

Plan:MK Topic Paper - Issues Consultation Transport and Travel

September 2014



www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK

Plan:MK

Plan:MK Topic Papers - Issues Consultation

Introduction

Plan:MK, a new Local Plan for Milton Keynes, will set out a development strategy for Milton Keynes up to 2031 with a range of detailed policies to guide development over this period.

It will replace the Core Strategy, adopted in 2013 and the existing Local Plan (2005) which together currently form the part of development plan for the Borough.

Once complete, Plan:MK and any Neighbourhood Plans, will be the starting point for planning advice, (other than for Minerals and Waste) and decisions made by the Council. It will set out how much development is expected over the plan period and the location of development sites across the Borough. It will also include detailed policies to ensure that all development is of high quality and respectful to the character of Milton Keynes, and that unplanned development only occurs where it is appropriate.

Plan:MK has to be prepared within the context of national planning policy and within the legislative framework set out by the Government. This Topic Paper is part of the first stage in the process where we are seeking initial view of the public and other interested parties on what should be in Plan:MK.



What is the purpose of the Topic Papers?

This is one of a series of Topic Papers published by the Council at this time. In total there are twelve Topic Papers covering:

- Growth in Housing
- Employment and Economic Development
- Town Centres and Retail
- Transport and Travel
- Rural Issues
- Provision of Physical and Social Infrastructure
- Quality of Place
- Culture, Recreation and Quality of Life
- Open Space and the Natural Environment
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Duty to Cooperate
- The Way Forward: Preparing a Vision and Development Strategy for Plan:MK

Each of the Topic Papers is available on the Council website at <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planmk>

The aim of the papers is to engage everyone with a stake in the future growth and development of Milton Keynes in the preparation of Plan:MK. They cover a range of topics, sometimes interlinked, which the Council have identified as being key to the development of the Plan.

Each paper summarises the background to the topic, setting out data and policy context, before highlighting key issues and posing questions for the reader - the responses to which will help the Council in the development of Plan:MK.

The final topic paper, “The Way Forward” draws together issues raised in the preceding papers and considers what they mean for the Vision and Development Strategy.

When we produce the final version of Plan:MK, the Vision and Development Strategy will be at the start of the Plan, setting the scene for the policies that will follow.

These Topic Papers are being published for consultation in accordance with Regulation 18 ‘Preparation of a local plan’ of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.



How to respond

The Council would appreciate any feedback you have on the Topic Papers. In particular, if you can focus on the questions posed it will help with the development of the plan. Feedback can be submitted:

- Online via our consultation portal: <http://miltonkeynes-consult.objective.co.uk>
- Via email: PlanMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk
- In writing: Development Plans, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ

All comments should be received by **5pm on Wednesday 3rd December 2014.**

How will the feedback be used?

The next stage of the process will be to develop a Preferred Options document, which will set out the Council’s initial draft of Plan:MK.

Feedback from this Issues consultation will help to shape the options considered as part of the development of the Preferred Options. These options will evolve through further focused consultation with key stakeholders.

The Council expects to publish the Preferred Options document for consultation in 2015.

The overall aim is to get a final plan prepared by early 2016, at which time it will be submitted to the Government and be subject to independent examination.

Introduction

1 Transport in its broadest sense has an impact on everybody. The movement of raw materials, goods and people is an essential part of all modern and vibrant communities. Today's transport networks need to accommodate an ever increasing volume of movements and need to do so in more efficient ways.

2 An efficient transport network needs to move people and goods in the most cost-effective way possible while minimising the impacts of those movements. Transport impacts can take many forms such as; noise, air quality and the production of greenhouse gases, as well as impacts on the urban environment (e.g. severance, safety, streetscape and parking).



3 The formulation and implementation of coordinated planning and transport policies is a vital part of delivering more capacity for movement but doing so in a way that reduces impacts and costs, as well as contributing to quality of life.

4 Milton Keynes has a highly-planned transport network, consisting of a grid of higher category distributor roads supplemented by a network of shared pedestrian and cycle routes known as Redways. However, this network does not assist all modes of transport equally.

5 The planned growth of Milton Keynes will not only increase the number of people travelling, but will also increase the size of the city area, potentially adding to journey lengths. Growth will also lead to more trips to Milton Keynes by visitors and retail expansion is set to increase the catchment area for shopping-related trips.

6 But with additional growth there is also an opportunity for Milton Keynes to embrace new technologies and new patterns of movement as well as encouraging more sustainable travel by all residents and visitors.

7 This paper will consider the issues affecting transport and movement in and around Milton Keynes. In particular, it will look at what opportunities exist to fully integrate high quality transport into the growth, regeneration and economic development of Milton Keynes.

8 The main issues this paper will address are:

- How extending the transport network can provide a 'fit for purpose' solution to delivering high quality, efficient and accessible movement in the future and what the challenges are;
- How the location and planning of new development areas can reduce the need to travel, especially by less sustainable modes;
- What opportunities exist in the planning of new communities to influence a change in people's travel behaviour, particularly towards more walking and cycling.

Transport Policy

National Transport Policy

9 The Department for Transport (DfT) formulates the government's transport policy. Much of the government's current emphasis is on creating and enabling growth as well as cutting carbon emissions. The government recognises the key role that transport can play in this.

10 The policy document "Improving Local Transport" (DfT; 3 October 2012) proposes actions and strategies to address what it considers to be the main local transport issue:

"55% of car journeys are under 5 miles - many of these trips could be walked, or made by bike or public transport. Making these ways of travel more attractive encourages people to leave the car at home. This reduces their carbon footprint and helps the UK reach its climate change goals."



