

Landslide Vote Approves CMK Business Neighbourhood Plan

On 7 May the people of Milton Keynes made history when they voted overwhelmingly in favour of adopting the country's first ever Business Neighbourhood Plan. This pioneering plan, produced by local people and businesses under the leadership of Central Milton Keynes Town Council, will guide development throughout CMK over the course of the next 10-15 years. An impressive 89,000 residents voted Yes at the borough-wide referendum (84% of the votes cast), and 356 businesses also voted in favour (88% of the business votes cast).

This marks the first time such an important plan for a city centre has been produced by local people and not by a local authority. It is the most complex plan of its type, dealing with housing, business, transport and community needs.

The plan was adopted by Milton Keynes Council on 10 June, meaning it must now be taken into account when the Council is deciding planning applications in CMK. This will ensure that new developments are built in line with the needs and wishes of local people. This includes the provision of more small, local shops, a new CMK public transport shuttle and more parking for commercial developments. The plan will also protect the city's unique infrastructure, including its grid roads, leafy boulevards and open space, beautifully represented in Helmut Jacoby's classic 1971 artwork (above right), which would otherwise have remained vulnerable to piecemeal development.



© Caroline Brown / MK Partnership / Helmut Jacoby

The plan also sets out a vision for a host of new community facilities for CMK, including building a new covered market hall in addition to the existing outdoor market, new leisure and sports facilities, a new civic space at the heart of the city centre and land for an expanded university campus for Milton Keynes.

Derek Walker Remembered

One of the key masterminds behind the original plan for Central Milton Keynes, the former chief architect Derek Walker, passed away on Monday 11 May at the age of 85. Responsible for many of Milton Keynes' most recognisable and most loved features, he was

both a visionary architect and a unique personality, who leaves behind Britain's most successful New Town as his legacy.

Walker became the chief architect for Milton Keynes in 1970, just as construction was beginning on the city. He played a huge part in designing the city centre, most notably the central shopping building, which he lived to see listed by English Heritage in 2012. He also worked on developments across the city, including many housing and industrial projects, as well as Willen Lake.

"He was a remarkable man," remembers Town Councillor Ken Baker, who worked with Walker during their time at the Milton Keynes Development Corporation. "In his role as chief architect he assembled around him a team of very bright, talented young designers. He really knew how to get the best out of people, entrusting his vision for Milton Keynes to young aspiring practitioners with a wide range of styles. This was a remarkable feat, and the success of the city is very much a testament to his skill and his personality".

His enormous contribution to the success of Milton Keynes will always be remembered.



Photo by Victoria JK Lamburn (www.vickylamburn.com)

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Office to Residential Conversions Update

The application to convert two buildings on Silbury Boulevard at the site of the former job centre to residential use has been refused. It is expected that a new application will be made for this site soon. An application to convert Kingsbridge House on South Fifth Street to residences has also been submitted and approved, which includes some physical changes to the exterior of the building.

See the Test Pod Roaming CMK

Some eagle-eyed residents may have noticed a strange white car driving around the footpaths and underpasses in CMK recently. This is a test vehicle for the new driverless 'pods' that are being introduced later this year. The pods, which are booked via mobile phone, will run between the station and the shopping centre. The test vehicle is helping to gauge clearances and turning circles to ensure the pods will be able to operate safely when they are introduced.

New Office Block Planned near Grafton Park

An application has been submitted to the main Milton Keynes Council to build a new five-storey office building in CMK. The building, which will be known as 'Victoria House', will be located on the undeveloped plot of land to the east of The Jaipur, on the north side of Avebury Boulevard. The plan is expected to go before Milton Keynes Council's planning committee for determination in August.

New Hotel Planned for Leisure Plaza

Following on from the recent redevelopment of the Leisure Plaza, a planning application has now been submitted for a new hotel next to the ice rink. The six-storey building will be on the undeveloped plot of land on the north side of the site, fronting onto Avebury Boulevard. The design will be in keeping with the rest of the Leisure Plaza development, filling in the gap between the Planet Ice and Argos buildings.

