

PUBLIC TRANSPORT LONG TERM VISION

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL AND ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS

Study Report

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M4



11 Summary of recommended measures to develop public transport over time

Below we set out a number of measures that are independent of key decisions about the long-term future of public transport in Milton Keynes, but which could contribute to an incremental building of demand for public transport. Many of these measures could be pursued by the local authority, or in partnership with the bus operators.

For the purposes of the recommendations as set out in this section, '*short term*' refers to immediate actions with a view to implementation up to 2007. '*Medium term*' refers to 2007 to 2011 to tie up with the Local Plan or equivalent, and '*Long term*' refers to the time period for the growth planned by the Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Study proposals with a view to have the proposed measures firmly in place by 2021.

In the short term (up to 2007)

Restructuring and improving bus services without major infrastructure or traffic management changes. These measures are relatively straightforward to develop and can be implemented relatively quickly. The measures could include:

- Provide high quality attractive bus shelters for all bus stops in Milton Keynes;
- Provide high quality visible interchange facilities at key locations – train stations (Milton Keynes Central, Bletchley and Wolverton) CMK Shopping Centre and the MK General Hospital;
- Provide extensive and easy to understand information on services at all bus stops throughout Milton Keynes;
- Place bus information travel centres (preferably staffed) at the CMK Shopping Centre and at MK Central rail station, preferably combined with existing rail travel centre;
- Restructure and simplify route numbering – Key axes / groups of routes, such as south to centre, north to centre, east to centre and west to centre be given route numbers distinctive to that specific axis;
- Incorporate branding and apply specific and distinctive livery to each route group / axis;
- Restructure schedules and timetables to provide services at repeating clockface intervals constant at all times and build into the timetable effective interchange;
- Re-organisation of Milton Keynes Central rail station forecourt to provide priority access for buses over car access. Relocate car and taxi access to enable this to be achieved (see draft designs);
- Re-organisation/re-design access to the M1 Junction 14 Park and Ride site to ensure easy and prioritised access into and out of the site (without having to traverse the congested motorway junction);
- Re-organisation/re-design of the internal circulation within the M1 Junction 14 Park and Ride site to ensure buses are not delayed by private car and coach traffic;
- Redesign Coachway to provide access from both directions (avoiding the need to traverse roundabouts, including the congested M1 J14 roundabout), and to prevent coaches and buses being blocked by cars and other vehicles as at present;
- Review the role of the MK Central bus station with a view to its relocation or dispersion of its functions, and redevelopment of the site;
- Review bus routes based on demand information to maximise catchment and minimise walk distances to stops. Make use of bus only access and gating to shorten bus routes through, into and out of the grid squares;

- Continue to increase the proportion of charged spaces in CMK and, as a minimum measure, implement the recently adopted lower parking standards for new developments;
- Ensure that all new development in CMK and at other locations use shared rather than dedicated parking (there should be a presumption against dedicated parking, although individual cases can be reviewed on their merits).
- All new parking access points should be designed and located away from routes that are to become bus-only or bus priority routes.
- Seek to differentiate travel costs in favour of public transport by ensuring that cost of bus travel is less than car travel using price and availability of car parking.

Medium term (2007 to 2011)

A greater level of improvement, and hence significantly higher potential for increasing public transport use, than measures set out under the 'short term' heading. The medium term measures are based on measures that simultaneously improve the quality of public transport, and reduce the relative attraction of car use. Infrastructure and traffic network changes in the medium term could include:

- All CMK routes to be focused on Midsummer Boulevard (MSB), and this Boulevard created as a single spine route through CMK;
- Midsummer Place and the railway station to become key points of interchange and interconnection for CMK buses;
- Reconfigure Midsummer Place to create a true bus mall for use by low/no emission vehicles subject to feasibility studies.
- Develop extensive bus priority and traffic management measures to be introduced at all junctions, pinch points and accesses approaching CMK. This measure should ensure, in its implementation, high visibility of the priority of the public transport over car traffic;
- Improve bus priority routes with judicious infill and other development to create bus user-friendly environments, and to link more effectively with existing development;
- Develop new Park and Ride sites: north of the City at Blakelands/Newport Pagnell accessible from the M1 and A509/A422; west of the City (west of Wolverton) accessible from A5; and south of the City (north of Bletchley/Denbigh) accessible from A5;
- Develop real time information system to cover key bus stops along main routes and extend, eventually, to all bus stops in Milton Keynes;
- Reduce parking ratios further still (beyond that achieved in the short term)
- Further differentiate in favour of public transport for trips to CMK relative to car travel through price and availability of parking.