11 Recent strategy documents include "Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration" (DfT; 14 March 2013). The aim of the strategy is stated as:

"We aim to make the transport sector greener and more sustainable, to promote growth and reduce carbon emissions. Central to this is encouraging and enabling more

people to make more of their door-to-door journeys by sustainable means: public transport, supported by walking and cycling."

12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG; March 2012) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. Section 4 is titled "Promoting sustainable transport" and it provides the framework within which transport policies contained in local plans should sit.

13 The NPPF outlines the national policy focus for transport and the key points concerning local policies and local plans are listed below.

14 Local transport and planning policies should:

- Facilitate sustainable development;
- Contribute to health objectives;
- Encourage smarter use of technologies;
- Be balanced in favour of sustainable travel;
- Provide real travel choice;
- Encourage a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gases;
- Aim for a balance of land uses to minimise journey lengths;
- Promote a mix of uses in larger residential developments to provide key facilities locally.



15 Local Plans should:

- Support a pattern of development that facilitates sustainable modes of travel;
- Ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel is minimised and sustainable modes are maximised;
- Ensure that developments:
 - Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;
 - Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;
 - Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians;
 - Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles;
 - Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.

Regional Context

16 Recent changes in regional government have resulted in the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs); Milton Keynes falls within the South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP). LEPs have submitted Strategic Economic Plans (SEPs) to the government in order to demonstrate how they will enable and encourage growth and administer the Single Growth Fund (SGF).

SEMLEP
South East Midlands
Local Enterprise Partnership



**STRATEGIC
ECONOMIC
PLAN**

17 Other than Highways Agency schemes, all major transport schemes (traditionally those over £5m) will now be funded through the Single Growth Fund via the LEPs. It is therefore crucial that the SEP reflects the needs of Milton Keynes in the regional context and that the Council and SEMLEP work together to deliver strategic transport infrastructure in Milton Keynes.

18 Recent announcements about funding via SEMLEP have included £1.5m for Bletchley railway station and £22.5m for the dualling of the A421 to Junction 13 of the M1.

Local Policy

19 The transport policy for Milton Keynes is set out in its third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) "A Transport Vision and Strategy for Milton Keynes" (MKC; June 2011). This document sets out the Council's Vision and Objectives for transport.

20 The Vision states that by 2031 Milton Keynes will have the most sustainable transport system in the country where there will be a real transport choice to encourage more sustainable travel behaviour. The transport system will provide fast and efficient movement of people and goods, and everyone will have access to key services and amenities. Milton Keynes will be an exemplar for the latest developments in technology and new forms of transport.



21 The Objectives, to deliver this Vision are:

1. Provide real and attractive transport choices to encourage more sustainable travel behaviour as Milton Keynes grows.
2. Support the economic growth of the borough through the fast, efficient and reliable movement of people and goods.
3. Reduce transport based CO₂ emissions to help tackle climate change.
4. Provide access for all to key services and amenities in Milton Keynes, including employment, education, health, retail, and leisure.
5. Improve safety, security and health.
6. Contribute to quality of life for all Milton Keynes residents, strengthening linkages between communities.
7. Establish a development framework, that embraces technological change, in which Milton Keynes can continue to grow, pioneer and develop.

22 The Core Strategy (MKC, July 2013), which Plan:MK will supersede, set out the Council's policy and aspirations for "a well-connected Milton Keynes". Policy CS11 describes how the Council will work with partners to meet the demand for increased movement of goods and people.

23 Measures proposed include: public transport improvements; more sustainable travel choices, especially by walking and

cycling; better planning of development areas and maximising the capacity of the transport networks.

24 Appendix B of the Core Strategy lists the policies from the Local Plan (MKC, December 2005) that were either superseded by the Core Strategy, or were 'saved' and would be incorporated into Plan:MK. With regard to transport, policies T1-T5 and T7-T17 were all 'saved' policies and will need to be considered as part of Plan:MK.

Summary

25 It is clear that at the national, regional and local level the overwhelming transport policy directives are to plan for growth, reduce emissions and contribute to the economy.

26 National policy is aimed at reducing the need to travel and, when we need to travel, to do so by more sustainable modes. Providing larger mixed-use developments where facilities can be accessed by cycling and walking is promoted as one of the main ways to achieve this.

27 In Milton Keynes this would mean providing growth in fewer locations, with each location providing more of a mix of uses in walkable neighbourhoods. In effect, this means continuing with the previous policy of concentrating development in identified locations in the Borough.

