

South West Milton Keynes

Statement of Community Involvement

Athene Communications

JANUARY 2015

Statement of Community Involvement

Site name: South West Milton Keynes
Client name: South West Milton Keynes Consortium
Type of report: Statement of Community Involvement

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Signed



Date January 2015

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Signed



Date January 2015

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1. Overview

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Athene Communications on behalf of the South West Milton Keynes Consortium (made up of Hallam Land Management, Taylor Wimpey, Connolly Homes, William Davis Homes and Bellcross Homes, hereafter referred to as 'the Consortium') and is designed to meet the requirements of Aylesbury Vale District Council's SCI and the Localism Act. The SCI intends to give communities confidence in a clear and fair consultation process.

This SCI is submitted in support of two outline planning applications for the development of up to 1,855 homes and associated infrastructure on the land situated between the A421, Whaddon Road and the currently disused Oxford to Cambridge railway line to the south west of Milton Keynes. The site is within the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council. The principal points of access will be taken from within Milton Keynes

The proposed site of the development is outlined in blue.



Athene Communications has supported the Consortium by undertaking a programme of community engagement to build understanding of the concerns, needs and aspirations of the local communities and to deliver a range of other pre-application consultation activities. This has involved engaging with Milton Keynes Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Parish Council Members, key local figures, and local residents in a range of ways.

The remainder of this document sets out the engagement and consultation approach for the proposed South West Milton Keynes development, the results of a Community Audit, and the issues and concerns raised during the course of the engagement programme, as well as how they have been addressed.

2. The Consortium's approach

The Consortium selected Athene Communications to deliver the pre-application consultation for the proposed South West Milton Keynes development.

Athene Communications has considerable experience of delivering community engagement programmes for developers, as well as experience working for both rural and urban communities.

Athene's role is to help promoters of developments first understand the communities they will be working with and then to develop detailed plans for consultation that recognise and address community hopes and concerns up front.

The core principles underpinning our engagement work are as follows:

- Understand the communities
- Create a level playing field for engagement
- Ensure meaningful dialogue

The first part of this process was to undertake a Community Audit of the Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale area which was designed to help the Consortium and other consultants employed as part of the project team to understand the make-up and mind-set of people living close to the proposed site. The team behind the project strongly believe that to achieve development that contributes positively to the existing community, it is essential to gain a thorough understanding of the political, environmental, social and demographic fabric of the communities you are hoping to work in, with and for.

Community consultation is often a neglected part of planning a development – we wish to challenge this norm and set the standard for best practice consultation. Our aim with the community engagement programme in Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale was to proactively connect with people, foster a meaningful dialogue where views are taken seriously, and build a strong foundation for on-going community engagement.

3. Community engagement methodology

The site comprises part of the previous Salden Chase scheme for which the planning application was formally withdrawn in 2011 at the request of Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC). This new proposal is considerably different and has in part been influenced by the extensive consultation with local stakeholders and residents that was undertaken in relation to Salden Chase as well as engagement upon the Consortium's revised proposal. It has also been developed in line with the planning policies of AVDC and Milton Keynes Council.

The SWMK Consortium recognised that engaging meaningfully with Aylesbury Vale District and Milton Keynes stakeholders and residents, in particular those communities which are located closest to the proposed development was a priority. They undertook a thorough approach to community engagement at an early stage with a commitment to real dialogue rather than consultation as a tick-box exercise.

To achieve this, the Consortium's first step was to commission a Community Audit of the Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale District area. This audit was used to identify key stakeholders and issues in the surrounding area, and to establish how the Consortium would consult and engage with local people to ensure awareness of the proposed development and to secure the best outcomes for all parties. The Community Audit has enabled the Consortium to identify pre-existing concerns in the local community early on in the design and planning process, allowing appropriate action to be taken to reduce areas of negative impact to stakeholders and the local community.

Using the information provided by the Community Audit, the Consortium developed an engagement strategy with identified stakeholders and the wider local public.

