

Shenley Park

Baseline Evidence and Design Analysis Report: FINAL REPORT

For Buckinghamshire Council

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.0	THE SHENLEY PARK SITE.....	5
	Location and Context	5
	Opportunities and Constraints	6
	Planning History	11
3.0	POLICY CONTEXT.....	14
	Local Policy.....	14
	Other Material Considerations.....	16
	National Policy	16
4.0	SHENLEY PARK ALLOCATION.....	20
	VALP: Policy WHA001.....	20
	Plan:MK Policy	29
5.0	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	33
6.0	DESIGN EVOLUTION	36
	Key Design Influences for the Site.....	37
	Emerging Development Framework Principles	61
7.0	DEVELOPMENT EXTENT, LAND USES AND OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS.....	66
	Overall Development Extent.....	66
	Land Use.....	67
8.0	ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE.....	71
9.0	CONCLUSIONS OF BASELINE DESIGN ANALYSIS WORK	73
	Preferred Design Approach.....	74

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Context

Figure 2: Initial Sketch Design Concept (Oct 2022)

Figure 3: Overarching Landscape Strategy

Figure 3(a): Proposed Green Infrastructure Framework

Figure 3(b): Proposed Framework for Public Transport and Active Modes

Figure 3(c): Walkable Catchments (Local/District Centres)

Figure 3(d): Proposed Intensity of Use/Residential Density

Figure 3(e): Indicative Extent of Development Area

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Policy Compliance Checklist

ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Site Review and Analysis (July 2022 Rev A)
- Annex 2: Development Character – Emerging Thinking (Sept 2022)
- Annex 3: Buffer to Whaddon – Emerging Thinking (Sept 2022)
- Annex 4: Edge Treatments – Emerging Thinking (Sept 2022)
- Annex 5: Connectivity Scenarios – Emerging Thinking (Sept 2022)
- Annex 6: Precedent Studies (Local Centres, Primary Schools & Care Homes) (Nov 2022)
- Annex 7: Emerging Masterplanning Thinking (November 2022)
- Annex 8: Milton Keynes Local Plan (Plan:MK) policies
- Annex 9: Long Term Futureproofing Considerations

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This *Baseline Evidence and Design Analysis Report* ('the Baseline Report' is prepared by David Lock Associates (DLA) and Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council (BC) to underpin the preparation of a dedicated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Shenley Park (the Site).
- 1.2 Shenley Park Site is a strategic allocation within the adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP). Policy WHA001 of the adopted Plan states that an SPD will be prepared to ensure a comprehensive development of the Site and to articulate the development principles established within policy WHA001.
- 1.3 This Report sets out the Site's opportunities, constraints and planning history (**Section 2.0**) before considering its planning policy context (**Section 3.0**) and interpreting the allocation's policy principles (**Section 4.0**). This Report also summarises the key outcomes of officer and stakeholder engagement undertaken to date (**Section 5.0**) and details how the design response and development principles has evolved for the Site to date (**Section 6.0 and 7.0**). **Section 8.0** sets out key environmental and climate change considerations and **Section 9.0** concludes this Report.

2.0 THE SHENLEY PARK SITE

Location and Context

- 2.1 The Site is situated north of the A421 within the administrative boundary of Buckinghamshire Council (BC), abutting the western boundary of Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) to the east (Figure 1).

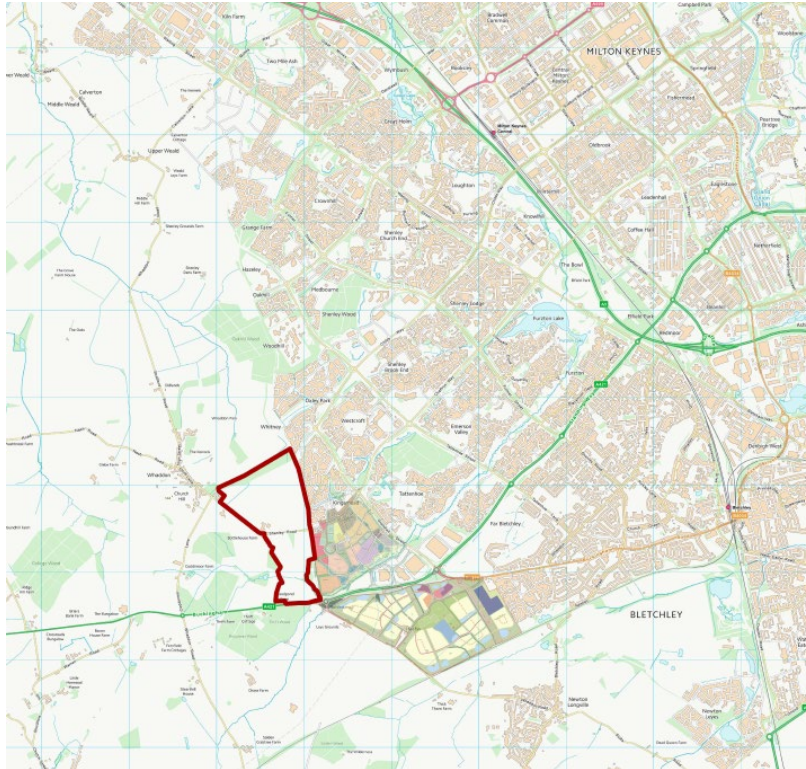


Figure 1: Shenley Park Allocation in its wider context (existing and planned development)

- 2.2 The Site comprises an area of approximately 99ha, laterally bisected by Shenley Road which connects the village of Whaddon and Kingsmead in south-west Milton Keynes, with the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk running along the eastern boundary of much of the Site.
- 2.3 The Site is very much a site of 'two halves', topographically quite distinct and bisected by Shenley Road running east-west through the site:
- The Northern part of the site is generally flat and gently sloping to the north, larger in scale and relatively well-contained physically and visually, as a result of the existing mature vegetation along its edges.
 - The Southern part, smaller in scale, is more intricately shaped by valleys running east-west / north-south, with a significant level drop from highest (129m) at Bottlehouse Farm to lowest point (106m) at the south eastern corner where the site meets the A421 with far-reaching views from the higher ground towards The

Brickhills and the Greensand ridge. Lower parts of this portion of the Site are visually well-contained due to existing mature vegetation. A watercourse runs roughly west- east through the parcel.

- 2.4 The Site's Northern part comprises arable agricultural land associated with Bottlehouse Farm bounded by mature hedgerows and woodland along the northern (Briary Plantation), eastern and southern edges. The Southern part is undeveloped greenfield land (in part used for grazing) along the A421 with blocks of mature vegetation and sloping valleys towards the Tattenhoe Brook. The landform to the west of the Site rises to a local high point at Mill Mound to the west, at 140m AOD.
- 2.5 The site abuts the A421 Buckingham Road, with the Bottledump Roundabout at its south-east corner acting as the western gateway to the more urban form of Milton Keynes. A wide variety of services and amenities exist within the local area including within Whaddon village and within the newly constructed neighbourhoods of Kingsmead and Tattenhoe Park, two of the western flank neighbourhoods of Milton Keynes (MK). Whaddon and Tattenhoe Park are the closest settlements to the Site, each with a primary school and local facilities.
- 2.6 To the south-east of the Site, planned development south of the A421 at Salden Chase will provide further local facilities and services within walking distance of the Site.
- 2.7 In terms of higher order facilities and services, Westcroft District Centre lies approx. 1.5km to the north-east of the Site. Central Milton Keynes lies around 6.5km to the north-east with Bletchley Town Centre around 5.5km to the east. The area is well-served with secondary schools, at Shenley Brook End (approx. 2km to the northeast) and at Hazeley (approx 2.7km to the north), with another secondary school planned to come forward as part of the Salden Chase development.
- 2.8 The closest rail stations are at Bletchley (5km), Central Milton Keynes (5km) and Winslow (7.5km).

Opportunities and Constraints

- 2.9 An initial *Site Review and Analysis* was undertaken in July 2022 comprised of a desk-based review and site visits. A suite of GIS overlays has been prepared to map and record the Site's designations, constraints and potential opportunities. This baseline material is set out in Annex 1 for reference, and the commentary below should be read in conjunction with the plans therein. In terms of physical constraints, the Northern part of the Site is considered less constrained than the Southern part. This does not present an absolute constraint on development but indicates that development proposed in the Southern part of the Site needs to be carefully considered and enforces the need for a design-led

approach that embraces and sensitively responds to its local context, particularly when considering the landscape and topographical characteristics of the Southern part of the Site (which is outlined further below).

