workshops, it is not to say that this could not be considered.

Should new satellite settlements come forward in Milton Keynes, there would be considerable opportunities to learn not just from Milton Keynes' own New Town history but from developments that are planned in places like Bicester, in terms of capturing the value of development land and for community ownership and long term stewardship of the land.

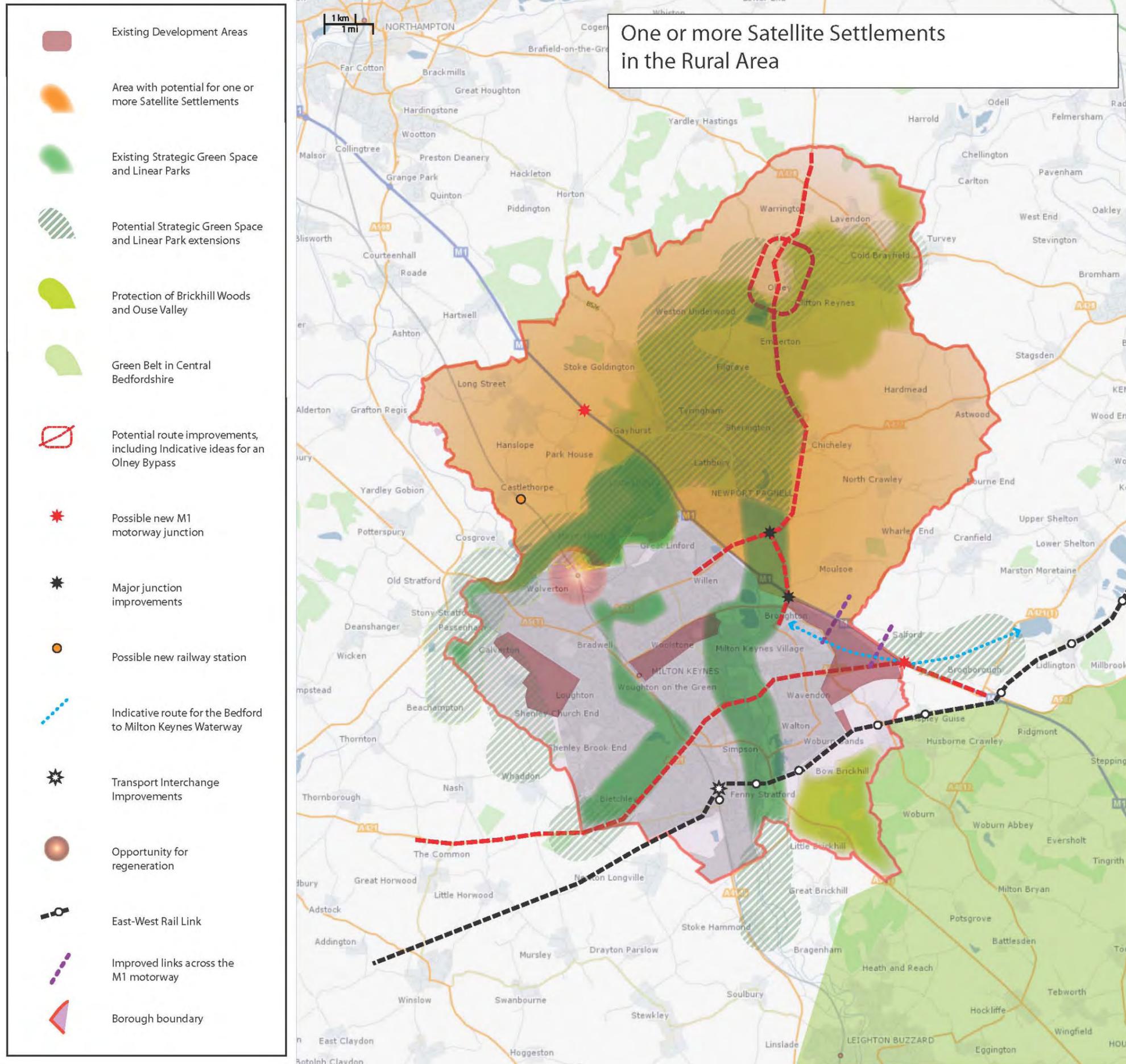
#### How big would a satellite settlement be?