The engagement strategy has been based around the following elements of activity:

1. A community audit
2. Development of strategy and timeline
3. Pre-application communication and engagement
4. Consultation period
5. Capturing, tracking and responding to comments
6. Statement of Community Involvement
7. Feedback to the community

Specifically this involved:

- Identifying and communicating with key stakeholders
- Compiling an extensive stakeholder database
- Attending local meetings
- Arranging face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders
- Developing promotional materials including a website, leaflets, exhibition displays, and a consultation document
- Promoting the public consultation by delivering a leaflet to 6000 local households, writing to our extensive stakeholder database, putting posters up in key locations, and online promotion
- Newsletters delivered to local businesses in Bletchley and Newton Longville
- Securing local media coverage
- Holding two public exhibitions
- Holding three stakeholder briefing sessions
- Recording and where possible addressing concerns and questions raised through the programme of engagement
- Providing ongoing updates and feedback by post, email, through local media, and through our website once the consultation ended.

A detailed plan showing the range of activities in the build-up to the public consultation period, and our approach to consultation, is available in Appendix A – Statement of Community Engagement.

4. Executive summary of the Community Audit

The community and stakeholder audit was designed to ensure that we had a detailed understanding of the local community, including 'hard-to-reach' groups, the local policy framework and stakeholder landscape. This informed the development of our engagement strategy and the stakeholder database and communications. Key findings of the Community Audit are as follows:

Demographics

- Milton Keynes is a large town in Buckinghamshire. At the 2011 census, Milton Keynes had a population of 248,800. Latest Mid-year Population Estimates for 2013 put the population of Milton Keynes at 255,700. Aylesbury Vale is a local government district of Buckinghamshire. At the 2011 census, Aylesbury Vale had a population of 174,137. Mid-year Population Estimates for 2013 put the population of the district at 181,071.
- Forecasts suggest that the population of Aylesbury Vale will grow to 205,000 by 2026 - an increase of 27,000 or 15.2% since 2012. The population of Milton Keynes is forecast to grow to 302,100 by 2026, an increase of 49,700 or 19.7% since 2012.

Political Influences and Finances

- Milton Keynes Council currently has no party in overall control with the Labour Party being the minority administration. Both Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council are Conservative-led. The four local MPs are all Conservative.
- Aylesbury Vale District Council had to find £2.4 million worth of budget savings for 2014-15. This was achieved through re-structuring, increased income (including from a 1.99% increase in council tax for a Band D property), the New Homes Bonus and further efficiencies across the council. Since 2010 the council has had to find savings of £5.7 million in its budget as a result of a 48% reduction in central Government funding. The council expects to have to find a further £1.2 million saving in 2015-16. It predicts that there will be a £7.5 million funding gap by 2018 if changes are not made in central Government funding.
- Milton Keynes Council's 2014-15 budget identified £14.75 million of savings. These included reductions in the budget for adult health and social care, planning and transport and education. This follows on from £16 million of savings in the previous year which were achieved through measures such as reductions in the senior management team, reviewing

contracts and suppliers, transferring some services and assets to Parish Councils and other bodies. The council reported last year that it needed to find a further £31 million for the following three years.

Housing and planning policy

- The Aylesbury Vale Housing and Economic Growth Assessment (AVHEGA) suggested that between 16,200 to 17,000 new homes will be required in the District between 2006-2031. The AVHEGA also suggests that over the next 20 years, around 110 hectares of employment land will need to be identified.
- AVDC developed a new planning policy document for the district called the Vale of Aylesbury Plan (VAP) which set out a strategy for growth to 2031. The VAP was withdrawn in February 2014 on the advice of an independent Planning Inspector. AVDC is now working on a new plan known as the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) which will include an overall development strategy for the district, site allocations and development management policies.
- An Updated Position Statement for the Council's five year Housing Land Supply was issued in October 2014. This included emerging findings from the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HENDA) which indicates a need for between 1,000 and 1,030 dwellings per annum between 2013 and 2033.
- Milton Keynes Council is preparing a new plan for the borough called Plan:MK. The Council undertook a broad public consultation on associated topic papers which concluded on 3rd December 2014. Once adopted Plan: MK will replace the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Local Plan, it will outline how much development is needed and where it should go and include detailed policies that will be used when making decisions on planning applications. Milton Keynes also recently consulted on the first stage of their Site Allocations Plan.

Economic landscape

- Latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that economic inactivity levels in Aylesbury Vale are around 19.5% compared to the South East average of 20.1% and the Great Britain average of 22.5%.
- In addition, 0.8% of people are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). This is below the regional (1.2%) and national (2.1%) average.