Flooding

- 2.10 There is a relatively low risk of fluvial and/or surface water flooding across the Site.
- 2.11 In the Northern part, there is a low risk of surface water flooding (0.1%/annum) along an agricultural ditch and in the shallow landform between Shenley Road and Briary Plantation.
- 2.12 In the Southern part, a single watercourse (Tattenhoe Brook) flows eastwards into Tattenhoe Valley Linear Park (owned and operated by the Parks Trust). There is a medium to high risk of surface water flooding (1-3.3%/annum) along this Brook, albeit that the impact is relatively contained to the watercourse's immediate surrounding area. There is also a low risk of surface water flooding along the hedgerow running north-south through the midpoint of the Southern part of the Site.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 2.13 The site lies within National Character Area (NCA)88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands which is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys. At a regional level, Shenley Park is located within Z Clayland Villages. At a local level, the site falls wholly within and consists of the southeastern extent of Whaddon Chase Landscape Character Area (LCA 4.7) which is part of the Undulating Clay Plateau Landscape Character Type (LCT 4) in the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment. The overall landscape character is one of *"sloping ground which drains from the A421 ridge toward the Great Ouse catchment"*. Key characteristics of this LCT are; *"the incised valleys; irregular shaped field pattern, extensive woodland cover and settlement [Whaddon] on local promontory"*. Distinctive features include; *"mixed deciduous and coniferous plantations and large areas of broadleaved woodland"*. *"Traffic on A421"* is identified as an Intrusive Element.
- 2.14 Situated to the south and east of the village are the remains of Whaddon Chase, a former medieval hunting forest which originally covered an area of 22,000 acres and included woodland, heath and common land, and supported approximately 1,000 deer. The Chase was largely cleared for agriculture in the 19th century but small areas of historic broadleaf ancient woodland still survive. Some of the historic rides and boundaries of the Chase were preserved as tracks of field boundaries after the area and are reflected in the lines of the present-day hedgerows. Small, generally rectangular areas of woodland called coverts, were created to provide cover where foxes could rest during a chase, are also still visible today. Notable views of the village are gained from points along the A421 although these are interrupted by fences, hedges, woodlands and buildings.

- 2.15 Views from the village looking to the north, east and west are extensive, with views both into and out of the village from the area around Whaddon Hall being particularly important. The location of the site to the south of the village of Whaddon means the impact on any views to and from the Hall would be limited.
- 2.16 As part of the process of allocating the site in the Local Plan, a Landscape and Visual Capacity Comparison Assessment (LVCCA) was undertaken by Bradley Murphy Design (BMD) in 2019. This report briefly outlined the constraints and opportunities for the Site recognising the sensitivity of the Southern parcel and the role for buffer zones to the site.
- 2.17 The Inspector considered this report in allocating the site and concluded that; *“The Site is well enclosed by the existing/emerging settlement edge and surrounding woodland. The southern parcel is more exposed to the surrounding landscape but allocation of the northeastern corner of the northern parcel has the greatest potential to reflect the existing/emerging settlement pattern and has the greatest opportunity to minimise the impact/effect on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity” (para 6.1.6).*
- 2.18 This approach is reflected in the policy criteria as part of policy WHA001.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 2.19 Larger areas of tree cover are generally constrained to the Site edges with some individual trees and hedgerows within fields. Significant areas of woodland and ancient woodland exist around the south and east edges of the Site, including the western extent of the MK Linear Park network.
- 2.20 Briary Plantation abuts the Site’s northern boundary providing a mature wooded separation from the historic parkland (Whaddon Chase) to the north. The Plantation is protected by a Tree Protection Order (TPO) with the majority portion also designated as Ancient Woodland. Trees and mature hedgerows run along the majority of Shenley Road and along the MK Boundary Walk / Swan’s Way to the east.
- 2.21 Woodland within the Site comprises a triangular copse just south of Shenley Road, a block where the Tattenhoe Brook meets the Tattenhoe Valley Linear Park along the Site’s south-eastern corner, and a linear block alongside the A421.
- 2.22 Applying policy-mandated buffers to each of the green and blue¹ infrastructure elements further establishes that the Northern Part is relatively less constrained than its Southern counterpart in terms of accommodating built development for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.17 above.

¹ Field ditches will be classed as ordinary watercourses (i.e. Need to have a 10% buffer)

Ecology

- 2.23 The site falls within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) which identifies where the greatest opportunities for habitat creation and restoration lie. The Whaddon Chase BOA specifies '*fens; hedgerows; lowland meadows; woodlands; wood-pasture & parkland; and ponds*' as habitats of importance. Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are situated 1.5km to the east (Howe Park Wood) and 0.5km to the north-east of the Site (Oxley Mead) respectively. The Site does not have any material ecological designations or in-principle constraints, although more detailed survey work done alongside an application submission may reveal site specific ecological interests.

Heritage & Archaeology

- 2.24 There are no Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the site itself. However, the existing farmstead of Bottlehouse Farm comprises a mix of buildings including a red brick farmhouse and several larger agricultural barns. The main farmhouse and two of the smaller brick built outbuildings have recently been assessed as worthy of local listing and are therefore considered a non-designated heritage asset. The site is also known to contain archaeological constraints. The A421 follows the line of a minor Roman road, and recent archaeological evaluation within the site, comprising geophysical survey and trial trenching, have identified a substantial Roman settlement in the south-eastern area, which has been assessed as being of local significance. This settlement is reflected by one of the two Archaeological Notification Areas within the site, the other covering an area in the northwest where cropmarks of a rectangular double ditched enclosure have been identified from aerial photographs.
- 2.25 Heritage and archaeological features also exist to the north of the Site, relict features linked to the distinctive heritage and associations with Whaddon Chase. These features are focused around the Whaddon Conservation Area (which lies in close proximity to the northwestern corner of the site) and the Snelshall Priory Scheduled Ancient Monument (north of Briary Plantation). It should be noted that there is limited visual connectivity between these features and the Site as a result of the Site's topography and landscape and the LVCCA referred to above also recognised; *"the mature and establishing woodland along the northern boundary providing a substantial degree of enclosure along this edge, minimising any influence on the Conservation Area"*.
- 2.26 Whaddon is also home to 13 Listed Buildings including the Grade I-listed Church of St Mary and Grade II-listed Whaddon Hall. Views to and from these landmarks, into and out of the village and around Whaddon Hall in particular, from the northern part of the site will need to be carefully considered. Whaddon's two Conservation Areas (hereafter referred to as 'Whaddon Conservation Area') were first designated in 1990, and the Appraisal (2007) acts as a key consideration for development scale and appearance. Elements of the 19th century parkland overlooked by Whaddon Hall also survive, shaping the character of the

landscape and are of particular importance in terms of the setting of the Conservation Area and the grade II listed hall.

- 2.27 Any future development of the Site will need to consider the setting of Whaddon's heritage assets and the two potential non-designated sites of archaeological interest within the north-western and mid-eastern areas of the Site and the potential for hitherto unknown remains to be present as well as the known remains. Any impact on the buried remains should be mitigated through appropriate archaeological excavation, analysis, and recording.

Contaminated Land

- 2.28 Public records do not indicate the presence of any contaminated land within the Site. Although there is a water body approximately 125m to the west of the site which is identified as a potential area of contaminated land, this is thought to be as a result of previous earthwork activity and is not a material risk to the development of the Shenley Park Site.

Access & Movement

- 2.29 The A421 Buckingham Road runs along the Site's southern edge. The site is bisected by Shenley Road which provides a vehicular connection between the village of Whaddon and Milton Keynes via Swan's Way/Guildford Avenue to V1 Snelshall Street (grid road).
- 2.30 North and south of Swan's Way, the MK Boundary Walk forms the eastern boundary of the site, running along the administrative boundary and forming part of the wider green infrastructure/pedestrian/bridleway connections in the area.
- 2.31 The nearest existing bus stops are located in Whaddon to the west and within the various MK neighbourhoods to the east and which are mapped and shown within Annex 1.
- 2.32 A Link Road connection is required in policy through the site to Grid Road Childs Way (H6) and/or Chaffron Way (H7) which includes a public transport route to incorporate Mass Rapid Transit. The H6 Childs Way grid corridor from to the immediate eastern boundary of the site is allocated in Plan MK as a Transport Corridor, facilitating this connection. The H7 Chaffron Way Transport Corridor terminates at the V1 Snelshall Street / Kingsmead Roundabout. Hayton Way runs westwards from the Kingsmead Roundabout and provides a potential secondary connection to the Site from the east, but is separated from the Site by privately-owned land.
- 2.33 There is one Public Right of Way through the Site which is in the Southern Part extending north-west from Tattenhoe Valley Park to Shenley Road. The Site also benefits from a wider well-established network of active travel connections including public footpaths, bridleways, Redways and recreational paths. There is scope to extend and enhance these connections within the Site, including with the 'Super Redway' along the A421 and there is

a policy requirement for a Redway connection into the existing Redway Network and for existing public rights of way to be retained, enhanced and integrated into the development.