From past experience in Milton Keynes and elsewhere, a minimum size of 5,000 homes is generally considered necessary in order to ensure that a settlement is large enough to meet some of the day-to-day needs of its residents, particularly in terms of school provision. Subject to further work to understand likely future pupil yields, a minimum size of 5,000 homes would be likely to support a secondary school reducing the need for secondary age children to leave the settlement on a daily basis in term time and, therefore, the need for a considerable number of journeys.

As a general guide, a satellite settlement should be capable of accommodating that minimum level of development together with associated facilities such as schools, health and community services, shops, leisure and employment opportunities.

As the name 'satellite settlements' suggests, it is recognised that there will be some degree of dependence on neighbouring urban areas such as Milton Keynes and the services and jobs that they offer, but the aim will be for the settlements to be large enough to meet the daily and weekly needs of the majority of their residents as much as possible.

Figure 5 Direction of Growth 3 - One or more satellite settlements in the rural area





### What are the possible benefits associated with this direction of growth?

There are some potential locations in the Borough that could have the potential to access the West Coast railway line from Wolverton station and then onto the future East-West rail route via Bletchley. In the longer term, it might be possible that new development could support the opening of a new railway station.

Development of satellite settlements could provide benefits in helping to deliver important infrastructure projects, for example route improvements or a bypass. Projects like this could ease traffic and air pollution, as well as easing traffic accessing Central Milton Keynes on arterial routes.

This development direction does not consider any locations outside of the Milton Keynes administrative boundary. Any proposal that did look outside Milton Keynes would require discussion and co-operation with neighbouring authorities, the affected Parish Councils and their residents.

A possible new junction on the M1 between the existing Junctions 13 and 14 is illustrated on the plan which would provide motorway access to a settlement or settlements located to the east of Milton Keynes. Major improvements to Junction 14 of the M1 are also shown as part of this direction, although for both of these schemes the point made below about the delivery of infrastructure should be noted.



### What are the possible risks associated with this direction of growth?

**Infrastructure delivery:** At this stage no work has been done on the viability of any settlements to deliver the necessary supporting infrastructure. Whilst we have highlighted above possible infrastructure improvements and links, such as a new railway station or a new motorway junction, there are no current plans for these. The Department of Transport and Highways England are clear that there is no opportunity for a new junction on the M1 in the location that the Workshops identified, but looking longer term, it is possible that the situation may change.

Some possible locations for satellite settlements could be quite disconnected and existing road connections are less than optimal. Therefore, further work would be needed to look at transport connections, including how an efficient and effective public transport network could work across a dispersed pattern of development.

**Design principles:** By developing new settlements rather than building extensions to the urban area of Milton Keynes, it may not be possible to replicate the design principles of the city that many people think are important. The design and layout of any development would of course need to reflect the characteristics of its surroundings, but developments are unlikely to be of a scale or be suitable for delivering items such as, for example, grid roads.

## Section 4 Development Directions

**Dependence on larger urban areas:** Even with a range of services and facilities, it is acknowledged that any satellite settlement will have a degree of dependence on the larger urban areas in the surrounding area. This is particularly likely to be the case in relation to jobs and employment opportunities as many residents are likely to commute into Milton Keynes which, in turn, will have implications for traffic levels. Depending on the size of the settlement and decisions on how health care is delivered in the future, it is also possible that residents might have to travel outside of the settlement for primary care (i.e. GPs surgeries) or a hospital.



**Speed of delivery:** Enabling the development of a new settlement on greenfield land takes longer than building on a number of smaller sites within an established urban area, where the main elements of infrastructure (main roads, access to mains water and sewerage and utilities) are already in place. For this reason there is likely to be a need for a hybrid approach, which would deliver a mixture of smaller sites to ensure a short term supply of development whilst the larger development areas are planned and brought forward.