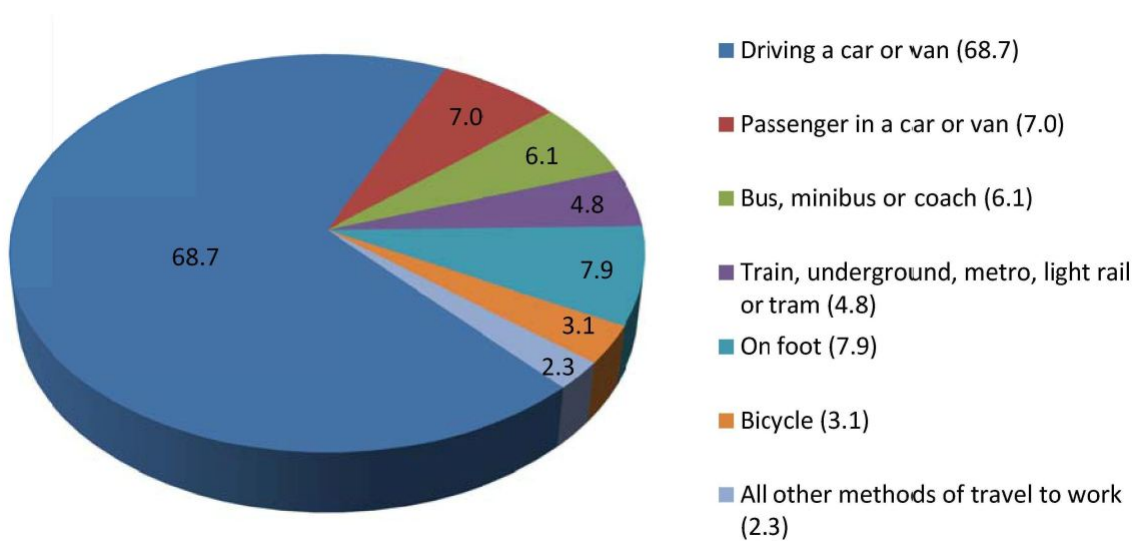


Data and Trends

28 The traditional peaks for traffic on the network are still mainly associated with the journey to and from work. The weekday morning and afternoon peak hours still represent the busiest times on the network.

Figure 1 'Method of Travel to Work in Milton Keynes (2011)' shows the relative proportions of the main modes of travel to work in Milton Keynes (2011 Census data). NB. The census data includes those that work at home and therefore do not actually travel.

Figure 1 Method of Travel to Work in Milton Keynes (2011)



(Source: ONS Census Data)

29 The Census showed that 9.8% of respondents work at home (or mainly at home) and therefore do not travel. Figure 1 'Method of Travel to Work in Milton Keynes (2011)' shows that over three quarters (75.7%) of those that do travel to work do so by car or van as a driver or passenger. Furthermore, almost two thirds of all journeys to work (61.7%) were via a car or van with a single occupant.

30 This proportion of trips being undertaken by single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) is extremely inefficient and is unsustainable. High proportions of SOVs mean that more roadspace is required to move people around, which in turn reduces the capacity of the network and increases congestion, pollution and transport costs.

31 This congestion and delay on the road network in Milton Keynes is beginning to significantly impact on journey times. The DfT monitors average speeds and journey times on 'A' roads in Milton Keynes. Table 1 'Journey time and average speed comparison (1 mile)' below shows average journey times (for 1 mile) and speeds during the weekday morning peak (7am-10am) on locally managed 'A' roads (in Milton Keynes this excludes the A5).

Table 1 Journey time and average speed comparison (1 mile)

Year	Time (min, sec)	Speed (mph)
2009-10	1'43"	35.0
2013-14	1'50"	32.7

(Source: DfT)

32 These figures show an increase in journey times and a reduction in average speeds of almost 7% in just 4 years. Local traffic data from Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) in Milton Keynes over the same period shows an overall increase in traffic of just under 2%. This disparity between increased journey times and increased traffic volumes could indicate that the network is beginning to reach capacity.

33 In addition to the high number of SOV trips referred to in Figure 1 'Method of Travel to Work in Milton Keynes (2011)', car ownership (per household) in Milton Keynes continues to rise. Table 2 below shows car ownership data for Milton Keynes in 2001 and 2011.

Table 2 Car ownership in Milton Keynes: 2001-2011 comparison

Year	Households	Vehicles	Vehicles per Household
2001	82,184	103,896	1.26
2011	95,584	128,029	1.30

(Source: ONS Census Data)

34 Nationally the number of households without access to a car continues to fall (30% in 1995/7 down to 25% in 2011/12). However, in Milton Keynes the proportion of households without access to a car has remained almost unchanged at just below 19% (It has actually increased, albeit by only a small margin - 18.7% in 2001 and 18.9% in 2011).

35 With car ownership continuing to rise it is even more important that sustainable alternatives are provided as real and competitive travel options. Encouragement of low carbon and more fuel-efficient vehicle technologies is also key while the car continues to be the predominant mode of travel.

36 The Council is currently carrying out a review of parking standards in Milton Keynes and a consultation exercise is planned for autumn 2014. As a result, new parking standards will be proposed for residential and commercial properties. The new standards will also include guidance on cycle parking, electric vehicle charging points and other parking-related issues.

37 Although the proportion of journeys to work by car is still very high and the majority of those are by Single Occupancy Vehicle, there have been some positive changes between 2001 and 2011.

38 Comparing the data from the 2001 census with the 2011 census there was a rise of almost 19% in the number of journeys to work. This is mainly due to population growth. With no change in travel habits, each journey type would therefore be expected to rise by around 19%. Table 3 'Method of travel to work in Milton Keynes: 2001 to 2011 comparison' shows the actual changes.

Table 3 Method of travel to work in Milton Keynes: 2001 to 2011 comparison

	Home	Rail	Bus	Driver	Passenger	Cycle	Walk	Other
2001	9,253	4,060	5,118	67,986	8,732	3,265	7,405	2,256
2011	12,598	5,563	7,065	79,474	8,084	3,611	9,150	2,693
Change (%)	36.2	37	38	16.9	-7.4	10.6	23.6	19.4

(Source: ONS Census Data)

39 These figures show that there were some positive shifts in travel behaviour; working at home and travelling by rail or bus increased significantly more than the rise attributable to population growth. The increase in car driver numbers was less than population rise, with car passengers showing a fall in actual numbers.