Noise

2.34 The Site is generally free of noise constraints. However, indicative noise contours (DEFRA Road Noise data England Oct 2022) show that the Site's Southern Part is affected by the presence of the A421 on the southern boundary, as follows:

- 60-64.9dB at approximately 35m from the A421
- 55-59.9dB at c.100-240m away from the A421
- <55dB at c.240m from the A421.

2.35 As such any noise impact arising from presence of the A421 will need to be assessed in detail and considered in the design of development.

Known Utilities

2.36 A BPA Oil pipeline (part of the strategic infrastructure network) runs along the Site's eastern edge, within Milton Keynes. While this pipeline does not represent a significant constraint to development within the Shenley Park Site, it is an important consideration for providing the access connections to H6 (Child's Way) and H7 (Chaffron Way).

2.37 There is an overhead electric line present in the Southern Part which may be either replaced or undergrounded as part of the development of the Shenley Park Site. Again, this does not present a significant constraint to development.

2.38 The full extent of underground electrical cabling can be confirmed as part of survey work undertaken as part of outline application material. Early appraisals suggest the route stops abruptly within the Northern field, but the assumption is that it continues to Bottlehouse Farm. This will likely not require any buffers or offsets.

Planning History

The Site

2.39 The published planning history of the Site is detailed in Table 1. No major applications have been made to date on-site and the applications predominantly relate to householder and agricultural building conversions at Bottlehouse Farm and Whaddon.

Table 1 - Shenley Park Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision (Date)
07/01341/APP	Conversion of barns to create No. 3 residential dwellings	Refused (05/07/07)
07/01343/APP	Erection of two storey detached dwelling to replace existing bungalow	Granted (17/01/08)

07/02899/APP	Conversion and extension of barn to form residential dwelling	Refused (04/07/08)
10/02462/APP	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of replacement dwelling - renewal of 07/01343/APP	Granted (09/03/11)
13/02347/APP	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a new two-storey detached dwelling and detached double car port garage	Granted (27/11/13)
14/00679/APP	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 storey detached dwelling and garage	Granted (06/05/14)

- 2.40 Crest Nicholson submitted a request for an EIA Scoping Opinion (17/01868/SO) in May 2017 to the then Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) "for the provision of up to 2,000 dwellings (Use Class C3), local centre (Use Class A1 - A5, D1, D2), extra care/care home (Use Class C2), 1-2 Form Entry Primary School (Use Class D1), sports pitches, formal and informal open space, landscaping, the provision of potential new accesses onto Childs Way, Shenley Road and the A421 and necessary enabling infrastructure". The scoping request was accepted as appropriate in January 2018.
- 2.41 Savills, on behalf of Crest Nicholson, submitted a further EIA Scoping Report in September 2022, to both Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Councils. The Proposed Development was described as comprising; "up to 1,650 No. residential dwellings, 110-bed care home/extra care facility, a mixed-use local centre, education provision, with supporting strategic green and blue infrastructure, landscaping, amenity space, biodiversity enhancements, sustainable drainage systems, means of access, and delivery of a highways link between the A421 Buckingham Road and H6 Childs Way". Buckinghamshire Council formally issued their Scoping Opinion on 8th February 2023.

Tattenhoe Park

- 2.42 The Tattenhoe Park development was granted outline planning permission (OPP) in August 2007 (06/00856/MKPCO) for 1,310 new homes, a local centre, a primary school, community facilities, a hotel and public house, public open space with associated landscaping and infrastructure. Three reserved matters applications were submitted and approved under this OPP, two of which related to the phased delivery of infrastructure and the third for 138 dwellings on a northern parcel (Phase 1).
- 2.43 Following an unsuccessful attempt to extend the extant OPP time limit and a subsequent EIA scoping opinion request, the permission was renewed in August 2017 (17/00918/OUT). Phases 2, 3 and 4 have already come forward under this OPP for 318, 117 and 190 dwellings respectively and a community centre.

Salden Chase

- 2.44 'Salden Chase', (South West Milton Keynes) is a proposed development south of the A421 for up to 1,855 new homes, an employment area with associated infrastructure and access

(shown spatially in Figure 1 above). Two applications were initially submitted in March 2015 to MKCC (15/00619/FUL) and the then AVDC (15/00314/AOP).

- 2.45 MKCC refused the proposed physical improvements around the Bottledump Roundabout which would have enabled a new access to the development from the A421. The Planning Inspectorate allowed the appeal, overturning MKCC's decision arguing that the highway impacts of the development could be appropriately mitigated (APP/Y0435/W/20/3252528). The MKCC appeal development was granted outline planning permission on 26 July 2021 subject to conditions.
- 2.46 The Outline Planning Application (OPA) submitted to the former AVDC, now BC, secured a resolution to grant outline consent, and following completion of a Section 106 Agreement, consent was issued on 20 December 2022.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Local Policy

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033

- 3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning Act requires determination of applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making and for the purposes of the Baseline Report, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) adopted by BC in September 2021, is the key Development Plan document. As at the time of writing, BC has undergone a Call for Sites exercise for an emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan but this county-wide Plan is still at its infancy. Local Transport Plan 5 is also in development with emerging themes in relation to decarbonisation and building places for people.
- 3.2 Policy D-WHA001 allocates the Shenley Park Site and establishes the development principles to be supplemented by the SPD and adhered to in forthcoming proposals. This key policy is examined in further detail in **Section 4.0**.
- 3.3 Policy H6a states that new residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially diverse and inclusive communities. Applicants will need to consider the Council's latest evidence (as updated)² on local market conditions and be in general conformity with the standards prescribed therein.
- 3.4 Policy H6b 'Housing for older people' lists WHA001 Shenley Road (Shenley Park) as one of the sites for the development of older persons (C2) accommodation between 2020 and 2025. Table 15 lists provision of "1ha for C2" within the Site for "110 units (approx.)". Masterplanning should ensure that the proposed facility is in a sustainable location for amenities and services and that the proposed type of accommodation accords with the typical design and facility requirements set out in Table 14 of the VALP.
- 3.5 Policy T1 sets out the strategy to deliver the sustainable transport vision in Aylesbury Vale which entails encouraging modal shift and improving the safety of all road users. Development proposals will deliver highway and transport improvements to ensure new housing and employment development does not create a severe impact on the highway and public transportation network. Policy T3 lists local transport schemes which the council actively support and which includes; *"New roundabout access on A421 to serve Shenley Park and subject to more detailed traffic modelling possible dualling between new access and Bottledump roundabout and link road through the site connecting the A421 with H6 and/or H7"* (Table 17). The Policy states that *"Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice or diminish the integrity of the implementation"* of this scheme. Policy T5 states that *"Transport and new development will only be permitted if*

² Latest evidence is the Buckinghamshire HEDNA (2016) but this will be subject to monitoring and review.

the necessary mitigation is provided against any unacceptable transport impacts which arise directly from that development”.