**Development funding:** The delivery of new settlements under this direction of growth would require the provision of a large amount of primary infrastructure up front. Schools and other community facilities need to be provided alongside new homes so that residents do not have to travel out of the settlement for these. A new development funding mechanism would need to be put

in place so we can forward fund the early delivery of the critical pieces of infrastructure.

### Question 12

#### Size of new settlement(s) (Direction of Growth 3)

Would it be better to have one much larger new settlement, like a Garden City, in the northern part of or adjacent to the Borough, which is large enough to be self-sufficient in terms of jobs, schools, health, shops and all other services? Or would you favour an approach of having several smaller settlements?

### Question 13

#### Possible locations for new satellite settlements (Direction of Growth 3)

Are there any locations that you think would be suitable for a satellite settlement? And if so, why?

### Question 14

#### Final extent of new satellite settlements (Direction of Growth 3)

If this approach were to proceed, should we define an eventual 'final extent' of development around any satellite settlement?

### Direction of Growth 4 - Intensification and Redevelopment in the urban area

What does this direction of growth entail? What are the main features?

This direction reflects the views of workshop participants that better use should be made of the land in the existing urban area of Milton Keynes. Figure 6 'Direction of Growth 4 - Intensification and Redevelopment in the urban area' attempts to show this on a map.

This approach is in line with the Government's planning guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out as one of its core planning principles that effective use should be made of land by re-using previously developed (brownfield) sites. By seeking to make the best use of vacant or underused land, it should be possible to reduce the amount of greenfield sites needed to meet future growth needs.

It is difficult to quantify how many new homes this direction of growth could deliver so, although it will make a contribution to meeting our future development needs, it is very unlikely that this approach alone would be enough to negate the need for greenfield development.

So, where might new development take place under this approach? There are probably four broad ways in which intensification and redevelopment might take place within the urban area:

- **The completion and possible redevelopment of sites within Central Milton Keynes:** This could include the redevelopment of some older office buildings for residential use as well as the completion of the

residential areas around Campbell Park and might involve taller buildings to make efficient use of the sites, as well as building at a greater density than had previously been proposed.

- **The redevelopment of existing employment land for other uses:** The Council has completed a review of the existing employment sites in Milton Keynes which has identified underused, surplus or vacant areas which could be redeveloped for other uses including housing. At the Workshops, Blakelands, Tongwell and Kiln Farm were identified as possible locations where employment land could be used for residential use<sup>(23)</sup>.
- **As part of the RegenerationMK programme:** The Council is looking to form a joint venture with a private sector partner to improve homes and neighbourhoods across Milton Keynes. The partnership will deliver a 15 year asset management service to the Council's housing stock including a regeneration programme, focusing on seven priority estates. The programme is not just about housing and the built environment; it will also provide opportunities for employment, training and investment and will support communities to be strong, active and ultimately sustainable. Although the detail of the delivery is yet to be defined, it is anticipated that there will be considerable scope to increase the current density of housing in some areas.
- **Infill and redevelopment of other sites:** These would be sites within the urban area, some of which might be identified and allocated in planning policy documents, including the Site Allocations Plan and Neighbourhood Plans prepared by local communities. Others might arise as windfall development<sup>(24)</sup>. It could include

23 Economic Growth and Employment Land Study [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents)

24 Windfall development is new development that has not been previously allocated in a local or neighbourhood plan

## Section 4 Development Directions

opportunities for regeneration in the older town centres such as Bletchley and Wolverton, redeveloping some areas to provide more effective use of a site, or developing sites not previously looked at for development, for example grid road corridors or underused areas of open space or amenity land.

### What are the possible benefits associated with this direction of growth?

Making use of development opportunities within the urban area reduces the amount of greenfield development necessary to meet future growth needs, which would act to protect the character of the countryside and rural settlements. Where urban land is underused and poorly maintained, redevelopment can deliver benefits to the appearance and attractiveness of an area. The Wolverton Park development provides a good example of how former industrial buildings can be redeveloped to create a high quality residential development.



