

Joint Working Memorandum of Understanding between Milton Keynes Council and Central Bedfordshire Council for the Milton Keynes South East Strategic Development Area

1. Background

To accommodate the future expected growth of Milton Keynes, Strategic Development Areas to the South West (SW SDA) and South East (SE SDA) of Milton Keynes have been identified in various planning policy documents as sustainable urban extensions to Milton Keynes. The SW SDA lies wholly in Aylesbury Vale District and is planned to provide for 5,390 homes. The SE SDA lies partially in Mid-Bedfordshire District and partially in Milton Keynes and comprises 3 component parts: three Strategic Reserve Areas in Milton Keynes as identified in the Milton Keynes Local Plan 2001 to 2011 (to provide for about 2,500 homes), unallocated land in Milton Keynes (to provide for about 4,800 homes) and unallocated land in Central Bedfordshire (to provide for 2,000 homes as identified in the Central Bedfordshire (former Mid-Beds Area) Core Strategy). The current total capacity of the SE SDA will be approximately 9,300 homes. **Annex B** shows the full extent of the SE SDA.

In order to co-ordinate the proper development of the SW and SE SDA's (including Core Strategy sections and/or policies, development framework planning and infrastructure requirements), it is appropriate to enter into joint working arrangements between the various stakeholders.

Due to the separate characteristics of each SDA, this report will principally address joint working arrangements in the SE SDA.

This Joint Working Paper sets out the joint working arrangements to support and implement development in the SE SDA, to secure:

- Production of a development framework for the whole SE SDA providing a comprehensive and flexible approach to the delivery of approximately 9,300 new homes in a timely manner
- The maximum potential from developer contributions and other funding
- The timely identification and delivery of infrastructure needs
- Completion of joint projects to accelerate delivery of growth and infrastructure
- Appropriate and timely decision-making

The acceptance, role and benefits of joint working between local authorities are established through national, regional and sub-regional policy guidance. Various forms and types of joint working are encouraged by the recently revised PPS12. Moreover, revised PPS12 allows the allocation of strategic sites in Core Strategies where such sites are central to the achievement of that strategy and also for the preparation of joint DPD's. The key role of this document is to set out how joint technical working will take place, and to bring about political consensus building.

Changes re Central Beds and East of England Plan

Although the South East Plan Panel Report identifies both the SW and SE SDAs as sustainable urban extensions to Milton Keynes, that part of the SE SDA in Central Bedfordshire has not been included in the Government's Proposed Changes to the South East Plan. Nevertheless, and subject to the inclusion of the Central Bedfordshire part of the SE SDA in their Core Strategy and the East of England Regional Plan, both the SW and SE SDAs will require joint working rather than being isolated developments separate from Milton Keynes. There is, furthermore, a presumption in the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy of support for the principles of joint working and for joint DPD's with and between Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale and Central Bedfordshire

Financial benefits for joint working are also available as part of the proposed Housing and Planning Delivery Grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government.

2. Joint Working Arrangements

Joint working arrangements between Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale, Buckinghamshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire and others are already in place through the Cross Boundary Officer Group and Member Reference Group, both which meet quarterly. Both groups are informally structured but have formal meetings.

By implication, decision-making on joint working and the preparation of joint DPD's rests with the respective Councils. Progress, or otherwise, with joint working relies on good working relationships between the respective Councils within the Member Reference Group and the Cross Boundary Officer Group.

It is considered that the current joint working arrangements are in order, acceptable and can be maintained. For the sake of clarity, joint working arrangements should deal with at least the following issues:

- Joint working and liaison to develop and steer the development of a planning framework at an officer level through a Joint SE SDA Officer Steering Group. The group will be co-ordinated by MKC, and comprise officers from Central Bedfordshire Council, MKC and MKP.
- Meetings to be held at least quarterly
- Positions reached to be submitted to respective Council for approval
- All decision making powers including Plan making / approval / adoption of documents remain with individual Councils
- Joint studies to be jointly commissioned and paid for where this is more efficient than being commissioned by the individual Councils
- Development Plan Documents, where appropriate, to include jointly agreed common sections
- Each organisation to be responsible for its direct joint working costs

This Agreement is not legally binding and each organisation reserves the right to withdraw from it should circumstances dictate

3. Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations

All three local authorities affected by the SDA's, Milton Keynes, Aylesbury Vale and Central Bedfordshire, are busy with the preparation of their respective Core Strategies. Central Bedfordshire have submitted their Core Strategy (for the former Mid Beds area) to the Secretary of State and Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale are preparing their Core Strategies for submission to the Secretary of State at the earliest by mid-2009.