- 3.6 Policy T6 specifies that all development should provide appropriate levels of car parking for various development types, in line with Appendix B (Parking Standards) of the VALP, while Policy T8 establishes the standards for EV charging infrastructure provision. Buckinghamshire Council also launched, in 2022, a 5-year Electric Vehicle Action Plan to support the transition of the county to EVs and to help reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in Buckinghamshire as set out in BC’s Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy.
- 3.7 Policy T7 advises that networks of pedestrian and cycle routes should be provided to give easy access into and through new developments. Policy C4 protects public rights of way to ensure their integrity and connectivity is maintained and integrated to form new links with development proposals between existing open spaces, enhancing existing green corridors.
- 3.8 Policy S5 asserts that *“all new developments must provide appropriate on- and off-site infrastructure (in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) in order to:*
- a) avoid placing additional burden on the existing community*
 - b) avoid or mitigate adverse social, economic and environmental impacts and*
 - c) make good the loss or damage of social, economic and environmental assets.”*
- 3.9 Policy BE1 stresses the importance of conserving and enhancing heritage assets, and their settings, wherever possible. New development should contribute to heritage values and local distinctiveness to ensure the proposals do not cause harm to or loss of significance of the assets.
- 3.10 Policy BE2 stipulates that all new development shall respect the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings, the local distinctiveness and vernacular, the natural qualities and features of the area, and the effect on important public views and skylines. Policy BE4 encourages development densities that make effective use of land and reflect the surrounding densities.
- 3.11 Policy NE1 seeks to preserve and enhance existing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, including by securing biodiversity net gains, while Policies NE2 and NE8 establish the requirement for buffers around watercourses and trees/woodlands respectively.
- 3.12 Policy NE4 states that any development must recognise the individual character and distinctiveness of landscapes and mitigate any adverse impacts. Policy NE5 also requires an appropriate mitigation for pollution (noise / light), air quality and contaminated land impacts.
- 3.13 Policy NE8 also underlines the requirement for development to enhance and expand Aylesbury Vale’s tree and woodland resource by implementing, where possible, natural

buffers around retained vegetation and mitigate/compensate for any unavoidable loss. All applicants will be required to prepare and submit a full tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

- 3.14 Policy C3 reinforces the need to achieve more efficient use of natural resources, including from renewable sources and alternative decentralised energy systems, provided these are not to the detriment of landscapes, highways, etc.
- 3.15 Policy I1 requires the provision of Green Infrastructure to meet the Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt), including amenity green space as well as sports and recreation facilities, as per Policy I2, where these would be compatible with publicly accessible Green Infrastructure. Policy I3 establishes that community facilities reasonably related to the scale and type of development proposed will be secured via planning conditions or obligations, as appropriate.
- 3.16 VALP Appendices C (ANGSt) and D (Standards for sports and recreation) prescribe the open space and community facilities requirements (both on-/off-site) for new development in accordance with policies I1 and I2.
- 3.17 Policies I4 and I5 require the assessment and mitigation of potential flood risk, the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), the modelling of climate change and the adoption of suitable measures to improve water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainable use of water.

Other Material Considerations

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.18 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently revised in July 2021, adopts a presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined by the economic, social and environmental objectives and is a material consideration to which significant weight should be attached. For plan-making, paragraph 11 describes this presumption as:
 - a) *all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;*
 - b) *strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:*

- i. *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
- ii. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 3.19 Paragraph 008 of the Plan-Making PPG (ref 61-008-20190315) clearly states that the role of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) is to *"build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan"*. Importantly, SPDs do not form part of the development plan and as such, *"they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan"*. They are nonetheless a material consideration in decision-making.

Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Net Gain SPD (adopted July 2022)

- 3.20 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was prepared in support of VALP Policy NE1 and is intended to guide developers towards securing a biodiversity net gain, as calculated using the Natural England Biodiversity Metric. It sets out the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimise, remediate and compensate for biodiversity loss and also how further assessments and /or contributions may be secured through planning conditions or obligations.

Aylesbury Vale Area Design SPD (Emerging)

- 3.21 The Aylesbury Vale Area Design SPD seeks to ensure that new development across Aylesbury Vale is of the highest quality, responds appropriately to its context, and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design SPD sets out clear principles and objectives to assist landowners, developers and designers to deliver high quality and well-designed development. A key aim of this SPD is to help deliver a low carbon and climate resilient future for the area through well-designed sustainable buildings and high-quality local environments suitable for low-carbon living while respecting the heritage, character and ecology of the plan area.
- 3.22 Public consultation on this SPD was held between 21 September and 2 November 2022 on Buckinghamshire Council's website. Adoption of this SPD will follow in 2023.

Buckinghamshire Council Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy (2021)

- 3.23 Buckinghamshire Council passed a Motion on 15 July 2020 which committed them to work alongside the government to achieve net-zero for carbon emissions for Buckinghamshire as a whole by 2050. The *Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy* (CCAQS) was prepared to set out how this target would be achieved, in partnership with suppliers and communities.

- 3.24 Of particular relevance are Actions 48 to 51 of the CCAQS (as follows) which relate to how BC intend to achieve their net zero target within new buildings and developments:

48. Work with neighbouring local authorities and England's Economic Heartland to reduce air pollution impacts from cross-border and major transport hub developments.

49. Produce a Technical Advice Note (TAN) on addressing climate change in new developments.

50. Use opportunities coming out of changes to national planning policy to enhance environmentally sustainable aspects of developments.

51. Explore means to protect heritage assets from, and use them to address, climate change and poor air quality.

Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan – Sport and Leisure Facilities SPG (2005)

- 3.25 A 'Ready Reckoner' was adopted as a companion document to the *Sport and Leisure Facilities Supplementary Planning Guidance* in August 2005 to support the previous Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan. Since the adoption of VALP, this document continues to be used to advise BC on the indicative level of provision for on/off site open space and community/sports facilities required based on the scale and type of development in addition to whether the facilities could otherwise be secured through off-site contributions. The Ready Reckoner also enables indicative costings of these contributions per facility type. A Playing Pitch Strategy is being prepared to cover the area and Appendix E of VALP advises the intention for an SPD to be produced on Open Space, Sports, Leisure and Cultural Facilities in order to provide detailed guidance and operation of VALP policies I1, I2 and I3 but at the time of writing, this has not been completed.

Plan:MK

- 3.26 Plan:MK is the Local Plan adopted by MKCC in March 2019. In 2021, MKCC commenced a review of Plan:MK as per the provisions of its Policy DS0, commencing with evidence gathering and Call for Sites. MKCC have confirmed they are now preparing the New City Plan which will take forward MKCC's Strategy for 2050. Consultation on the Ambition and Objectives of the New City Plan (as well as the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report) opened on 31st January 2023 and closed on Tuesday 14th March 2023, so its preparation is at a relatively early stage.
- 3.27 The Site lies wholly within Buckinghamshire, and therefore, development proposals will be assessed against VALP policies as the adopted Development Plan covering the site. However, the principal access points into the H6/H7 fall within the administrative boundary of Milton Keynes and so will be subject to compliance with the City Council's policies as application(s) for access and infrastructure connections (including new redways and green infrastructure) will need to be submitted to Milton Keynes City Council for approval. There

are a number of policies of note in Plan:MK as the most up to date policy document for MKCC and these are listed at Annex 8. The NPPF states that public bodies have a duty to co-operate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly where strategic issues are involved. Due to the number of strategic allocations at the boundary with Milton Keynes, Plan:MK includes specific policies relating to development adjacent to its border. Strategic Objective 4 affirms that MKCC will *"work jointly with neighbouring authorities and any other key organisations on planning of any development located on the edge of MK so they are integrated with the city and contribute to its role and character"*.

- 3.28 Policy SD15 establishes the development and place-making principles for Sustainable Urban Extensions in local authorities adjacent to MKCC. These principles include an expectation for cooperation between the local authorities, and with infrastructure and services providers, to achieve a sustainable extension that is well-integrated with, and accessible from, the existing city structure (grid road system, redways, linear parks, strategic flood risk management). Regard will be had to this key policy, in addition to policy CT8 (Grid Road Network), which are examined in further detail in **Section 4.0**.

Foreword to 2030 Biodiversity Action Plan

- 3.29 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes NEP partners have published the latest revision to their joint Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) which extends the biodiversity targets to 2030. The BAP's stated strategic aim is to *"to reverse biodiversity decline by working together to create more bigger, better and more joined-up habitats across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes by 2030"*.
- 3.30 The BAP includes provisions to:
- Retain, enhance, expand and create priority habitats everywhere – with a focus on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) and strategically-identified areas
 - Increase the overall land area of wildlife-important habitats and of land positively managed for wildlife and high nature value habitats
 - Enhance existing habitats and improve habitat condition
 - Create and manage buffers around existing and new areas of priority habitat and other core and high-quality biodiversity and habitat sites following best practice guidelines
 - Connect quality habitats across the landscape to enable species movement across larger areas to improve habitat and species resilience to external pressures, with a focus on connectivity within and between BOAs as well as into the wider landscape
 - Improve people's connectedness with nature so that communities across Bucks and Milton Keynes value and understand the role of nature in mental / physical wellbeing
 - Ensure biodiversity is a key factor in the design of the urban environment and of new developments

4.0 SHENLEY PARK ALLOCATION

- 4.1 As aforementioned, policy D-WHA001 of the VALP allocates the Shenley Park Site for at least 1,150 homes and associated development. Plan:MK policies SD15 sets out place making principles for development in adjacent local authorities and CT8 refers to linking the grid network into new cross boundary developments.
- 4.2 This Section breaks down each of the principles within these policies and offers a summary commentary which has informed the SPD. This Section is anticipated to be reproduced in the main *Shenley Park Supplementary Planning Document*.