The redevelopment of vacant or underused land within the urban area and building at higher densities can contribute to the development of more sustainable communities by increasing the number of people living in an area which in turn can create opportunities for public transport improvements, low-energy transport modes and to reduce overall car use. Increasing the number of people living in an area can also help to improve the viability and quantity of services and facilities such as

health, shops, schools and job opportunities in relatively close proximity to where people live.

Developments within the existing urban area are able to take advantage of the existing infrastructure and are, in general, able to be built more quickly than is the case for greenfield development where the primary infrastructure needs to be funded and delivered up front.

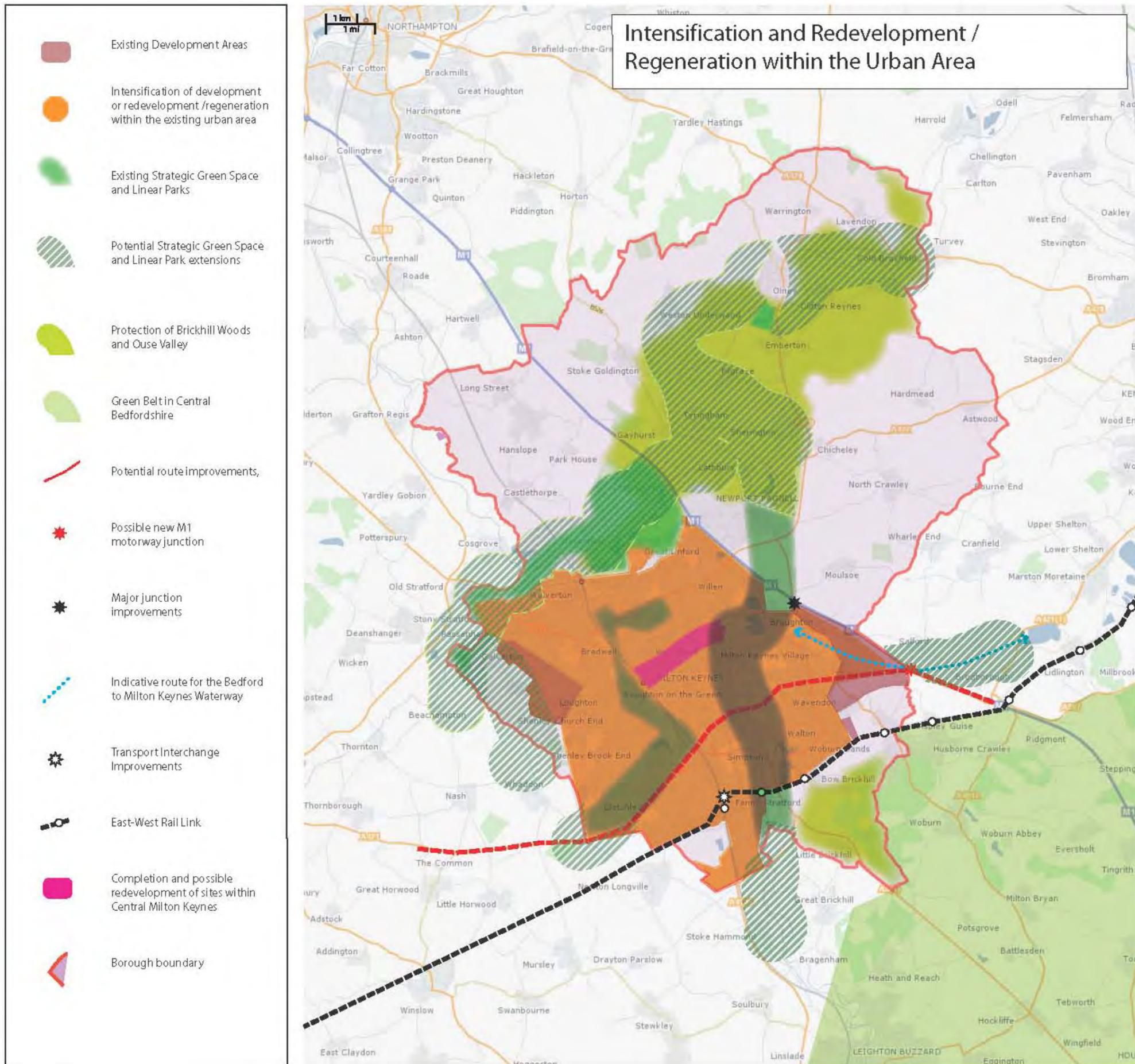
### What are the possible risks associated with this direction?