Subject to Public Examination and decisions being taken by the respective Independent Inspectors, it is anticipated that the respective Core Strategies of all three affected local authorities will contain sections and/or policies relating to joint working. In this respect such sections and/or policies will deal with at least the following issues:

- Acknowledging that the SE Plan proposed changes require the expansion of Milton Keynes into Aylesbury Vale and Central Bedfordshire as sustainable urban extensions of Milton Keynes through Strategic Development Areas.
- Identifying the Strategic Development Area land parcel/s required for the expansion of Milton Keynes.
- Identifying the date from which the Strategic Development Areas will be required for development.
- Accepting the need for the preparation and approval of a joint development framework before development can proceed.
- Accepting the need for the payment of appropriate developer contributions and other funding to provide infrastructure within, or related to, the Strategic Development Area, modelled along the lines of the Milton Keynes Infrastructure Tariff/ Central Beds planning obligations approach and to be jointly adopted.
- Accepting that the infrastructure and related tariff will include cross border contributions.

4. Infrastructure Requirements

The Milton Keynes Infrastructure Tariff has been in operation since 2005 to secure the infrastructure required by future new growth and development in Milton Keynes up to 2016. It is administered by Milton Keynes Partnership, working together with Milton Keynes Council and other stakeholders. The Milton Keynes Infrastructure Tariff is not expected to meet the full infrastructure costs and to do so will require other sources of funding.

In order to deliver the infrastructure required to accommodate the future new growth and development in the SW SDA and most of the SE SDA a tariff similar to the Milton Keynes Infrastructure Tariff is required. Due to their inclusion in the Milton Keynes Local Plan, infrastructure provision in the three Milton Keynes Strategic Reserve Areas is subject to the existing Milton Keynes Tariff Framework Agreement. Therefore, separate tariff arrangements for infrastructure provision will need to be made between the Milton Keynes Strategic Reserve Areas and the remainder of the SE SDA in Milton Keynes and Central Bedfordshire. If possible, and if practicable, it is proposed that only one tariff will apply to all development in the SE SDA.

Following adoption of the respective Core Strategies, master-planning of the SE SDA under the guidance of the Joint SE SDA Officer Steering Group will establish the level of infrastructure required to support the respective approximately 9,300 homes and associated employment land in the SE SDA. The broad list of local and strategic infrastructure categories is set out below;

- Education: Primary, Secondary and Higher Education
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation, including Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Social Infrastructure
Acute and Primary Healthcare, Emergency Services, Community Facilities, Waste Collection, Management and Disposal
- Transport Issues, Public Transport and Public Transport Connectivity, including East West Rail and Road Schemes, including Sustainable and Smarter Travel
- Affordable Housing
- Employment
- Water Cycle Study and Flood Prevention
- Other Strategic Items
- Administration

No cost estimates for the calculation of the tariff contribution have yet been determined. The list above is initially prepared simply to include as many as possible of the required local and strategic infrastructure for consideration and approval. Thereafter, once the list of local and strategic infrastructure has been approved, cost estimates can be made to determine the appropriate tariff for the SE SDA.

It is not possible to give detailed consideration to the cross border administrative arrangements of some service providers until further work has been undertaken on the development framework for the site. Whilst, in the interim, a presumption will be made that some infrastructure will be the responsibility of Central Bedfordshire Council and some will be operated by Milton Keynes.

5. Indicative Timescales For Decision-Making

It is anticipated that major development will commence from 2016 and the programme for future activities is anticipated to be as follows :

Adoption of Core Strategy/ies	complete mid-2010
Masterplanning	complete end-2010
Planning Application/s	approved end-2012
Negotiate Tariff/Section 106	complete end-2013
Infrastructure/Services planning (Phasing)	complete end-2014
Tender for Infrastructure/Services (Phasing)	complete mid-2015
Installation of Infrastructure/Services (Phasing)	complete end-2015
Housing development (Phasing)	
Milton Keynes	start beginning-2016
Central Bedfordshire	start beginning 2021
(unless development framework indicates otherwise)	