VALP: Policy WHA001

"To create an exemplar development, of regional significance, which will be a great place to live, work and grow. Built to a high sustainable design and construction standards, the development will provide a balanced mix of facilities to ensure that it meets the needs and aspirations of new and existing residents, at least 1,150 homes, 110 bed care home/extra care facility, new primary school, subject to need a site for new secondary school, multi-functional green infrastructure (in compliance with Policies I1 and I2 and associated Appendices), mixed use local centre, exemplary Sustainable Drainage Systems, new link road between A421 Buckingham Road and H6 and or H7 Childs Way/Chaffron Way, public transport and cycling and walking links".

"Development proposals must be accompanied by the information required in the Council's Local Validation List and comply with all other relevant policies in the Plan. To ensure a comprehensive development of the site an SPD is to be prepared for the site and in addition, proposals should comply with all of the following criteria":

Development Extent, Land Use and Density

- 4.3 In terms of the overall number of dwellings allocated for the site, the policy states:
- a. *"The site will make provision for at least 1,150 dwellings at a density that respects the adjacent settlement character and identity. To ensure that strong place shaping, community safety and sustainability principles are embedded throughout, creating a socially diverse place with a mix of dwelling types and tenure mix including a minimum of 25% affordable housing 'pepper-potted' throughout the site*
 - b. *Provision of 110 bed care home/extra care facility"*
- 4.4 As part of the preparatory work on the SPD, the development extent and capacity of the site for the quantum of residential and other land uses allocated in policy WHA001 has been tested based on the constraints and analysis undertaken to date. Whilst the full extent of site constraints (and any further consequence for developable area and layout)

will not be fully known until such time as an application is prepared, based on the level of information and evidence available through the Local Plan and the SPD process it can be confirmed that the allocated Site is capable of delivering the quantum of development set out in policy WHA001.

4.5 Annex 7 sets out the development extent and capacity testing analysis undertaken as part of the baseline evidence for the SPD. The following high-level assumptions informed this analysis:

- (i) Higher density development would be acceptable in the northern parts of the Site (a) as part of/around the local centre, and (b) adjacent to the eastern boundary of the allocation, reflecting the character of adjacent built development;
- (ii) The need for more bespoke design responses reflecting the topography and landscape constraints in the southern half of the Site are likely to generate lower densities;
- (iii) The full complement of open space requirements and other supporting uses will be accommodated on site in line with VALP policy.

4.6 Further testing on the impact on the highway network, landscape and visual impact and other technical considerations would be required in relation to accommodating any higher capacities on site, which would be required as part of any outline planning application.

4.7 Housing provision (type, mix and tenure), including the care home/extra care facility, will need to comply with the standards set out in VALP policies H6a/H6b (and respective supporting text) to meet local housing need and to create socially-diverse and inclusive communities.

Education

4.8 In terms of the education provision to be made for the development, policy WHA001 requires:

- c. *"Provision of land, buildings and car parking for a 2FE primary school (capacity 420) with 52 place nursery. Infrastructure will need to be provided and phased alongside development, the details of which will be agreed through developer contribution agreements.*
- d. *Subject to detailed discussions and agreement with the Education Authority, a financial contribution towards existing secondary schools will be required or provision of a site for a new secondary school if the need for an on-site facility is proven; and a financial contribution to special needs education"*

- 4.9 Officer engagement on the SPD drafting has confirmed the need to make provision for a 2FE primary school and nursery within the site. The phasing of this provision will need to be agreed as part of the outline planning application and s106 agreement, taking into account the capacity of existing schools/nurseries in the local area, particularly the Primary School in Whaddon village, so that schools are not at risk of losing pupils and therefore viability / funding for their continued operation. The school will be co-located with other community services, facilities and public realm as encouraged by the Council guidance and centrally located to the overall development and area the school will serve. Any community facilities on the school site (where use is intended during the school day) would need to have a separate access and adult and pupil facilities should not be shared.
- 4.10 The school site will be accessible from a suitable highways and safe direct walking and cycling routes and is not constrained by any issues in relation to flooding, contamination, power lines, utilities or other risk factors. The well located school will be able to provide a safe and healthy environment for children, teachers and other staff.
- 4.11 The Site borders Milton Keynes so is likely to impact schools across the boundary. It is expected that Buckinghamshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council will work together to ensure that the development is effectively mitigated. It is anticipated that a financial contribution towards off site secondary school provision (which may relate to the 'land not less than 5.12 hectares' to be provided for a secondary school at the nearby Salden Chase development (Site NLV001)) and the cost of purchasing land necessary to expand secondary school provision³ will be secured and can be paid to the Council within the relevant administrative area.

Community and Health Facilities

- 4.12 Policy WHA001 requires the following in relation to community and health provision within the development:
- e. Provision of land, buildings and car parking for new local centre including community hall and a contribution towards or delivery of a healthcare facility either by way of site provision or direct funding (including temporary buildings if necessary). To create a sustainable community providing a mix of uses to ensure that housing development is accompanied by infrastructure services and facilities*
- 4.13 Recognising that the majority of existing Whaddon residents rely on Milton Keynes for jobs, shopping and other services (rather than Aylesbury, Winslow or Buckingham), it is anticipated that local centre facilities at Shenley Park will be of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of new residents whilst complementing the existing facilities and services (both in Whaddon and adjacent Milton Keynes neighbourhoods). It is as important to

³ This could include provision of an all-weather sports facility/s to facilitate the provision of additional secondary school places - as the area can be counted twice under DfE minimum area guidelines

design in good walkable, cycling and public transport accessibility to existing village, local and district centres as well as provide a degree of new facilities on site which can be conveniently accessed.

- 4.14 Shenley Park falls within the Bucks, Oxon and West Berks (BOB) Integrated Care Board (ICB). Provision for a healthcare facility is possible on site if required or alternatively a S106 contribution will be paid to the Council (at an agreed timing trigger point) towards the cost of providing necessary additional land and buildings in the provision of necessary public healthcare and medical facilities to serve the Development. In addition, there is likely to be a requirement from the NHS Bucks Health Trust towards acute and community healthcare and which would be adjusted to take into account that the population are likely to be treated at an MK hospital and therefore, provisions would need to be made accordingly.

Landscape-Led Design Approach

- 4.15 There are a number of policy provisions for the design approach to new development at Shenley Park and which address the considerations of the LVCCA undertaken in the allocation of the Site. Policy WHA001 states that:

f. The site will be designed using a landscape-led and green infrastructure approach. The development design and layout will be informed by a full detailed landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) that integrates the site into the landscape and the existing network of green infrastructure within Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire. It will provide a long term defensible boundary to the western edge of Milton Keynes. This recognises that whilst being located totally within Aylesbury Vale, the development will use some facilities in Milton Keynes, given its proximity. Milton Keynes also provides an access point into the site.

- 4.16 Both BC and MKCC share the ambition for a landscape-led approach to design⁴, and this has been carried forward into the SPD masterplanning. Further development of the proposals at application stage will also be informed by a LVIA. Green infrastructure – particularly that which exists across the administrative boundary – provides opportunities for increased biodiversity networks, better access to site and wider green infrastructure networks, as well as opportunities to reinforce the site's setting relative to the wider Whaddon Chase landscape character.
- 4.17 As part of the SPD masterplanning, there has been some discussion with officers around the interpretation of how a "long-term defensible boundary to the western edge of Milton Keynes" can be best realised. Section 6 of this Report discusses this further.

⁴ VALP Policy WHA001, Plan:MK Policy NE5

Heritage

4.18 In terms of heritage, policy priority is given to:

- g. Conserve the setting of Whaddon village and Conservation Area by creating a substantial, well designed and managed countryside buffer (not formal open space) and enhanced Briary Plantation woodland belt between the development and the village of Whaddon*

4.19 The principle of a countryside buffer within the site which conserves the village setting whilst not precluding good and direct accessibility between the village and Shenley Park is to be carried through into the SPD. A number of design responses for the countryside buffer have been explored with stakeholders as part of the SPD masterplanning activity (see Section 6 of this report) which offer alternative approaches to landscape character and activities for the open space within the buffer. The preferred design response will be determined in the SPD and used to test outline application proposals.

4.20 Agreements for appropriate management regimes to avoid encroachment or coalescence in the long-term will be put in place as part of the grant of any planning consent. All parties are keen that the Parks Trust have an opportunity to take on the management of the buffer but, failing that, Whaddon Parish Council (PC) have expressed their desire to own and manage the land in perpetuity.