Long term (Post 2011)

It is critical to appreciate that the long term proposals are feasible only if pursued in conjunction with high levels of development growth located and designed specifically to support a high intensity public transport corridor(s). The options for the long term are described and developed in Chapters 4 and 6 of this report.

In brief, it is recommended that the City should work towards developing the proposed land use growth primarily along an east-west corridor with specific attention given to the Public Transport Orientated land use Development. The growth will be served through increased frequency and quality of service on the eight core diameter bus routes with busways constructed on the east-west and a north-south (subject to the forthcoming proposals for the regeneration of Bletchley) axes. Busways will be developed using one of the existing lanes in each direction on the dual carriageways, where the existing network consists of single carriageway highway (particularly applicable to part of the north-south route), a dedicated lane to be constructed for exclusive use by buses. Where the physical

constraints do not allow construction of a dedicated lane for buses, priority measures will be developed to ensure public transport vehicles receive priority over private vehicles. In particular,

- In preparing for the long term, implementation of the short and medium term measures, as set out above, is critical.
- The planning authority must ensure that strict guidelines are in place with respect to structure, configuration and densities of developments,
- The highway authority, together with the planning authority must ensure that public transport routes and busway routes over the existing network as well as in new development areas are safeguarded

11.1 KEY ACTIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE LONG TERM VISION

In this section we set out the key actions and activities, which should be undertaken in Milton Keynes towards the realisation of the long term public transport vision. It is noted that the actions listed below are not exhaustive and are listed to set out as the main direction of tasks following this Study.

- Securing central Government funding is critical to the realisation of any major scheme. In considering any application, Department for Transport (DfT) insists on high quality data on transport demand. A comprehensive and complete programme of periodic private and public transport usage data collection should be developed, building on the recent surveys undertaken for the Milton Keynes multi-modal transport model development work.
- A comprehensive Multi-Modal transport demand modelling tool should be developed to act as a main means of developing, testing and assessing schemes. This tool, once fully developed, should also be used to undertake a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the proposals recommended as part of this Study. This action effectively refers to the multi-modal model for Milton Keynes, the development of which is currently nearing completion.
- In the first instance, an application to be submitted to DfT, through the Annual Progress Review route to secure funding for the Central Milton Keynes Public Transport Access Improvements scheme which will act as a catalyst for all the short, medium and finally, long term schemes.
- Discussions with Bus operator(s) to start to secure the restructuring of the bus services and development of the eight core diameter routes.
- Set up guidelines and develop the basis for local authority/public transport operator agreements to secure service quality improvement against infrastructure development. It is critical to ensure that the upgraded infrastructure will be served by upgraded services.
- Pursue restraint with respect to parking standards, through implementation of the recently adopted parking standards and consider further tightening of these standards through further reducing of spaces and increase of parking fees. To ensure progress, preparation of a six monthly or annual report on the progress of parking restraint (to contain numbers, geographical and tariff based distribution of parking spaces, revenues collected etc) would provide an important monitoring tool.

- Set up realistic, clear and measurable targets for public transport usage and mode share.
- Develop specific urban design criteria to accommodate public transport routes through all new developments.
- Develop a clear and transparent set of rules for securing contributions from developers, towards the proposed Milton Keynes Public Transport system which will apply to all Section 106 agreements across the whole of the district.
- Set up a public transport scheme development fund which will start receiving contributions from various sources, from a proportion of parking revenues (to be decided) through to developer contributions.
- Set up detailed investigation and pilot projects to improve access to bus stops on foot, and to demonstrate how such improvements can be enhanced through integrated new development.
- Set up pilot projects with respect to the development of the restructured bus routes, based on branded, frequent services.