5. Need for the development

The proposed development will provide a logical new neighbourhood for Milton Keynes, complementing the existing communities at Tattenhoe Park, Kingsmead and Far Bletchley and supporting the city's ambition for growth.

The site is to the south west of Milton Keynes, located between the A421, Whaddon Road and the currently disused Oxford to Cambridge railway line (within the administrative boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council).

A recent Centre for Cities report highlighted a direct link between house building and economic prosperity. Milton Keynes was highlighted as a key example of where this approach has worked. We believe that this development will help deliver further sustainable growth for the city.

The land has been identified by a number of independent studies as suitable for development over a twenty two year period.

Housing need

There is both a national and a local need for housing. The number of households in England is projected to grow to 24.3 million by 2021, an increase of 2.2 million (10%) from 2011, or 221,000 households per year (Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Household Interim Projections 2011-21, England). In 2013 there were 109,370 housing completions in England, the lowest figure since 2010.

Our studies (based on the DCLG projections) suggest the number of new homes that need to be provided each year in Milton Keynes between 2011 and 2021 is 2,359 with a further 1,232 new homes per year needed in Aylesbury Vale in the same period.

Local word-of-mouth

Throughout the stakeholder meetings, and at the public exhibitions, we have received feedback demonstrating a clear need for high quality housing, both affordable and for market sale. Both during and after the public consultation we received correspondence from people who support the proposed development. A selection of the comments received can be seen below:

“Keep up the good work, we need more affordable housing to keep up with demand.”

“The development seems to provide a natural extension to the city and a good opportunity to provide additional housing - it seems to give a good mix of housing to meet a range of needs.”

“I believe that as MK is a developing city, it is necessary to continue building homes. I want young people to be able to afford their own homes. I think that the consultation process has given locals ownership of the development and a say about the plans. Houses need to be built for the next generation!”

“Homes and extra development is a must.”

“People need new housing.”

“The needs of those who are unable to purchase their own home has been neglected in the recent past.”

6. Engagement programme

Pre-consultation meetings with stakeholders:

Following the initial Community Audit a range of stakeholders were identified and a database was created (see Appendix B). A plan of engagement was devised to inform key stakeholders early on about the proposed development.

During April and May 2013 the Consortium held a series of individual meetings with key business and political stakeholders, including Hilary Chipping from the South East Midlands Local Enterprise partnership (SEMLEP), the then Leader of Milton Keynes Council Andrew Geary, the then Milton Keynes Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development David Hopkins, Milton Keynes Council's then Assistant Director of Planning Nick Fenwick, Iain Stewart MP, and John Bercow MP's office.

In May 2013 a series of stakeholder meetings were held to shape the proposals and answer any questions. We invited over 120 local stakeholders, including MPs, local councillors, headteachers, school governors, businesses, and community groups. Of those invited, the following attended the stakeholder briefings:

- West Bletchley Sub Committee
- Cllr Warren Whyte, Buckinghamshire County Council
- Cllr Edith Bald, Emerson Valley, Cabinet member for Finance
- Cllr Susan Renshell, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Chair of Buckingham Business Club
- Cllr Alan Webb, Ward Councillor, Eaton Manor
- Nicola Wheatcroft, Senior Planning Officer, Strategic Applications Team, Development Management, Milton Keynes Council
- Cllr McKenzie, Bletchley Parish Council
- Cllr Cowdrey, Little Horwood Parish Council
- Cllr Stewart, Whaddon Parish Council
- Cllr Chapman, Shenley Brook End and Tattenhoe Parish Council
- Cllr Rachel Webb, Stewkley Parish Council and Chairman of North Bucks Parishes Planning Consortium
- Helen Walker, Clerk to Newton Longville Parish Council
- Paul Neate, Head of Council Services, West Bletchley Council
- Simon Mavin, Governor, St Thomas Aquinas School

- Robert O'Malley, St Thomas Aquinas School
- Krys Kuzminska, Headteacher, Newton Longville Combined School
- Vice Principal, Aylesbury Vale Regional College
- Representative, Sir Herbert Leon Academy
- Michael Shepperd, Green Party
- Toni Fisher, Practice Manager, Whaddon Medical Centre
- Anne Jones, Whaddon Medical Centre
- Hayley McCann, Facilities Manager, Suzuki
- Rev Laurence Meering, St Faith's Church, Newton Longville
- Michael Dunn, Resident
- Julie Gandolfi, Resident
- Jackie Grace, Resident
- John Hawkins, Resident
- Rob Matthews, Resident
- Lawrence Renshell, Resident
- Kevin Ryan, Resident
- David Thirkettle, Resident
- Robin Turner, Resident
- Dan Wilton, Resident

A copy of our stakeholder database can be found in Appendix B.