40 There was a modest additional increase in walking - approximately 5% higher than population growth; however, cycling as a method of travel to work showed a proportional decline compared to population growth.

41 More work is needed to understand the reasons behind some of these changes and the potential impacts of economic factors such as the recession.



Conclusions

42 It is clear that the car is still the predominant mode for the journey to work. While the proportion of those driving to work has slightly decreased (63% in 2001 down to 62% in 2011) the actual numbers have increased due to growth (around 68,000 in 2001 up to around 79,500 in 2011).

43 The proportion of car journeys in Single Occupancy Vehicles is very high. The Car Share scheme operating in CMK has been successful but outside CMK car sharing is not prevalent. This is due to a number of factors including awareness and promotion of car-sharing as an option, but also the availability of free car parking at or near to the workplace.

44 There has been a modest increase in walking but it is not clear what has influenced this change. More encouragement for walking as a mode of travel to work is required and more understanding of the potential barriers to walking is needed. Planning neighbourhoods for walking as the primary mode is essential.

45 Perhaps the most disappointing figure is the relative decline in cycle commuting; however, the change is relatively small (3.0% in 2001 down to 2.8% in 2011). Information about leisure cycling over the same period is not reliable, but indications in recent years show that cycling for leisure purposes is increasing.

46 Bus and rail as modes of travel to work are increasing much faster than population growth. We need to understand more about the reasons for this and how to plan developments that capture the elements that do most to encourage public transport use.



The Milton Keynes Multi Modal Model (MKMMM) Transport Model

47 The MKMMM is a transport model that can assist with the planning of growth. It can aid the decision making process by allowing us to forecast future transport demands, not only for traffic, but also public transport.

48 As part of the development of the Core Strategy a 2009 base model was developed. This allowed us to look with more certainty at future scenarios and test how the Milton Keynes network would accommodate future growth and development. For the Core Strategy, a future year of 2026 was modelled. Planning data (number of additional households, jobs and school places etc.) was taken from the Core Strategy (2009 to 2026) and was used to develop the 2026 model.

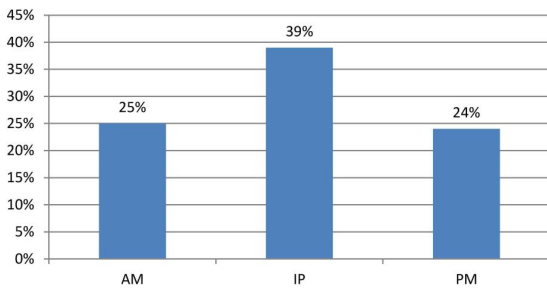
49 As well as the local planning data, the forecast growth in travel demand was derived from regional data and national traffic growth forecasts. The model also incorporated planned changes in infrastructure, such as major highway and public transport schemes.



50 The impact on traffic volumes of the local and regional growth and other changes is shown in Figure 2 'Percentage increase in traffic due to growth' below. The graph shows the predicted increase in traffic volumes in the morning peak hour ("AM" - 8.00am-9.00am), the evening peak

hour ("PM" - 5.00pm-6.00pm) and the remainder of the day between the peak hours ("IP" - 9.00am-5.00pm).

Figure 2 Percentage increase in traffic due to growth



51 The predicted changes in traffic between 2009 and 2026 indicate that traffic will increase significantly along all of the key corridors in each of the three time periods with the largest increase in the interpeak (IP) period. What the model is demonstrating is that the capacity for

increase in the peak hours is limited (to around 25%) and that any further increases will take place immediately before or after the main peak hour where some capacity does exist.

52 The locations used to assess the impact of development growth on traffic volumes are shown in the Figures below. The cordon (red line in Figure 3 'Cordon and Screenline Locations') shows the changes in traffic volume averaged across every entry/exit point to the main urban area of Milton Keynes.

53 The screenlines shown in Figure 3 'Cordon and Screenline Locations' bisect the most highly-trafficked routes and can be used to indicate changes in traffic volumes to and from specific areas. For example the canal screenline (green) shows east-west movement including the A422 and routes between CMK and the M1.