**Traffic and Transport:** Just as intensification of development in the urban area can provide benefits for improving public transport and creating more sustainable neighbourhoods, it can also result in higher levels of traffic and a worsening of local environmental conditions. Sometimes it may be difficult to make road and junction improvements within an already developed area, limiting opportunities to improve the infrastructure to meet the needs of a new development.

**Infrastructure:** In addition to roads, the intensification of development in the urban area could result in increased demands on other aspects of infrastructure such as surface water drainage, as well as on public services including schools and health facilities. Whereas larger scale developments such as urban extensions and new settlements can be planned wholesale and the delivery of strategic infrastructure phased to meet the needs of the new development, urban intensification through the redevelopment of many smaller sites can result in a piecemeal form of development which is unable to justify or fund investment in infrastructure improvements.

**Character:** Intensification of development within Milton Keynes could result in a change in the character of the urban area, particularly some of the older estates, which could present a threat to the New Town heritage.

Figure 6 Direction of Growth 4 - Intensification and Redevelopment in the urban area





### Question 15

#### Intensification and Redevelopment of the urban area (Direction of Growth 4)

Do you think that intensification and redevelopment of the existing urban area should take place alongside greenfield development as identified in the other directions of growth?



### Question 16

#### Types of Redevelopment or Intensification of the urban area (Direction of Growth 4)

Are there any of the redevelopment/intensification approaches mentioned above that you would particularly support, or that you think should not be considered? Are there any opportunities that have not been included?



### Question 17

#### Other areas suitable for redevelopment (Direction of Growth 4)

Are there any locations that you think would be particularly suitable for redevelopment?



## Section 4 Development Directions

### Other Opportunities

Besides the four development directions presented here, there are a number of other sites that could provide further development opportunities that are not a direct product of the Vision Workshops. This includes sites that have been put forward to Milton Keynes Council through our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment<sup>(25)</sup> or were submitted in response to the Topic Papers consultation in 2014. Neighbouring authorities also undertake the same processes so there may be other land outside the Borough boundary that could potentially contribute to the growth of Milton Keynes.

The majority of the sites that have been previously put forward are covered by the Development Directions shown in this document. However, there are also some sites within or adjacent to villages in the rural area that have been promoted. These sites are not strategic in nature due to their size and as mentioned earlier in this document, sites like these could come forward outside of the Development Directions presented here. Further, a large development site was promoted through the Topic Papers process to the north of the urban area around Haversham. As this location was not specifically identified with any consensus at the Workshops, it has not been included as part of any of the options here, but you may consider it has potential for future development.



In addition, there may be other approaches or scenarios that you think should be considered, or there may be a particular combination of sites that you believe could be a sensible and sustainable option for the future development of Milton Keynes. Are there elements of some of the directions we have presented that you think are particularly strong, and that should be given further consideration? The questions below give you the opportunity to give us some feedback on these issues.

#### Question 18

##### Other approaches for longer term development

Do you think there are other possible development directions, beyond those that came out of the Workshops, that should be considered?

25 The SHLAA was last published in 2012 and will be updated shortly. The 2012 version is available at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment).

### Question 19

#### Your thoughts on the directions of growth

Are there elements of any of the directions that you particularly like or think have particular merit? Similarly, are there any elements that you think would be unworkable, even over the long term future? Are there any conditions or requirements you would place on any of the approaches presented that would help to make them a sustainable direction of growth that you could support?

### Question 20

#### Order of preference of directions of growth

As mentioned at the start of this section, it is possible that the final Development Strategy in Plan:MK might involve a combination of parts or all of two or more of these directions of growth. Which of the directions of development would you consider to be the last resort, the one that you would find most difficult to support? Similarly, which do you think is the most sensible or sustainable direction, that should be considered as a priority?