Sustainable Travel

4.21 Linked to the provision of a green infrastructure network through the site which connects to the wider area, WHA001 states that the development will:

- h. Create high quality walking and cycling links to and from Whaddon, Bletchley and Milton Keynes as an integral part of the development and shall include an extension of the Tattenhoe Valley Park into the site*

4.22 This principle has been carried forward into the SPD. Walking and cycling is particularly supported within the adjoining Milton Keynes infrastructure networks, and it is envisaged that the MK redway network can be extended into the site (as per clause p of Policy WHA001).

Ecology and Landscaping

4.23 The protection, enhancement and management of existing and new ecological and landscape features is addressed through:

- i. An ecological management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council, covering tree planting, hedge planting, pond creation, and ongoing management of the site*

j. Existing vegetation should be retained where practicable, including existing woodlands and hedgerows. Specific attention should be made to enhancing Briary Plantation, Bottlehouse Plantation and other significant blocks of woodlands / hedgerows within or on the edge of the site

k. Hard and soft landscaping scheme will be required to be submitted for approval

4.24 Biodiversity and habitat creation are key priorities for the Site and, given the existing natural capital on-site, there are ample opportunities to retain and enhance mature vegetation to secure net gains (rather than rely on newly-planted or off-site contributions). Appropriate offsets from the protected hedgerows and Ancient Woodland related to the site have been incorporated into the constraints mapping and have informed the capacity and layout of the site and the emerging development framework.

Archaeology

4.25 Protection and management of archaeology within the Site is addressed in policy through:

l. Archaeological assessment and evaluation shall be required to be submitted to the Council. Development must minimise impacts on the Statutory Ancient Monument of Site of Snelshall Monastery on the northern boundary of the site

m. The scheme layout shall have regard to the findings of an archaeological investigation and preserve in situ any remains of more than local importance

4.26 Located to the north of the Site is the Scheduled Monument of the medieval Snelshall Benedictine Priory. The monument is located outside of the Site and the geophysical survey already undertaken does not appear to show any associated remains extending within the site. The potential for changes to the setting of the Monument and any mitigation required as part of proposed development will be an important consideration for planning applications and there may also be opportunities for these assets to make an improved and positive contribution to the new and surrounding communities.

4.27 The Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) in the northern half of the site, close to the village of Whaddon defines the extent of an apparent late prehistoric rectangular double-ditched enclosure. The ANA in the southern area was originally created to highlight an area of cropmarks seen on aerial photographs. A geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation discovered and partially investigated a late Iron Age and Roman settlement in the in the Southern part of the Site.

4.28 A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) prepared by Oxford Archaeology (April 2023) was produced to determine the significance of the settlement; to assess the potential impacts from development on the remains; and consider the potential for excavation of the sites to contribute to regional research objectives. This exercise has determined that the settlement is of local significance and does not warrant preservation *in*

situ. It also confirms that the settlement has; "good potential for addressing regional research objectives and contributing to the understanding of late Iron Age and Roman settlement in the region, particularly the south-western part of Milton Keynes, for which the level of knowledge is less advanced compared to other areas of the city".

4.29 As such, the recommendation for the SPD is that excavation of the remains will be carried out in full (rather than in any piecemeal way) through a programme of archaeological investigation especially as the CHIA advises that any remains left in situ could be negatively affected from development or through continued agricultural activity if the site is not developed. Recording of heritage features within the site, mapping and interpretation information should be integrated into the public realm/green infrastructure design alongside new development maximising opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place. The Parks Trust has successfully applied such approaches within its green infrastructure assets locally.

4.30 At the time of writing a programme of archaeological trial trenching is underway within the northern half of the Site as part of preparatory work for a planning application.

Access and Connectivity

4.31 Within Policy WHA001, a number of access and connectivity requirements are identified:

- n. The development must provide a satisfactory vehicular access from the A421 Buckingham Road*
- o. More detailed traffic modelling will be required to inform on the extent and design of off site highway works and to determine whether the section of A421 between the Bottledump roundabout and the site access roundabout needs to be dualled. The scope and design of any detailed traffic modelling must be agreed by Buckinghamshire Council as the highway authority, in consultation with the Milton Keynes highway authority.*
- p. Provide for a Link Road connection through the site to Grid Road H6 Childs Way and or H7 Chaffron Way, which shall include:*
 - A Redway providing direct connection through the site to the existing Redway Network*
 - A public transport route to incorporate Mass Rapid Transit through the site to Grid Road H6 Childs Way and or H7 Chaffron Way*
- q. Existing public rights of way need to be retained, enhanced and details integrated into the development with safe and secure environments as part of a wider network of sustainable routes (utilising amongst others the Redway and Sustrans network), to directly and appropriately link the site with surrounding communities*

and facilities including the extension of bridleways into the site (Bridleway WHA12/2 and Shenley Brook End Bridleway 006) to Redway Standard

r. Provision of public transport service improvements and associated new facilities into Milton Keynes, including new or improved links to Bletchley railway station, and to surrounding areas

- 4.32 The principles of clauses *n* to *r* above have been carried forward into the SPD preparation and have shaped the approach to masterplanning and the emerging development framework plan.
- 4.33 However, although the potential points of connection are defined as the A421 and “H6 and or H7”, this policy maintains a considerable degree of flex in terms of a preferred transport / movement strategy for the site. This flexibility extends to the form and function of any ‘Link Road’ and any other transport infrastructure required within/through the Site (eg vehicle / MRT). Impacts on the highway network arising from the proposed development and the need for appropriate mitigation to manage these impacts will need to be assessed through traffic modelling as part of a future planning application.
- 4.34 Access to the site from the east is via the MK infrastructure network, most notably through the MK green and grey ‘grid system’. Recognising the need to co-ordinate infrastructure provision and ensure appropriate cross-boundary infrastructure design and capacity is central to the objectives of Plan:MK Policies SD15 and CT8 (see below), and as such, regard should be had to the requirements of these MKCC policies as well as those in the VALP covering development in Buckinghamshire.
- 4.35 Therefore, to ensure that the SPD provides for a deliverable development at Shenley Park— insofar as access has to be approved by both MKCC and BC as highway authorities - the policy requirements of both authorities will need to be appropriately considered.
- 4.36 At the time of writing, the detail of the manner in which the objectives of both local plan policies are successfully achieved is not yet settled between the two authorities, nor with local stakeholders.
- 4.37 The form and function of the highway infrastructure through the Site will likely affect (i) the delivery of effective Public Transport (PT) priority in MK and (ii) the management of capacity and/or congestion on the A421 (through dualling, P&R or vehicular restraint to favour public transport use). Decisions on the routeing or timing/phasing of MRT provision are not yet in place; however care should be taken to ensure that the Site can be well-served by future prioritised public transport facilities however they materialise.
- 4.38 Further, the Site cannot be considered in isolation because a number of the decisions to be made in the context of the SPD and/or an outline application will impact upon emerging

wider strategic and cross-boundary transport strategies currently being considered by MKCC and BC.

- 4.39 As such, preparatory work on the SPD has set out the various alternative design approaches and offered a commentary on the extent to which each design approach would meet the objectives of each element of policy. These strategies are explored in further detail under **Section 6.0**.
- 4.40 Further engagement between the two authorities will continue, with a view to agreeing and selecting a preferred high level connectivity strategy for the proposed development, which will inform the final SPD.

Environmental Considerations, Assessments and Strategies

- 4.41 A number of technical assessments are defined in policy WHA001 to inform detailed design and development at Shenley Park:
- s. An air quality and noise assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to development commencing*
 - t. A surface water drainage strategy will be required for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment submitted to the Council for approval and should ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The strategy will create new green infrastructure corridors along major surface flowpaths. Development on this site, which would drain into the management area for the Loughton Brook, will seek to reduce flood risk downstream on the Loughton Brook*
 - u. Detailed modelling will be required to confirm 1 in 20, 100 and 1,000 year extents and 1 in a 100 year plus climate change extents on the ordinary watercourse. Climate change modelling should be undertaken using the up-to-date Environment Agency guidance for the type of development and level of risk. The impact of culvert blockage should be considered for the modelled watercourse. The impacts of climate change must be taken into account in designing the site's SuDs and in any other flood mitigation measures proposed*
 - v. A foul water strategy is required to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council following consultation with the water and sewerage undertaker.*
 - w. An updated assessment of sewerage capacity and water supply network shall be carried out, working with Anglian Water, to identify the need for infrastructure upgrades and how and when these will be carried out to inform site delivery.*
 - x. The road access to the A421 will be designed to avoid areas of flood zone 3a with climate change and remain operational and safe for users in times of flood*

- 4.42 The evidence and information supporting and informing the development of the masterplanning for the Site enable compliance with the above criteria. Any future application will require submission of specific technical assessment to demonstrate compliance with the criteria and which must also satisfy the requirements of Buckinghamshire Council's Local Validation List for a valid planning application. Further information on the supporting information required to accompany a planning application should be developed through pre-application discussions between the applicant and the Council.