Figure 3 Cordon and Screenline Locations

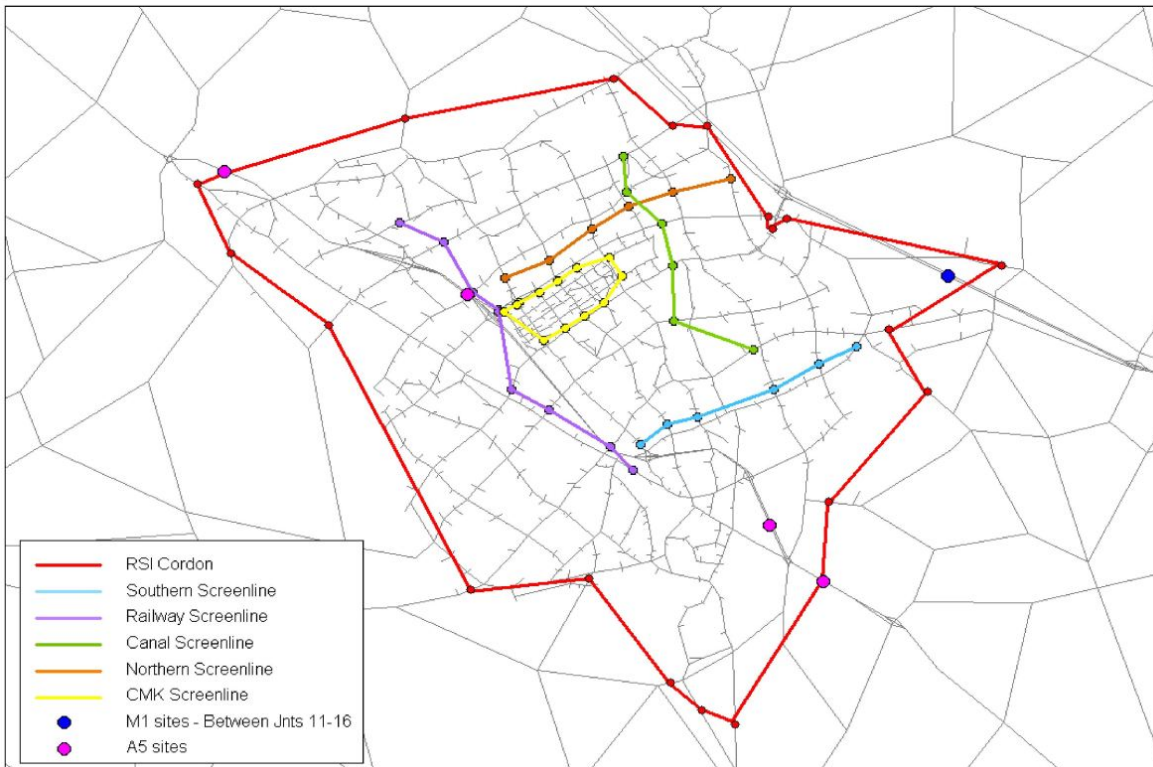
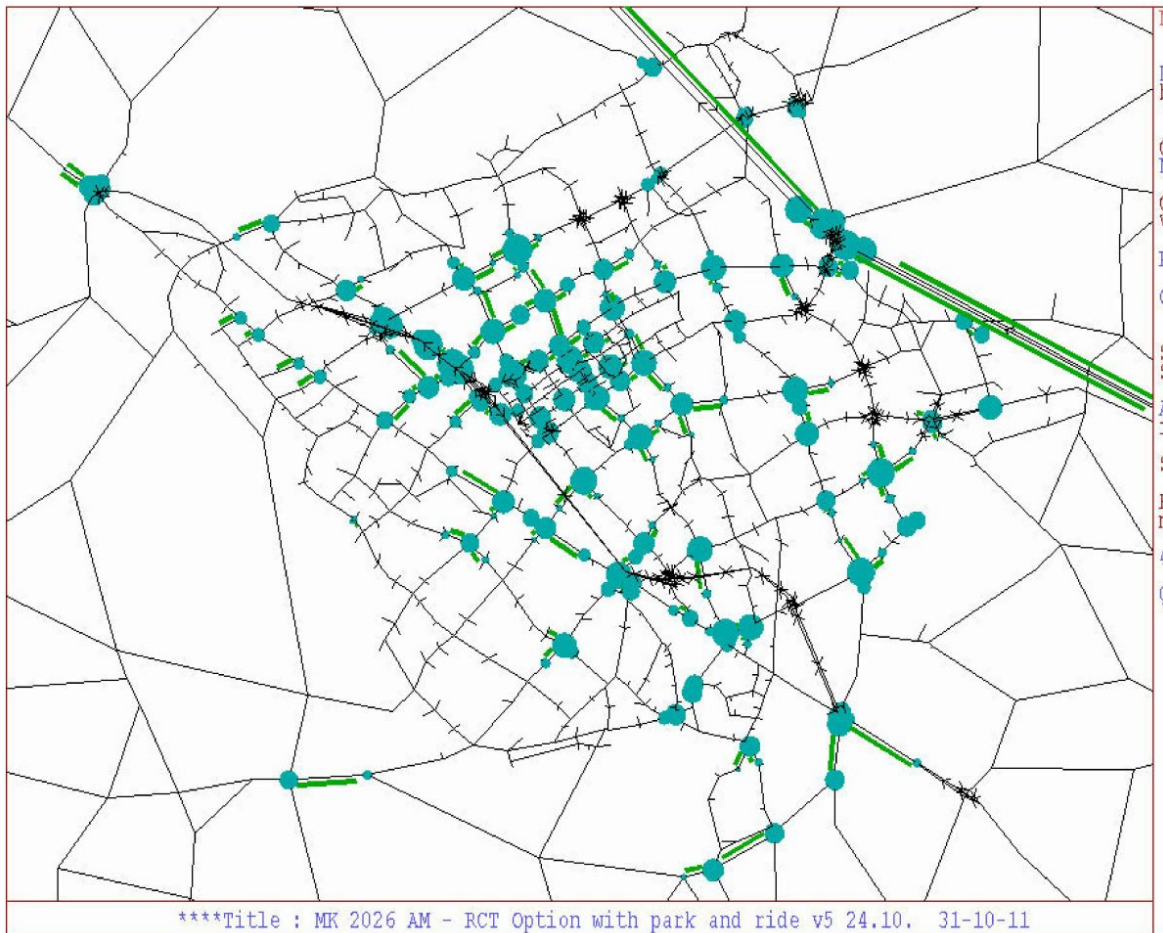