Community benefit

The stakeholder meetings helped shape how the site could incorporate community facilities and benefits, including:

Sustainability – the masterplan includes services, including employment, provision for primary and secondary education, health, recreation and leisure

Open space - the masterplan includes green infrastructure that residents and neighbouring communities will all be able to access, including parkland, wildlife areas, landscaping and allotments. In addition, wherever possible existing hedgerows will be maintained, and areas for new habitat creation have also been identified

Space for a community facility - the proposals include a local centre that will provide for local retail and community facilities, including health provision

Play areas – a central park area has been included in the masterplan, along with play areas, and sports and recreational facilities

Affordable homes – Up to 30% of the housing will be affordable, and will be available for rent and shared ownership

Job creation – the proposed development is expected to create around 475 jobs per annum during the construction period, plus opportunities for new apprenticeships.

The proposed employment area would also create new jobs.

Programme for public consultation

The six week public consultation was made up of the following main elements:

December 2013	Community and Stakeholder Audit completed to ensure a detailed understanding of the local community, policy framework, and stakeholder landscape. This allowed the development of a tailored and informed strategy for engagement and consultation with local people
January – February 2013	Engagement with key stakeholders through letters summarising the proposals and promoting the public consultation
April 2013	Launch of stand-alone website: www.southwestmiltonkeynes.co.uk
April – May 2013	Engagement with key stakeholders through meetings with key elected members, parish councils and business leaders; briefings for elected members and stakeholder briefings
w/c 6 May – w/c 3 June 2013	Wide-spread promotion of the consultation period through a range of communication channels – letters to stakeholders, online, in the media, advertising, through posters, leaflet to 6,000 homes and businesses closest to the proposed site
May – June 2013	Maintenance of website and continued monitoring of and responses to feedback and queries via email, Freephone number and Freepost address
8 June 2013	Public exhibition in Newton Longville, Newton Longueville Hall, 11am-4pm. A weekend drop in event open to all and widely publicised
14 June 2013	Public exhibition in West Bletchley, Chepstow Community Centre, 2-7pm. A drop in event open to all and widely publicised
Post consultation	Consultation analysis and reporting to the project team
	Feedback to the local community on the consultation findings

Promoting the public consultation

In order to engage as many local people as possible, thorough promotion of the public consultation was carried out. Consultation began on Monday 20th May 2013 – all materials were ready and distributed prior to or on this date.

- A website – www.southwestmiltonkeynes.co.uk was set up making key information about the proposal easy to access, including frequently asked questions, background information, technical studies, benefits and a copy of the masterplan that could be downloaded. It also outlined the Consortium’s approach to community engagement
- A leaflet promoting the public consultation and our events was hand-delivered to 6,000 homes closest to the proposed site for development (See Appendix F)
- Leaflets were also hand-delivered to local businesses
- Posters were put up locally in shops and on public noticeboards. Posters were also sent to the venues of the public exhibitions to be displayed (See Appendix E)
- Information was placed on relevant websites including the MK Citizen’s website and www.newtonlongville.co.uk (See Appendix H)

- Media releases were issued on the 3rd and the 12th June 2013 (See Appendix H).

Gathering feedback

We established a number of ways for people to offer their feedback to us:

- A Freephone number was set up for people to call for more information or to request documents in a different format
- A Freepost address for people to correspondence to
- A dedicated email address was set up for people to submit queries and comments – info@southwestmiltonkeynes.co.uk
- The website included an opportunity for people to submit their feedback online
- People were also able to attend one of our public events to offer comments through the consultation feedback forms.

Public consultation events

Over the course of the public consultation we held two public exhibitions and three stakeholder briefings.

About the exhibitions:

The public exhibitions were manned by members of the project team who could answer questions on different topics e.g. drainage, sustainability, transport, and engineering. Attendees were invited to complete a short consultation feedback form to convey their views on initial proposals. A copy of the feedback form can be found in Appendix G.