Plan:MK Policy

- 4.43 As noted above, whilst the development proposals will be assessed against VALP policies as the adopted Local Plan for development in Buckinghamshire, due to the Site's location adjacent to the established urban area of Milton Keynes – and specifically the need to provide highway / green infrastructure connections across the boundary – regard will also be had to relevant policies in the adopted Plan:MK; including policy SD15 and CT8. Each of the principles within policy SD15 is set out below, together with a summary commentary which has informed the baseline and SPD drafting.

Policy SD15 - Placemaking Principles for Sustainable Urban Extensions in Adjacent Local Authorities

- 4.44 The justification for this policy is in its introduction, which states:

A. "It is expected that development proposals on the edge of Milton Keynes are likely to have significant impacts upon the infrastructure and services of Milton Keynes, particularly given the significant attractor Milton Keynes will be for any future residents".

- 4.45 This is recognised as a material consideration for Shenley Park by both officers and local stakeholders, as it is anticipated that the future residents of developments on sites adjacent to Milton Keynes will use the infrastructure and facilities in Milton Keynes as opposed to destinations within their own authority areas and therefore, development should function as a sustainable urban extension to Milton Keynes and provide appropriate contributions to infrastructure and service provision within Milton Keynes. .

- 4.46 Joint working is advocated by MKCC through SD15 clause B in seeking to deliver its 10 development principles:

B. "When and if development comes forward for an area on the edge of Milton Keynes which is wholly or partly within the administrative boundary of a neighbouring authority, this Council will put forward the following principles of development during the joint working on planning, design and implementation":

- 1. The local authorities will work jointly, and with infrastructure and services providers, to achieve a coordinated and well-designed development.*

2. *A sustainable, safe and high quality urban extension should be created which is well integrated with, and accessible from, the existing city. Its structure and layout should be based on the principles that have shaped the existing city, especially the grid road system, redways and the linear parks and strategic, integrated flood management.*
3. *A strategic, integrated and sustainable approach to water resource management (including SUDS and flood risk mitigation) should be taken.*
4. *The design of development should respect its context as well as the character of the adjoining areas of the city.*
5. *Linear parks should be extended into the development where possible to provide recreational, walking and cycling links within the development area and to continue the city's extensive green infrastructure and redway network.*
6. *Technical work should be undertaken to fully assess the traffic impacts of the development on the road network within the city and nearby town and district centres and adjoining rural areas, and to identify necessary improvements to public transport and to the road network, including parking.*
7. *A route for the future construction of a strategic link road(s) and/or rail link should be protected where necessary.*
8. *New social and commercial facilities and services should be provided, and existing facilities improved where possible, to meet the day to day needs of new and existing residents.*
9. *The opportunity for new 'Park and Ride' sites for the city should be fully explored and where possible provided, and efficiently and effectively linked to the city road system.*
10. *The local authorities and their partner organisations should produce an agreement on appropriate mechanisms to secure developer contributions towards improvement and provision of infrastructure to support the development, including facilities in the city that will be used by residents of the development area".*

4.47 Several of the development principles closely reflect the policy requirements set out in WHA001 (#1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8), and as such are reflected in the masterplanning which informs the SPD. Principles #2, 7 and 9 include principles which more closely reflect established MK design criteria than those contained in VALP policy WHA001. The degree of compliance with these elements requires careful consideration in the overall approach to development. Necessary developer contributions will be secured via a Section 106 Agreement and which can also be directed proportionately towards Milton Keynes in accordance with principle #10 and following the approach adopted in the application for Salden Chase.

4.48 These elements are explored further in **Section 6.0** below.

Policy CT8 Grid Road Network

- 4.49 Plan:MK Policy CT8 is relevant to the SPD and subsequent development proposals in respect of the design and delivery of infrastructure will need to connect appropriately into the MK network. Clause C of this policy states:

C "Opportunities for extending the grid road system design and redway super network route into any major new development areas will be required to ensure that the grid continues to function effectively and sufficient land/corridors are safeguarded for future highway/transit links around the district to accommodate and manage increased travel demands changing and future travel demands. The Council will also seek to extend grid roads and redway super network route to link with new cross-boundary developments. New grid roads should also include green infrastructure buffers to improve air quality, reduce noise and vibration and enhance the landscape and result in a net gain in biodiversity".

- 4.50 This futureproofing approach is well-understood and already integrated into the fabric of existing and recently built development in MK (including Kingsmead, Oxley Park, Tattenhoe Park and Grange Farm), as well as within the planned development at Salden Chase within the BC area.

- 4.51 Policy CT8 also sets out the specific design principles for new grid roads, which follow those already embedded in the design of the MK infrastructure network. The following are of relevance to Shenley Park:

A. "New grid roads will be designed with the following characteristics:

- 1. Grid roads will run in generous multi-functional green infrastructure reservations (which are designed to allow for future upgrading to dual carriageways if and when required);*
- 2. Grid roads will also accommodate main services, and landscaping of appropriate road surfaces to protect adjacent development from the noise and visual intrusion of traffic and give a green character to the road. Where possible, grid roads will incorporate a bund providing additional protection;*
- 3. Grid roads will also be designed for use by public transport and for alternative forms of transport if required [eg electric cars/driverless cars], with bus laybys at intersections with pedestrian bridges and underpasses and controlled crossings where appropriate;*
- 4. Grid Road Reserves will be identified in order to safeguard further potential extension of the grid and enable future development to access the grid;*
- 5. Grid road reservations should be 80m in width where residential is on each side and 60m where other land uses occur;*

6. *Junction spacings will be set out as in MK Planning Manual. Redways should be setback 3m from the carriageway;*
7. *In order to improve pedestrian safety, in line with the Planning Manual, development incursions would be considered permissible within the grid road reserves at "points of connection", for example where redways pass underneath the grid road and at bus stops. This might include local centres and housing which should be designed to provide surveillance over the underpass or bus stop. This development should not however constrain the overall 60m width such that it prejudices future transport systems from being implemented. The overall green character and multi-functional green infrastructure of the grid road reserves should also still be maintained. The effect should be a green corridor punctuated at "points of connection" by development. This development could also have the important benefit of assisting with wayfinding around the grid road system, especially for visitors;*
8. *There are cross-border locations where MK Council considers that the extension of the grid road network, as part of new or future development allocations, will provide benefits to both local communities in MK and those in the adjacent district, as well as provide much needed connections to the strategic road network. Milton Keynes Council will seek the safeguarding of grid road connections and extensions or reserves through joint working and consultation responses to neighbouring authorities' local plan policy, or its response to planning applications in adjacent districts";*

4.52 Although the overarching principles which govern the MK green and grey grid are supported by both authorities, officer and stakeholder engagement has revealed there is not a universal acceptance that the principles relating to grid roads and reserves should be extended to and applied within Shenley Park. A balanced approach to the application of policy needs to be followed to reflect the fact that the main development proposals will be subject to compliance with VALP policies and the specific site allocation (WHA001) but the principal points of access, pedestrian/cycle links and elements of the green infrastructure will need to connect into the MK network and be acceptable in relation to MKCC policies.

4.53 As such, the design evolution for the SPD has explored a number of design approaches which offer the opportunity to connect and safeguard land and infrastructure in accordance with the principles of CT8 to a greater or lesser degree, noting that application of all criteria would create a certain appearance of road which needs to be balanced with the other policy criteria and placemaking principles. This is explored further in **Section 6**.

5.0 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 From the outset, BC has been committed to developing the Site's SPD with full engagement from local partners and local communities. It is vital that engagement is genuine, ongoing and responds to the ways the partners and community engage on issues.
- 5.2 A series of individual or small topic-based meetings were held between Buckinghamshire Council officers and members of the DLA team around technical matters as well as regular meetings with Council officers in relation to management of the project. This took into consideration the Site's identified opportunities and constraints, its context relative to other developments in the area and the development's requirements as set out in the Local Development Plan allocation.
- 5.3 A brief scope and timings of the various engagement activities undertaken to date are identified and summarised in Table 3.