CMK Gets Two Spring Cleans!

Residents and workers from across CMK joined forces to pick litter, paint street furniture and give CMK two well-earned spring cleans as part of the "Love Where You Live" project. An amazing fifteen bags of rubbish were collected and nine benches repainted.

The CMK Street Warden, Rob Harriman, organised the events, which attracted nearly 60 volunteers for the first event, and even more for the second. The events enjoyed a far larger turn out than similar ones in other towns, with one neighbouring town only managing ten attendees. This serves as a clear demonstration the pride local people have in CMK.

The spring cleans were sponsored by MK City Centre Management (MKCCM), working together with McDonalds, Milton Keynes Council, thecentre:mk and Serco. A third event is planned for 7 August, with more planned for the rest of the year. Please see the events calendar on the Town Council website for more information about how to get involved.



© Rob Harriman

Residents Bring About Changes to Lloyds Court

Residents on North Tenth Street had cause for celebration after plans to regenerate Lloyds Court, the first building to be built in CMK, were changed to address the controversial issue of noise. The plans initially featured a new service entrance on the residential road, which would have brought fully laden lorries down the quiet side street on a daily basis. However, after residents voiced their opposition, developer Palatium Investment Management responded and moved the entrance to North Row.

Plans to demolish this historically significant building four years ago raised widespread opposition, so the

new owner's proposals, which retain the colonnades and overall design of the original building, are likely to be more welcome. The new plans aim to transform it into a new retail destination, creating a new uninterrupted pedestrian route along the Secklow Gate and Silbury Boulevard faces of the building. The current service entrance and steps on the Secklow Gate side will be filled in to achieve this, and the internal courtyard spaces will be removed to create more retail space. The new CMK Alliance Plan requires some smaller units suitable for independent shops and the developer has assured the Town Council these will be provided as well. The famous Black Horse statue outside Lloyds Bank will also be retained, as will the bank itself.



Changes Planned for Norfolk & Ashton Houses

A planning application has been submitted to make major changes to the environment around Ashton House and Norfolk House, on Silbury Boulevard. The plans include building a new car park between Norfolk House and the YMCA, on the existing green space. They also include removing the pool around the 'Octo' figure of eight infinity sculpture at the east end of Norfolk House and redesigning the garden area that houses the artwork.

Another aspect of the plans is adding a new metal structure to the four-storey glass wall of Ashton House, on its frontage with Silbury Boulevard. This will substantially alter

the façade of the building. As part of this redesigned main entrance, a new pedestrian walkway will be extended out into the car parking on Silbury Boulevard, replacing some of the existing public parking spaces.

The plans are expected to go before Milton Keynes Council's planning committee this month. CMK Town Council feels that the pool is an essential part of the Octo sculpture and that the altered entrance and loss of public parking are the kind of changes to CMK's classic infrastructure that should be avoided, and is therefore objecting to the proposals.

'Bin' There, Done That!

An area of CMK that suffers from litter problems is set to benefit from four new bins, thanks to Town Council funding. The new bins will be installed in Petersfield Green, the area of housing approaching the underpass into Oldbrook at the bottom of South Fifth Street. This area experiences problems with litter being dropped by passing pedestrians, which then gets blown around the confined space between the buildings. This installation comes in response to the feedback from last year's residents' questionnaire, in which the majority of residents chose litter bins as the highest priority for small-scale projects in CMK.

A second, separate installation will also see two new dog bins provided inside Campbell Park. While residents from across the city come to Campbell Park to walk their dogs, there is currently a lack of bins for them to use, leading to dog littering becoming an issue. With the Park being one of Milton Keynes' greatest assets, it was felt that it was the right place to trial the bins and assess how successful they are in dealing with the problem.

On a related note, the CMK Warden has also lead the installation of a number of new cigarette 'butt bins' around CMK. These are being installed across the city to give office workers and visitors an easy way to dispose of cigarette butts, combating the problem of cigarette littering that exists in many areas of CMK.



