

## 12. Implementation

- 12.1 This Plan expresses the vision and illuminates the ambitious scale of growth and change that is desired for CMK by the end of the plan period in 2026, as set out in overarching terms in MK Council's adopted *Core Strategy*.
- 12.2 To help give a sense of proportion to this ambition, this Plan would welcome on average, every three years for the next fifteen years, completed and occupied developments containing:
- » about 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail space;
  - » about 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices;
  - » about 1,000 dwellings; and
  - » one to two cultural, sporting or community facilities.
- 12.3 Viewed another way, the objective is to encourage the development of about three hectares (just under nine acres) of undeveloped or under-developed land every year for fifteen years (one Blocklet is about one hectare).
- 12.4 This scale of development activity has been exceeded in several periods in the last few decades since CMK was begun, and proportionately this scale of planned growth is more manageable and a more credible prospect as the launch pad is now a successful regional centre rather than bare fields.

- 12.5 However, the scale of CMK that is planned for is more than was envisaged by the original master planners and designers and significant change in transport habits must occur among residents, employees and visitors if ease of access is to remain a major competitive advantage. Public transport must be made so much more attractive that it will be used by at least five times the current levels of passengers, and several thousand more car parking spaces will need to be built.
- 12.6 Against this background, this section of the Plan explains how its proposals are to be implemented.

### The Champions of the Vision for CMK

- 12.7 Experience has shown that the pressures upon local government are such that MK Council alone cannot realistically be expected to be the lead champion of the vision for CMK as summarised in this Plan.

- 12.8 It is evident therefore that a coalition of subscribers to the vision is needed to act as champion and to monitor progress. The CMK Alliance, gathered around the elected Town Council and local Ward Councillors, with leaders of the local business community, is seen as the kernel of such a coalition, which should be widened to include civic interest groups and amenity societies and similar organisations with a commitment to the ideas in this Plan.

### Statutory Responsibilities

- 12.9 The statutory semi-judicial role of local planning authority is MK Council and it has the powers and resources under Town Planning and related legislation to apply the policies of this Plan once it has adopted them.
- 12.10 MK Council has the power and resources - raised from Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) when enacted - to secure the rounded, high quality CMK to which this Plan aspires. In updating its policy on developer obligations, however, and in devising its CIL scheme, MK Council must be more realistic in setting charges to assist the development of CMK.

At present the demands for education and community facilities, for example, are far too low, particularly when compared to those required for the adjoining residential grid squares. Money collected in recent years for multi storey car parks was too low to be useful and had to be returned (meaning that development has occurred without adequate car parking being created).

## Marketing and Pump-Priming CMK

12.11 The dominant owner of development land in CMK has a vested interest in its continuing successful growth because it will drive up the value of land to be sold. Most of HCA's land-holdings in CMK were sold to MK Council and then transferred to the Council's wholly-owned subsidiary, Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP), at the beginning of 2013. MKDP, as the dominant landowner, is accordingly expected to maintain levels of investment in marketing CMK regionally, nationally and internationally, and to continue

to invest in the pump-priming infrastructure that will make its development land more attractive (by procuring multi-storey car parks and helping subsidise some public transport services, for example). This is an inescapable real estate management discipline, and it will not be credible for the landowner to be passive and assume that things will happen without focus and the investment of money and effort.

12.12 CMK is the largest planned growth area for employment in the region outside London, and it is expected that the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) will use the Government money it is being given for the purpose to help promote CMK and support its development with physical infrastructure and investment in skills training and education to provide not only an attractive workforce but also successive generations of entrepreneurs to sustain Milton Keynes' established record for new business start-ups and small and medium sized business activity. CMK's pivotal location in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc (O2C) remains a great advantage for successful economic development.

12.13 MK Council has an Economic Development Strategy which it is assumed will be implemented, and with its partners in Destination MK and similar organisations can also be expected to invest in marketing CMK as the heart of the whole city.

12.14 Arts and cultural organisations are already providing fabulous programmes of activity to animate the streets and public spaces of CMK - the International Festival (IF) being a prime example - and more complementary programming is underway.