The exhibition comprised nine A1 exhibition boards on tall display stands showing people the location of the proposed development, the initial masterplan, and examples of what the different types of homes could look like. There was also information about managing potential impacts, and next steps. Copies of the exhibition boards can be found in Appendix D.

Photos from all the public events can be found in Appendix C.

About the stakeholder briefings:

Three stakeholder briefing sessions were held for stakeholders to look at key issues regarding the proposed development to be examined and discussed in-depth, and to provide the Consortium with feedback on the proposed development.

7. Results / findings of the public consultation

Key facts

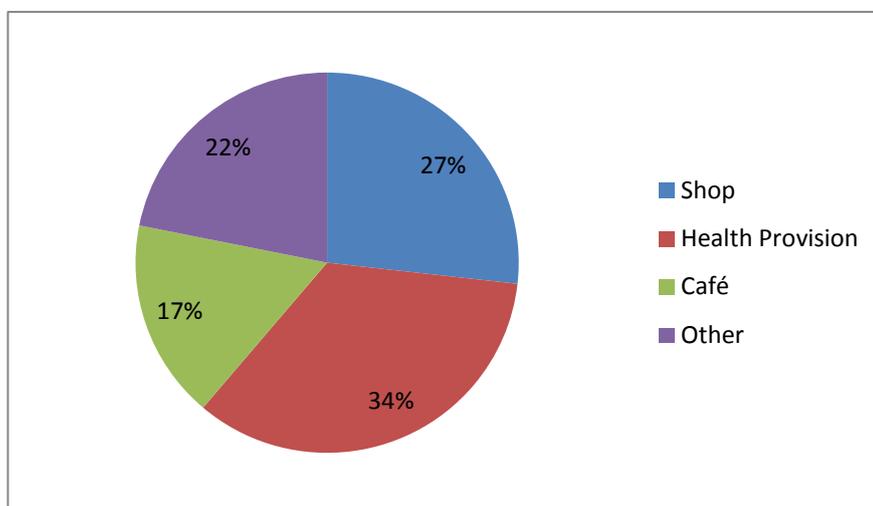
- 449 people (not including children) attended the public exhibitions (248 at the first and 201 at the second)
- 33 people attended the briefing sessions plus representatives of the West Bletchley Sub Committee
- 228 people submitted consultation surveys (either online, by post, or at the public exhibitions)
- 23 questions and queries were received (and answered) throughout the consultation by phone, email, and online

Key findings from the consultation surveys

We asked people how we could achieve a development that contributes towards the overall well-being of the local community.

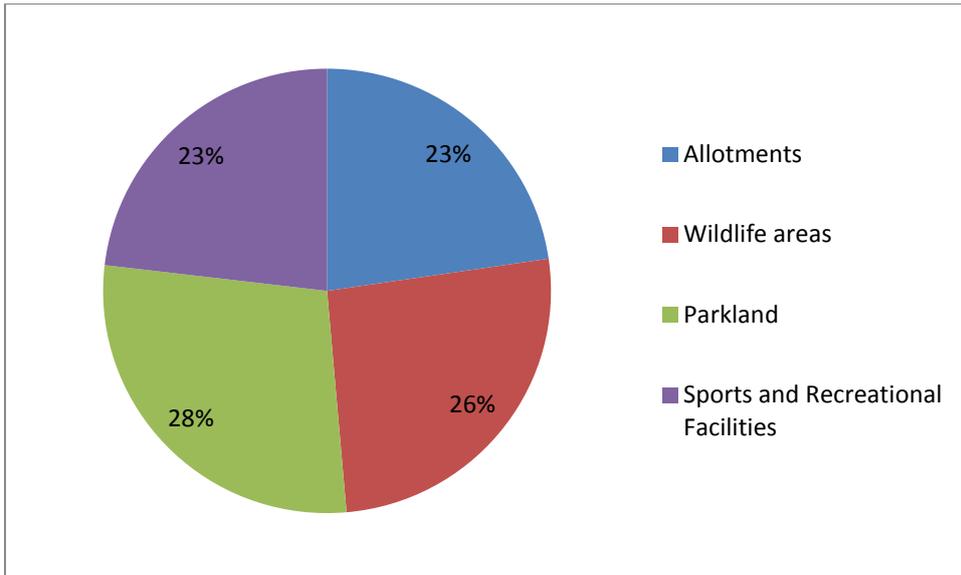
We asked people what sort of facilities should be provided as part of the proposed local centre