## Section 5 Next Stages

### Section 5 Next Stages

#### What happens next? The Preferred Options stage

While we are consulting with you on the Strategic Development Directions, we are continuing plan preparation by thinking about the other policies that will be included in Plan:MK, particularly those that will not be affected by the outcome of this consultation. This is to help us prepare our Preferred Options document, which will be the next stage in the Plan:MK process<sup>(26)</sup>. In order to write that document we are considering various sources of evidence:



- the comments that we received to our Topic Papers consultation in 2014;
- what our growing evidence base is telling us;
- the outcomes of the Vision Workshops and this subsequent consultation;
- a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment which considers the social, environmental and economic impacts of our policies;
- the outputs from ongoing discussions with neighbouring authorities and other partners;
- the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Guidance; and
- how we use our existing planning policies, and what works and doesn't work about them.

#### How will feedback to this consultation be used?

We will take into account the comments we receive back through this consultation period and consider how the issues covered here should be taken forward in the Preferred Options document. These issues will also be influenced by the outcome of the MK Futures 2050 Commission work that was mentioned in the Introduction, and the implications that this will have for future development. Any outputs from that process will be considered as part of the inputs to the Plan:MK process.

The Preferred Options stage will include a series of directions or approaches (not necessarily the specific wording for the individual policies) that we think are the right way forward for Plan:MK. We hope to be ready to consult on that Preferred Options consultation document towards the end of 2016.

#### Keeping in contact

Anyone who comments on this document will automatically be kept up to date as we continue to move through the process, and will be alerted when we approach the next consultation period. Please remember that this is a fully transparent process, and all comments we receive will eventually be published.

In the meantime, we will keep our website ([www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)) updated with the latest position and any other emerging work.

26 See the plan-preparation process in Section 1 'Introduction'

### Section 6 Links and References

The following links and resources have been used in the preparation of this document, or will be relevant to how Plan:MK develops throughout the plan-making process.

#### Previous stages in the Plan:MK process

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

#### Plan:MK Topic Papers and consultation responses

<http://miltonkeynes-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planmk>

#### Consultation Statement

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

#### Vision Workshops report

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

#### Evidence Base documents

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-documents)

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/five-year-housing-land-supply-annual-monitoring-report](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/five-year-housing-land-supply-annual-monitoring-report)

#### Core Strategy 2013

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/core-strategy-2013)

#### Local Plan 2005

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2005)

#### Site Allocations Plan

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/site-allocations-plan)

#### Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by Town and Parish Councils in close consultation with local communities. Milton Keynes Council provides guidance through the process and there are some stages that are the responsibility of MKC. For all of the Neighbourhood Plans being prepared in the Borough, there is a section of the website at the link below. If your local area is not listed, you may wish to contact your local Town or Parish Council to find out if they intend to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning)

#### Local Transport Plan

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streets-transport-and-parking/transport-policy](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/streets-transport-and-parking/transport-policy)

#### MK Futures 2050 website

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/MKFutures2050Commission](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/MKFutures2050Commission)

#### National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

## Section 6 Links and References

### Adjacent Planning Authorities

#### Aylesbury Vale District Council

[www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/planning-policy](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/planning-policy)

#### Buckinghamshire County Council

[www.buckscc.gov.uk/environment/planning/strategic-planning](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/environment/planning/strategic-planning)

#### Central Bedfordshire Council

[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/planning-policy.aspx](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/planning-policy.aspx)

#### Bedford Borough Council

[www.bedford.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_town\\_and\\_country/planning\\_policy\\_its\\_purpose.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose.aspx)

#### South Northamptonshire District Council

[www.southnorthants.gov.uk/Servicepage495.htm](http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/Servicepage495.htm)

#### Northampton Borough Council

[www.northampton.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=200205](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=200205)

#### Northamptonshire County Council

[www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/environ/planning/policy/landuse/pages/default.aspx](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/environ/planning/policy/landuse/pages/default.aspx)





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