Table 4 Predicted changes in traffic volume across Cordon and Screenlines

	Changes in traffic volumes 2009-2026		
	AM Peak	Inter Peak	PM Peak
RSI Cordon	27%	62%	25%
Southern	12%	59%	19%
Canal	9%	46%	2%
Northern	12%	59%	12%
CMK	16%	72%	21%
Railway	13%	54%	4%
M1 Sites	41%	51%	36%
A5 Sites	18%	64%	17%

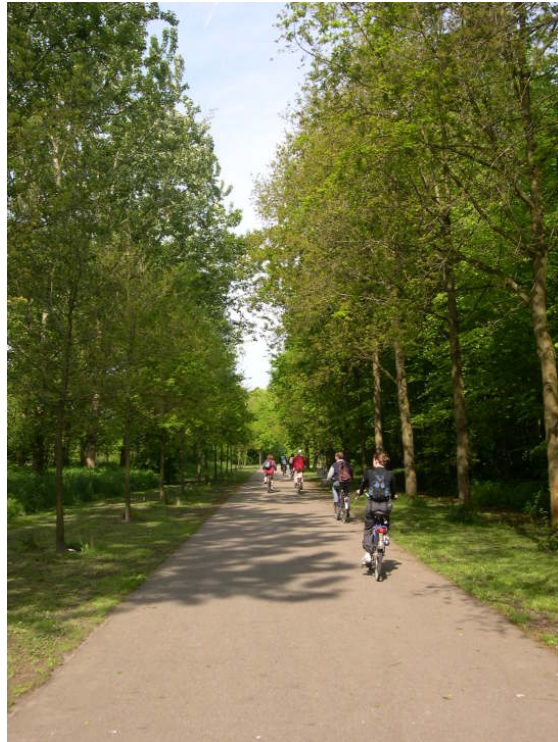
Figure 4 Potential Congestion hotspots in the morning peak hour, 2026



54 Using this data, further analysis of the model outputs also identified locations where congestion was predicted to deteriorate significantly in the period to 2026. These potential congestion 'hotspots' are shown in Figure 4 'Potential Congestion hotspots in the morning peak hour, 2026'.

55 The outputs from the modelling carried out for the Core Strategy shows that the growth planned in the Core Strategy would have had serious impacts on the transport network in Milton Keynes without intervention. Figure 4 'Potential Congestion hotspots in the morning peak hour, 2026' in particular shows how the impacts of growth are most significant in and around CMK. Almost all junctions in and around CMK will be over capacity in 2026 without further interventions.

56 Patterns of growth for Plan:MK will need to be modelled in a similar way to indicate what the impacts will be in the future. The model can help to predict the impact of different growth scenarios (numbers of dwellings, locations for growth etc.) and assist with planning for that growth.



57 The model is not a tool that can indicate where growth should happen, but it can help us to understand the implications of growth for travel and for transport networks. Model data can help us to plan for improvements to the network by estimating the demand for travel and how network changes will affect travel patterns and behaviours.

Challenges

58 There is a clear national, regional and local emphasis on enabling growth, which brings more demand for transport. However, growth must be sustainable and in transport terms it must contribute to providing attractive transport choices and reducing transport impacts.

59 Additional demand on our transport networks also requires innovative solutions to maximise the capacity of the infrastructure we have as well as looking at new ways of providing more capacity. One increasingly important area is to promote genuine and attractive alternatives to the car, particularly for the journey to work.

60 For Milton Keynes a particular challenge is to provide those alternatives within the existing fabric of a relatively low-density environment with a somewhat dispersed pattern of development. One critical aspect of new development proposals will be to ensure that the density of people (not dwellings) is sufficient to support public transport and to ensure that neighbourhoods are planned that incorporate sufficient facilities to allow residents to access them locally, without the need to travel.



61 Larger expansion areas with a mix of facilities are more likely to provide this environment than a larger number of

smaller sites, which individually do not have the critical mass to support local facilities.



Walking & Cycling

62 There is an increasing awareness of the links between active lifestyles and the health and quality of life of the population. In 2010 the Department for Transport (DfT) and Department of Health (DH) published the Active Travel Strategy, which promotes walking and cycling as low cost, healthier options for shorter journeys.

63 Guidance on acceptable maximum cycle and walk distances suggests that these vary significantly according to the journey purpose and the individual undertaking the journey. However, it is clear that reducing the distances travelled will increase the likelihood of those journeys being by cycle or on foot.

64 Some organisations are recommending maximum walk and cycle distances to certain local and community facilities. The average walking journey distance in England and Wales is around 1.2km (3/4 mile), which equates to a walk time of up to 15 minutes. The average cycle journey distance is around 4km (2.4 miles) and is again broadly a 15 minute journey.

65 If people are prepared to walk and cycle for up to 15 minutes to access local facilities, then it seems reasonable to propose policies that seek to ensure such facilities are available within a 15 minute walk/cycle journey.

66 Milton Keynes is often quoted as having good cycle infrastructure, with its 300km of Redways cited as a major asset. Unfortunately this is not borne out by the

number of people cycling to work. A recent consultation exercise for the “Cycling Strategy for Milton Keynes” (MKC: 2013) also highlighted that the Redway network is viewed as a good leisure resource, but not necessarily suited to the needs of the commuter cyclist.

67 New development areas will need to improve on the current Redway system and provide cycle commuter routes, which are much more direct and dedicated for cycle use. These routes should minimise interruptions for road crossings and private accesses as well as avoiding conflicts with dog-walkers, children and other pedestrians.



68 Such routes are proposed as part of the Cycling Strategy and have been referred to as “Super Redways”. In the future these routes could even be able to accommodate other forms of transport that sit in the speed range above pedestrians (3-4mph) and below road traffic (typically 20mph and above).