Music and Fireworks at Rugby World Cup "Fanzone"

Crowds and parades will bring Campbell Park to life at the start of October as it plays host to the "Fanzone" for the Rugby World Cup, several matches of which are taking place in the city. The two weeks of activities include a range of events including processions on the first weekend, a 1980s music festival, a fireworks display on the final day, a variety of musical performances, and much more.

The CMK Residents' Forum will be investigating the potential impact of

the event on local residents, following on from the parking and environmental problems experienced after the Cyclo-cross event last year. For the Fanzone event, a shuttle bus service will be operating between Campbell Park and the Stadium:MK, which it is hoped will reduce the number of people arriving by car.

The Fanzone will be open from Thursday 1 October through to Monday 11 October, overlapping with the Rugby World Cup matches being held at the Stadium:MK.



© Lee Scriven

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Sunday 26 July
The World Picnic

A festival to celebrate music, dance and cultures from around the world. The festivities begin at 1pm at the Campbell Park Amphitheatre. Free to attend for all.

Thursday 30 July
Festival of Nations

A celebration of international dance, music, poetry, storytelling, photography, film, fashion show, native dress, games & food, held at Arts Central, above MK Central station.

Saturday 1-2 August
Filipino Festival

A free annual cultural event celebrating Filipino culture, music, dance and food. Taking place all weekend at the Campbell Park Amphitheatre.

Wednesday 5 August
MK Play Day

A family fun day with games and activities from 11am to 4pm in Campbell Park. Entry is free and no booking is needed.

Friday 14 August
The Proms

An evening of uplifting music, fireworks and fizz at the Campbell Park Amphitheatre, starting at 6.30pm. Tickets cost £14 for an adult, £8 for a child, and £35 for a group of four.

Wednesday 19 August
Experimental Music

The first of two chances to take part in a PhD research project in which you will be asked for your reactions to some avant-garde music. Refreshments will be available and a film screening will follow the listening sessions.

Thursday 1 October
Rugby Fanzone

Eleven days of events in Campbell Park in connection with the Rugby World Cup, including music, parades, fireworks and more.

For more details of these events and others, please see our website at www.cmktowncouncil.org

Fun for Kids at MK Play Day

The annual MK Play Day will return this year for another day of activities for children and families. Fun things to do at the event include water slides, bug hunting, den making and woodland play areas. There will also be fairground rides, an under-fives' village, fun on the stage sessions, and much more! Face painting will also be available, at a small charge. There will be a series of acts performing on the stage, including the Diamond Theatre School.



Several organisations will have stalls at the play day, including Bucks Fire and Rescue. The event will run from 11am until 4pm in Campbell Park, and entry is free for all. For more information please check the events page of the Town Council website for links to the Play Day Facebook and Twitter pages.

The Festival of Nations at Arts Central



Arts Central, arguably one of Central Milton Keynes' great hidden gems, is hosting its second annual "Festival of Nations" event this month. The evening is described as a celebration of international dance, music, poetry, storytelling, photography, film, native dress, games and food. The organisers, Arts Gateway MK, are also inviting performers, food and retail vendors, exhibitors, cultural groups, and volunteers to get involved. There will also be a World Art Exhibition, as well as a Native Costume Fashion Show.

The event will be held at Arts Central's exhibition space, located above the central rail station on 30 July, starting at 1pm. Entry to the festival is free and open to everyone. Arts Central also plays host to a range of events and activities throughout the year, as well as having a selection of workshops and artistic spaces available for hire in the heart of CMK.

Experimental Music at MK Gallery



There will be an opportunity to take part in a music research project at the MK Gallery on two dates in July and August. During the sessions, audiences will be played recordings of a series of three pieces of avant-garde electronic music, while answering a questionnaire on their impressions of what they hear. After this there will be some time for the guests to informally discuss the music and socialise. The evening will be rounded off with a related film screening.

The sessions form part of a research project studying the way audiences react to unusual forms of electronic music. A selection of refreshments will be on offer throughout the two free events, which will start at 6:30pm on Wednesday 22 July and Wednesday 19 August. For more information and a link to sign up for the sessions, please visit the Town Council website's events page.

www.cmktowncouncil.org



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