1. Shop
2. Health provision
3. Café
4. Other



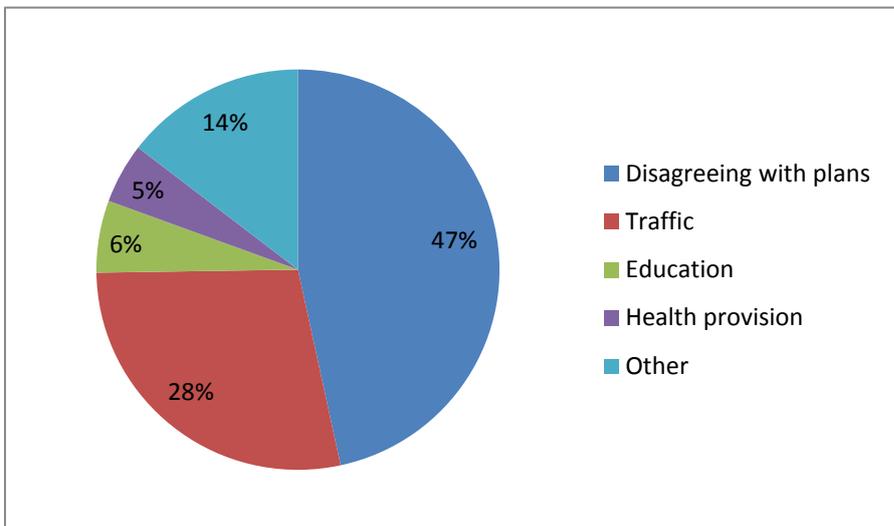
We asked people what types of green and open space facilities to be enjoyed by neighbouring communities should be provided

The top two answers were parkland and wildlife areas, while allotments and sports and recreational facilities were joint third.



We asked people whether they had any ideas about how the masterplan could be improved. The top four answers were:

1. Disagreeing with the plans in general
2. Changes to road infrastructure so that congestion through Newton Longville is alleviated
3. Addition of a secondary school
4. Addition of healthcare provision



Alongside the survey questions, there was also space for people to leave any other comments. For analysis purposes these have been grouped by theme:

Other comments	
Don't want the development	31
Traffic is already an issue and this development will compound the issue	30
Local amenities and services are already at capacity	14
Worried about impact on village life	13
There isn't a need for this many houses	11
Milton Keynes is growing and we need new homes	10
Concern about environmental impact and loss of countryside	8
Need for improved public transport services	6
Loss of view	4
Don't believe job creation figures	3
Need for better education provision - including a secondary school	2
There needs to be adequate car parking	2
Site density will be too high	2
A railway station would be useful	1
Drainage/impact on the water table	1

Save our Villages campaign

Of the completed feedback forms, 77 forms had the Save our Villages campaign's 'No' stickers placed on them front and back.

Key findings from the workshops

We invited key local stakeholders to briefing sessions where the Consortium outlined their proposals for the development. It also provided an opportunity for discussion and allowed the stakeholders to provide feedback to the Consortium. We have listed the key issues below:

- Desire to see provision for a secondary school in the scheme
- Concern that revenues from the development would go to AVDC while the pressure on services would be felt by Milton Keynes Council
- Traffic – particularly rat-running down into Newton Longville and pressure on Buckingham Road
- Query about the proportion of affordable homes
- Some doubt as to whether there was need for more employment land in the area
- Concern about the boundary with the Racecourse area of West Bletchley, particularly in relation to Hamilton Lane