Question 1

Walking and Cycling

What features can be incorporated into new developments to maximise the number of people walking and cycling, especially for short journeys?

Public Transport

69 The existing MK Local Plan (2005) recommended that dwellings should be located no more than 400m from a bus stop. 400m represents a walk of approximately 5 minutes, which is the maximum distance most people are willing and able to walk to access public transport.



70 Unfortunately in many recent developments this target has not been achieved for a number of reasons. Higher infrastructure costs for housebuilders (wider roads, bus stops), unsuitable layouts proposed by architects and reluctance from transport operators to provide bus services to some sites have all contributed to many new dwellings having poor access to public transport services.

71 In particular this has resulted in those with mobility issues often being unable to access public transport. In turn this has placed greater pressure on alternatives such as the Community Transport service.

72 This must change and public transport provision, alongside walking and cycling, needs to genuinely be one of the primary considerations when planning the locations and layouts of all new developments. Changes to legislation for planning obligations also means that new ways of funding development related bus services may need to be considered in the future.



Question 2

Public Transport

What would encourage people to use public transport for more journeys?
What could the planning system do to help make public transport more attractive?

Personal Mobility - access to a car, access to services & facilities

73 At the time of the 2011 Census almost 1 in 5 households in Milton Keynes did not have access to a car. Public transport operators cannot provide economically viable services between all of the very large number of locations across Milton Keynes. The dispersal of facilities and employment opportunities across the city also makes many of them difficult to access by walking and cycling.



74 This potentially excludes a large proportion of the population from job opportunities as well as access to healthcare and other support services. In order to meet the transport needs of this group of people and to improve accessibility for all, we must consider alternative options to support traditional public transport.

75 New development areas need to contribute to new transport solutions such as local car share and car pool schemes, "on demand" travel systems, pool bikes and/or cycle hire.

Question 3

Personal Mobility

How else can new developments encourage more sustainable travel behaviour and reduce the need to travel?

Rural development

76 The transport impacts of new developments in rural locations can be very high. It is not unusual for rural bus services to be more limited than those in the urban area, particularly in the evening and at weekends.

77 The highway network in rural locations is also often ill-suited to carrying higher volumes of traffic. Footways are often narrower and less extensive than in urban areas and, where there is any cycle provision it does not extend much beyond some limited national routes.

78 Some types of development such as employment, can have a larger impact on rural locations due to the volume and type of traffic generated (e.g. HGV movements). Whilst these developments can support rural economies, they are almost impossible to provide with sustainable transport.



79 Other developments in rural locations can seem like ideal opportunities to reduce the need to travel. However, uses such as childcare, beauty and hair salons or ancillary health services can, if located inappropriately, draw trade from large surrounding areas. Whilst this may be good for the business concerned, customers are very unlikely to be able to access the facility by anything other than the car.

80 Rural development policies should encourage the location and size of facilities to be commensurate with the community they are intended to serve. Larger rural settlements, which are easier to serve by public transport and have larger walk / cycle catchments, should be the focus for such facilities.

Opportunities

81 Growth brings with it significant opportunities for change and for the residents of new developments to have genuine travel options for most everyday journeys. Planning policies can influence many of the factors that have the greatest impact on travel and travel behaviour.



82 National policy clearly sets out the importance of the location and size of development on the need to travel and the mode of travel. Larger mix-used developments can help to reduce the need to travel beyond the neighbourhood and for those journeys within the neighbourhood to be walked or cycled.

83 New developments can also assist walking and cycling by ensuring that high quality routes are provided. These should be the most direct route possible, safe, convenient and easy to navigate. Routes for commuter cycling should also be incorporated into larger development areas.

84 Facilities for cycling should be embedded in all new development; convenient, secure and covered cycle storage at all employment, health, education and major retail locations; showers and changing facilities at all employment locations; cycle parking for all new dwellings, appropriate to the anticipated household size; pool bikes and cycle hire schemes as part of Residential Travel Plans.

85 In addition to encouraging walking and cycling new development proposals must embrace new technologies and innovation. Development should support some of the initiatives already being implemented by the Council:

- The Small Vehicle Transport (SVT) system, which is demand responsive like a taxi, yet shared and lower-cost, like a bus. Developments should incorporate pick-up / set-down locations and housebuilders should ensure new residents are provided with information and technology to access the service;
- The use of automated vehicles and “driverless pods” initially in CMK, but extending across the city area is currently being explored. These innovations will require infrastructure support from developments.
- Electric buses, which are currently running between Bletchley and Wolverton. Developments can incorporate additional charging points for the buses and extend the routes on which electric buses can run.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. The Council has provided a large network of these across Milton Keynes and new developments should provide EV charging points to extend that network even further.



86 The Transport Catapult headquarters in Milton Keynes offers opportunities to help UK businesses and promotes the UK as

a test-bed for the transportation industry. The driverless pods will be 'tested' in MK in 2015.

Question 4

Sustainable Travel

How can we ensure that sustainable travel is at the heart of all new development proposals?

Intelligent Transport Systems and Network Optimisation

87 The ability to actively manage traffic and to make real-time changes to the network is increasing rapidly with the advent of new technologies. Intelligent traffic signals that can detect vehicle types, Variable Message Signs (VMS) and real-time traffic monitoring can all help with maximising the capacity of our infrastructure.