12.15 The businesses of CMK are also the drivers of change for this Plan. Owners of retail and entertainment centres need to ensure a high volume of high quality visitors seeking a longer dwell time and creating a larger per capita spend.

- 12.16 Service companies need to help sustain a vibrant and attractive CMK to assist staff recruitment and staff retention, and to provide a competitive advantage. The educational sector also makes huge contributions for similar reasons, and this is expected to grow.
- 12.17 Progress has been made recently in organising business representation in Milton Keynes, with:
- » The Business Council, bringing together representational business organisations across Milton Keynes;
  - » CMK Business Forum, open to any business based in CMK, which appoints the business members of the CMK Alliance Steering Group; and
  - » Milton Keynes City Centre Management (MKCCM), a membership organisation open to CMK businesses and voluntary organisations, and to the public sector, which has administered and supported the preparation of the Plan.

- 12.18 The voluntary sector, in part made robust by the existence of not-for-profit organisations unique to Milton Keynes such as the Community Foundation and the Parks Trust, remain essential to the vitality and inclusiveness of CMK. The sector is diverse and has a wide range of interests in the Plan:
- » As landowners as well as delivering services in CMK, such as MK Gallery, the Church of Christ the Cornerstone, MK YMCA and MK Community Foundation;
  - » Occupying property in CMK such as Acorn House and the Buszy;
  - » Delivering services in CMK, for example Age UK and Citizens Advice Bureau;
  - » Representing members in the sector, Community Action:MK; and
  - » Monitoring and campaigning about issues that affect CMK, such as MK Forum, Urban Eden and Xplain.
- 12.19 The under-developed sector is that of small retailers, artists and crafts persons. This Plan has been explicit about the need to provide affordable accommodation to help growth, and this is to be achieved by cross subsidy from commercial development.

## Priorities for the Promoters

- 12.20 It has been made clear in this Plan that the establishment of a major University in CMK, in either Block B4 or F1, is a major priority.
- 12.21 Reference is also made to the apparent opportunity to encourage the development of a major business conference or international congress facility in CMK, perhaps with associated exhibition space.
- 12.22 The importance of the arts and cultural aspect of CMK has been emphasised, and the third priority is investment in additional facilities for the arts and culture.
- 12.23 The fourth priority is the development of a covered Market Hall to provide a characterful permanent focus for small and specialist traders to leaven the dominance of high street multiple chains in the CMK offer.

## Public Transport and Parking

- 12.24 MK Council as a unitary authority is responsible for transport planning in the city. Its present long-term vision and strategy is the third *Local Transport Plan (LTP3)*, which it is generally acknowledged will not achieve the necessary step change in the use of public transport within the context of the unique attributes of Milton Keynes (such as its dispersed activity centres and grid road network).
- 12.25 This Plan will contribute to the design of a more appropriate long-term strategy in due course, but the immediate priority is the early establishment of the CMK shuttle service. Current *LTP3* plans to build ever-larger bus stops in CMK and to delay every cross-city bus journey by requiring route diversion along Midsummer Boulevard need radically to be re-thought to save money and avoid destruction of the classic CMK infrastructure. The management of CMK parking to raise revenue must give way to a management regime which is designed to serve the needs of users of CMK.

## Maintenance of the Public Realm

- 12.26 The Parks Trust has been widely appreciated as an organisation committed to the maintenance of the green estate in the whole city of Milton Keynes. It is governed by a charitable Trust Deed, and was gifted with a dowry of cash and investments as a starter fund to encourage it to be self-financing in perpetuity.
- 12.27 Unsurprisingly, the contrast in quality in the maintenance and promotion of the Parks Trust green estate and that held by MK Council is all too obvious.
- 12.28 In CMK a similar challenge is presented by the urban estate - the Gates, Boulevards, Streets and public places in CMK. MK Council is not able to maintain them adequately to the detriment of all users and economic development.
- 12.29 It is proposed that a public debate should take place about the transfer of the public domain of CMK to the Parks Trust or to some similar body created specifically for the purpose.



***A variety of public transport solutions are needed***