8. How feedback has shaped the proposal

Issue	Mitigation
<p>Traffic is already an issue and this development will compound the issue. Particular issues around Buckingham Road and volume of traffic through Newton Longville</p>	<p>The Consortium have been working with Milton Keynes Council and Buckinghamshire County Council to identify the traffic impact of the proposed development.</p> <p>Our proposals include a package of measures to encourage the use of sustainable transport, such as an extension of Milton Keynes' public transport routes and integration with the MK Redway network, together with a Grid Road Reserve to facilitate the potential Bletchley Southern bypass / Relief Road which would provide significant additional capacity on the local road network.</p>
<p>Local amenities and services are already at capacity – in particular the hospital</p>	<p>The proposed development includes a local centre which will provide new and existing local residents with shops, a community centre, and space for new health services and other amenities.</p>
<p>There is not a perceived need for houses in the area</p>	<p>There is both a national and a local need for housing. The number of households in England is projected to grow to 24.3 million by 2021, an increase of 2.2 million (10%) from 2011, or 221,000 households per year (DCLG Household Interim Projections 2011-21, England). Current housing completions are in the order of 109,000 new dwellings per year.</p> <p>Emerging findings from the Aylesbury Vale District Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment suggested a need for between 1,000 and 1,030 new homes per year in the area.</p>
<p>Concern that these houses will be built on a greenfield site</p>	<p>The land has been identified by a number of independent studies as suitable for development over a twenty two year period. The Milton Keynes Draft Core Strategy provides a policy framework for development adjacent to its administrative boundary.</p>
<p>Residents who currently own properties that look over fields are concerned about their loss of view</p>	<p>The Consortium has revised the masterplan to help soften the boundary with Far Bletchley. Sports pitches have now been located at the far east boundary of the site which will provide a green buffer for many residents of Far Bletchley.</p> <p>The Consortium has also worked to reduce the visual impact of the site from Newton Longville. The revised masterplan shows less development along the highest point of the site that will be most visible.</p>

	Over 55Ha of the site has been given over to green infrastructure – including allotments, linear parks, open space, sports pitches, and wildlife areas.
There is a need for improved public transport services	Our proposals include a package of measures to encourage the use of sustainable transport, such as an extension of Milton Keynes' public transport routes and integration with the MK Redway network.
Need for better education provision - including a secondary school	<p>The Consortium has revised the masterplan to make provision for a secondary school, should it be required. A 5.2 hectare (Ha) site has been identified to the east of the site, towards Far Bletchley.</p> <p>The site includes sports pitches, which will provide a softer boundary for residents of Far Bletchley.</p> <p>The site for the primary school has been retained, but has been relocated slightly further south in the centre of the site.</p>
There needs to be adequate car parking within the development	At this stage the Consortium are submitting an outline planning application, which does not include details such as car parking. However, the Consortium will ensure that there is adequate provision made for car parking to ensure that traffic can flow through the development. Details of this will be submitted as part of the Reserved Matters applications.
The site density will be too high	The residential density of the development will vary within the site ranging from 20 dwellings per hectare (dph) to up to 50dph – these are typical for a scheme of this nature.
Impact on the water table	The Consortium has produced a Sustainable Drainage Scheme for the development, which includes 5.05 Ha of land for surface water attenuation measures. This includes ponds for surface water management and ecology. The scheme is designed to reduce the impact of the development with respect to surface water drainage discharge, and mimic natural systems so that water drains away just as effectively as it would naturally.

Below is a description of the final proposals for the development, taking into account feedback from the public consultation, and stakeholder meetings:

Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for a mixed-use sustainable urban extension on 144.77 Ha of land to the south west of Milton Keynes, to provide for the following: up to 1,855 mixed tenure dwellings (C3) on 54.16 Ha of land;

- an employment area (B1) on 2.07 Ha of land;
- a neighbourhood centre on 0.67 Ha of land accommodating retail (A1/A2/A3/A4/A5), community (D1/D2) and residential (C3) uses;
- provision of a primary school on 3.0 Ha of land;
- provision of a secondary school on 5.2 Ha of land;
- allotment space on 1.22 Ha of land;
- ground remodelling;
- 55.75 Ha of multi-functional green open space including: parkland, sports and recreational facilities with pavilion/changing facilities; play areas, wildlife areas, a range of strategic open spaces including a community orchard and new landscaping;
- a Sustainable Drainage Scheme including 5.05 Ha of land for surface water attenuation measures;
- associated infrastructure including new junctions to the A421, Whaddon Road and Buckingham Road, primary streets, residential streets, pedestrian footpaths and cycle routes, foul water pumping stations and statutory undertakers equipment;
- a Grid Road Reserve of 7.24 Ha;
- highway improvements on 5.56 Ha;
- public transport infrastructure, car and cycle parking for all uses; and
- undergrounding of 132Kv overhead power lines.