88 Modern traffic signals can actively manage traffic and adjust very quickly to different flows on approaches to junctions. Some of our busiest junctions would benefit from signal control, which could also offer bus priority and, depending on location, options for pedestrians and cyclists.

89 New development can contribute to network optimisation by providing residents and businesses with the right infrastructure and supporting that infrastructure with information. Ensuring that all new

developments have suitable broadband connections can not only enable online activity to replace journeys (shopping, conference calls) but it can also ensure information is available about journey choices in real time.

Travel Planning

90 Planning applications for all significant travel generating developments in Milton Keynes need to be supported by either a Transport Assessment (TA) or a Transport Statement (TS). TAs and TSs make an assessment of the travel needs of new developments and look at the impacts of that travel on the existing infrastructure.



91 Travel Plans (TPs) are documents that the housebuilder, developer or occupier is required to submit for most of these developments. The TP should build on the work in the TA/TS and should promote activities that minimise the impacts of the development. Policies in Plan:MK should ensure that new developments are supported by Travel Plans.

92 A good TP should include all measures that encourage more sustainable travel behaviour and consider the needs of those with mobility issues. Some of these can be incorporated into the development infrastructure and some will require financial support or the provision of information and literature.

Rail

93 Milton Keynes has six railway stations; Wolverton, MK Central and Bletchley, where West Coast Main Line (WCML) services stop and Fenny Stratford, Bow Brickhill and Woburn Sands on the Bedford-Bletchley line (these services also stop at Bletchley).



94 Despite this and the fact that Census data shows that the proportion of journeys to work by rail has risen significantly since 2001, rail commuting still only accounts for up to 4.3% of the total number of journeys to work.

95 Locating residential developments where access to rail services is maximised and working with operators could help to further increase the proportion of journeys by rail. Developments should demonstrate how they are maximising the potential to use rail services.

96 Journeys to rail stations and onward travel options after rail journeys are not always easy to plan and integrate. Combined ticketing is sometimes difficult or unclear and information about options is not always easy to find. In CMK travel options between the station and retail and employment locations are not extensive, being limited primarily to bus or taxi.

97 The Bedford-Bletchley line is now part of the East-West Rail (EWR) project, which will initially connect Bedford to Oxford, but will ultimately connect East Anglia to the South and West. This line is planned

for electrification and higher speed services. Major developments in Milton Keynes should seek to contribute to and benefit from these improvements.

98 Further into the future the provision of HS2, a high-speed service between London and Birmingham (and then Manchester and Leeds) has the potential to free up capacity on the WCML for more services calling at the three main line stations.

Question 5

Rail

How do you think new developments can contribute to the use of rail and capitalise on the additional capacity generated by East-West Rail and HS2?



Freight

99 Another possible benefit from EWR in particular is the ability to move more goods by rail. One of the key objectives of the project is to provide more capacity for freight trains.

100 Linkages between warehouse and distribution proposals and rail facilities need to be explored and either created or enhanced. Opportunities for additional road/rail transfer facilities arising from EWR also need to be considered.

101 For road-based and smaller-scale freight proposals, modern logistics practises mean that most deliveries are “just in time” and are highly planned. This has resulted in HGV parking becoming an issue not just confined to industrial estates. There is an opportunity to review HGV parking provision at such locations to see if some off-site provision could be made.

102 For small-scale and domestic deliveries, as well as Town Centre servicing facilities, shared points for goods delivery/collection could also reduce the impact of HGVs and reduce the number of delivery vehicles as well as delivery miles. Consideration should be given to integrating such facilities into new developments.



Question 6

Freight

What more can be done in new distribution and industrial developments to reduce the impact of road-based freight movements?

Other Issues

Funding

103 Central and local government is not able to fund and support all of the initiatives required to meet the demands of a fully integrated sustainable transport system. Most of the additional demands on the network and therefore the need to improve sustainability comes from new development.



104 Recent changes to and current mechanisms for securing funding from developments do not lend themselves to funding transport initiatives. Transport by its very nature does not relate closely to the geographic location of an individual development, yet 'pooling' of contributions is not permissible.

105 The planning system therefore makes it very difficult to secure contributions to travel information schemes, through-ticketing, bus and rail services, city-wide cycle hire and all similar proposals.

Question 7

Funding

How can the planning system ensure that contributions to sustainable transport options are guaranteed and easily secured from development proposals?

Grid Roads

106 Movement in Milton Keynes is dominated by the grid road system. The pattern of grid roads allows multiple route choices and disperses traffic across many routes; however, the grid roads do separate communities from facilities and increase distances to access public transport.

107 The grid roads are mainly high-speed routes (60mph / 70mph), which has some disadvantages:

- Accidents that occur have a greater severity (more serious injuries and fatalities);
- Buses have more difficulty entering the grid road carriageway from lay-bys, adding to journey times;
- Turning movements are more difficult, resulting in accidents and/or closure of junctions thereby lengthening journeys;
- Pulling out from junctions and at roundabouts is restricted, adding to journey times, delays and congestion;
- Noise generated by the fast movement of vehicles.

108 Recent developments, such as the Eastern Expansion Area, moved away from grid roads and whilst this is arguably better for access at the neighbourhood level, it does put more pressure on existing grid roads and increases traffic levels on local streets.

Question 8

Grid Roads

Should the principles of grid roads be maintained? Should speed limits on grid roads be reduced?

Milton Keynes Council

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

T01908 252358

F01908 252330

E planMK@milton-keynes.gov.uk

M14283 September 2014

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK



Plan: MK