

PLAN:MK EXAMINATION

Matter 2: Spatial Strategy

Issue 2: Emerging Growth Context, Plan Period and Plan Review

Whilst the Council have prepared a plan that covers a period of fifteen years in adopting a base date of 2016 for the plan the Council will effectively have just 11 full years to implement its objectives should the plan be adopted later this year. The Government sets out in paragraph 157 that 15 years is the preferable timeframe and one that allows the Council to take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date. The effect of such a short timeframe will be to increase the risk associated with the Council's ability to deliver the plan, a failure to provide longer term certainty with regard to land supply and a reduced flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances without having to prepare an entire new plan.

The Government sets out through the NPPF that its aim for the plan led system is to have long term strategic plans that seek to positively meet the needs of an area. The timeframe within which this plan is to be delivered does not provide that positive approach to strategic planning that does not provide sufficient long term certainty as to the level of development that will be accommodated by Milton Keynes. We would recommend that the Plan be extended to at least 2036 to provide a positive and strategic approach to local planning. A longer plan period would provide the necessary foundations to support the emerging longer term growth strategies as well as allow for a review of the local plan to fully consider their impacts without having to prepare a whole new plan. Such an approach essentially provides the certainty to provide for longer term needs alongside the flexibility to take account of the emerging growth context.

If a longer plan period is not considered appropriate then the plan itself should include a policy commitment to an early review. However, given the emerging growth context we would suggest that any review should reflect the emerging growth context in relation to the CaMKOx growth corridor and the development required to support these infrastructure improvements. In particular the Council will need to make a clear commitment to working with its neighbouring authorities, such as Aylesbury Vale and Central Bedfordshire to identify and allocate major development sites that will meet the needs created by this new sub regional infrastructure. Setting out a positive approach in taking forward future work and potential allocations in this plan is essential if such a short plan period is to be considered appropriate.

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