Feedback to local people following the consultation

The public consultation played an important role in shaping the development of the masterplan for this proposed scheme. As a result the following changes were made to the master plan:

- A substantial green buffer of sports fields, open space and ponds between Far Bletchley and the new development
- Allotments in a new location in the north east, adjacent to the golf course to soften the appearance of the development at the entrance to Far Bletchley
- A green swathe of open space, parks, and sports fields alongside the ridge of the site to minimise the visual impact of the development
- A relocated and smaller employment zone to reduce the visual impact of the development on those using the A421 to enter Milton Keynes
- A 5.2 hectare site for the provision of a secondary school
- Incorporating the Milton Keynes boundary walk into the development so it is possible to work the entire route through public open space
- Provision for sufficient land through the site to facilitate the Bletchley Southern Bypass

During November 2014 the consortium contacted a number of key stakeholders outlining the changes to the masterplan and offering meetings ahead of the submission of the planning application. These stakeholders included:

- Andrew Grant, Chief Executive, Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Cllr Neil Blake, Leader of the Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Carole Mills, Chief Executive, Milton Keynes Town Council
- Cllr Pete Marland, Leader of the Council, Milton Keynes Town Council

A letter and A5 pamphlet (see Appendix I) was sent to other key stakeholders and interested members of the public prior to the submission of the application. Full planning documents will be made available after submission to the public on the consortium website.

www.southwestmiltonkeynes.co.uk

9. Conclusion

Since the public consultation, members of the Consortium have held a series of meetings with the local planning authority to discuss issues raised by stakeholders and members of public, including health and education provision.

Considerable steps have been taken to ensure that there is a substantial green buffer of sports fields, open space, and ponds, between Far Bletchley and the new development, reducing the impact of the new development on residents of Far Bletchley.

The masterplan has also been revised to reduce the built development along the ridge of the site, therefore reducing the limited visual impact of the development on views from Newton Longville – instead, we have incorporated a green swathe of open space, parks, communal sports fields, and recreational space along the ridge. This has been possible by moving the primary school site slightly further south. This adjustment to the masterplan means that there will be a significantly reduced impact on views from Newton Longville.

The allotments have been moved to the north east corner of the site, adjacent to the golf course, helping to soften the appearance of the development at the entrance to Far Bletchley.

We have also engaged in discussions with the local authority about the quantum of employment area on the site. This change will provide more of a 'gateway' entrance to Milton Keynes. The employment area is now more sympathetically incorporated into the development, and situated next to the neighbourhood centre to the north of the site. This will reduce the visual impact of the development on those using the A421 to enter Milton Keynes.

Many local residents expressed concerns about the need for secondary education provision. We have revised our masterplan to make provision for a secondary school, should it be required. A 5.2 Ha site has been allocated to the east of the site, towards Far Bletchley. The proposed site includes sports pitches, which will provide a softer boundary for residents of Far Bletchley.

The existing Milton Keynes boundary walk has been retained and incorporated into the development. It is also now possible to walk all the way around the development on public open space.

Access to the scheme has also been revised. The access on Whaddon Road has been moved to a position north of Weasel Lane after discussions with the Highways Authority. This is a more appropriate location for traffic management in terms of phasing the construction of the development.

The masterplan reserves sufficient land through the site to facilitate the Bletchley Southern bypass / Relief Road.

The consortium will also work with the appropriate authorities and with residents to decide on the best way to manage any additional traffic in Newton Longville. This might include building traffic calming measures such as single vehicle passing points similar to those in nearby villages.

The South West Milton Keynes Consortium has undertaken a thorough and wide-ranging community engagement programme, to ensure as many local people and stakeholders as possible were involved in the process of shaping the proposed development. Feedback from the stakeholder briefings, public exhibitions, as well as via the website, email, Freephone helpline, and Freepost has helped to improve the final masterplan and wider planning application. The methodology that has been applied is robust and has produced a clear snapshot of the views of the local community on the proposed development. The proposed development is meeting an identified need in the area and has been designed to bring benefit to local people. The views of local stakeholders and residents have been taken into account, and have contributed to the significant revisions that have been made to the masterplan since the public consultation. Further engagement also took place with key stakeholders prior to the submission of the planning application. The full range of planning documents will also be made available to members of the public on the www.southwestmiltonkeynes.co.uk website after the submission of the planning application.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- A. Statement of Community Engagement
- B. Stakeholder database
- C. Photos from public exhibition
- D. Boards from public exhibition
- E. Poster advertising public exhibition
- F. Leaflet advertising public exhibition
- G. Feedback form from public exhibition
- H. Media coverage
- I. Leaflet summarising proposals prior to planning application submission