Table 2 - Consultation Mechanisms and Formats

	Format	Timings		Audience	Purpose
01	Officer Engagement on Technical matters – series of individual and small topic-focused meetings (mix of virtual and in-person)	July-December 2022, May 2023		Key Local Authority Technical Officers	Key officers from BC met with DLA to discuss and debate the emerging themes and technical matters. Individual meetings to discuss and resolve specific technical issues.
02	Workshops	August-September 2022, April 2023		Group of Local Authority Officers	Introduction to the project and opportunity to raise and discuss wider issues and themes. Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives as part of the SEA process.
03	Members Working Group Meetings	August – December 2022		Whaddon Parish Council, Shenley Brook End, Strategic Sites Committee, Local and Parish Members	Introduction to the SPD, information gathering and discussion of wider issues and emerging themes.
04	Meetings	July – December 2022		Developer (Crest Nicholson) and Consultant team	Sharing of evidence and information gathered and sharing of emerging themes and options.

- 5.4 To end December 2022, 3 meetings/workshops have also been held with Crest Nicholson, as sole promoters / developers of the Site, to share evidence and emerging design thinking to ensure the deliverability of the Shenley Park Site

- 5.5 Although Crest Nicholson sought to engage with Parish Councils directly in 2022 to inform their emerging planning application proposals, it was agreed that they would instead attend the September Strategic Sites Committee Members Working Group to avoid overlap with stakeholder engagement on the SPD, which has been led by Buckinghamshire Council.
- 5.6 Whaddon Parish Council (PC), associated as the nearest village, were invited to a separate workshop to discuss their aspirations and concerns for development at Shenley Park. In particular, Whaddon PC raised the traffic impact that committed development in the area is having on the village, and their concern that strategic development at Salden Chase and Shenley Park would compound this issue. A number of suggested mitigation ideas/proposals drawn up by the Parish were shared with the team to mitigate perceived impacts (either by way of calming traffic through the village or diverting A421 traffic away from the village through more direct connections to the MK grid network).
- 5.7 In a letter dated 14 September 2022, Whaddon PC expressed concern that the various local committed developments and the current Whaddon traffic calming scheme⁵ would create a 'rat-run' through Whaddon village. They recognised that the SPD work will occur in advance of the transport modelling but asked to be involved in evolving transport discussions going forward.
- 5.8 The Parish Council also stated that they would not support development forms at Shenley Park that would lead to the unacceptable coalescence of Whaddon with Milton Keynes, stressing the need to maintain a physical / visual 'gap' between development and Whaddon (albeit that the Parish are keen to enable good walk/cycling accessibility between the village and new facilities and services at Shenley Park).
- 5.9 Further, the Parish were cognisant that additional land is being promoted further to the west of the Shenley Park allocation, and suggested that rather than 'shoehorn' the proposed >1,150 dwellings into this Site, consideration was given on how best to create a defensible long term edge to the urban area which included looking at options outside of the allocation. This could result in extending the Southern Part of the Site further west up to existing woodland blocks east of Coddimoor Lane and may offer better connectivity with the A421 and better design solutions in terms of creating a permanent landscaped edge consolidating blocks of existing woodland west of the SPD allocation site.
- 5.10 It was subsequently confirmed by BC that the additional site in question was submitted by its promoter to the Council's wider Call for Sites process for consideration for development. It was explained to the Parish that any decision around future development allocations can only be made as part of the next Local Plan for Buckinghamshire, and the SPD can only address matters for the allocated Site. Nevertheless, not least because 'futureproofing' is a policy objective in relation to MKCC boundary development and a design principle set out in the draft AV Design Guide SPD [and it is understood the site in question is being

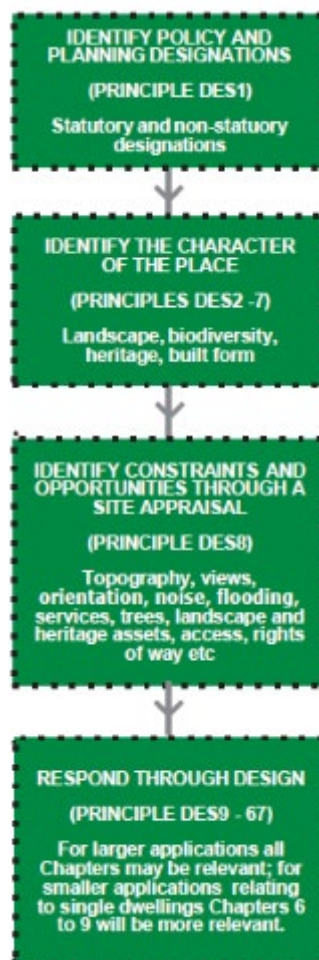
⁵ under construction, proposed as part of the MK Western Expansion Area mitigation measures

promoted by the same landowning interest as Shenley Park], the baseline design analysis does include some consideration of how future growth decisions might impact on Shenley Park throughout its delivery timeframe.

- 5.11 A full record of stakeholder engagement will be prepared as part of the Statement of Consultation which will sit alongside the SPD.

6.0 DESIGN EVOLUTION

- 6.1 This Section sets out how the assessment of policy context and the site analysis, supplemented by the stakeholder engagement undertaken, has informed the evolution of the emerging design Concept(s)/Framework Plan (**Section 7.0**) for the Site.
- 6.2 Buckinghamshire Council has recently consulted upon a draft *Aylesbury Vale Area Design Supplementary Planning Document*. Although currently in draft form, the document provides a useful tool for the way in which the design of new development should be shaped.
- 6.3 To aid understanding, the way in which the design elements of the draft Shenley Park SPD have been prepared follows the process and principles set out in the draft *Aylesbury Vale Area Design SPD* which has the objective of delivering high quality and well-designed development. It is expected that the Design SPD (once adopted) will also inform the planning application proposals for the Site, and as such the Shenley Park SPD will cross refer rather than replicate these design principles wherever possible.



Key Design Influences for the Site

Landscape, Designations, Green Infrastructure, Natural Features and Topography [Ref. Aylesbury Vale Area Design Guide Design - Principles DES1, 2, 3, 9, 10 and 11]

- 6.4 It is clear from the policy context and site analysis in Section 2 that the landscape and green infrastructure context and setting for the site plays a key part in the evolution of design responses. The presence of landscape features on site – including hedgerows, woodland and undulating topography – as well as around the margins of the allocation, coupled with the site's location relative to the remnants of the historic Whaddon Chase landscape mean that a **landscape-led approach to design** is entirely justified and reasonable.
- 6.5 This has provided the starting point for the evolution of the design concept in line with policy WHA001 and the AVA Design Guide.
- 6.6 This approach starts with the premise that re-profiling, cut-and-fill, and engineering techniques will be minimised (if not avoided) and the Site's topographical character will be preserved wherever possible to create a distinctive form of development and also respecting the LCT characteristic. A slope analysis exercise was carried out to inform emerging masterplanning. Land north of Shenley Road is generally flat and able to accommodate built development with less sensitivity in terms of impact on landscape and adjacent uses. It is therefore reasonable to assume that this part of the site can accommodate a greater proportion of the allocated development. Elsewhere within the Site, land of an existing / natural gradient of up to 1:15 is considered appropriate to accommodate built development. For such steeper parts of the Site (generally in the southern half of the Site), emerging masterplanning has considered how access and development could be configured so as to avoid/minimise the need for engineering / reprofiling of the landform. **Annex 2: Development Character – Emerging Thinking** includes slope analysis and commentary on consequential design influences.

Green Infrastructure

- 6.7 Applying the landscape buffers stipulated by VALP policies NE2/NE8 to the existing on-site green / blue infrastructure – hedgerows (10m); woodland (25m); ancient woodland (50m) and watercourses (10m) - provides a good basis upon which to start to define development edges and how built development might interact positively with existing landscape features. The landscape strategy is approached as a connected corridor of landscape into and along the edge of the site. The site's location in the Whaddon Chase Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) has also informed emerging masterplanning as the design seeks to protect, enhance, create and connect biodiversity to support coherent and resilient ecological networks as supported by Design Guidance. It is expected that the Shenley Park OPA will seek to deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least 10% and to accord with the emerging Biodiversity SPDs of both Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

- 6.8 A curated variety of open space and green infrastructure typologies will be required to create a holistic Green Infrastructure Strategy ('GI Strategy') at the Site. This entails the provision of different types of space (e.g. brook, woodland, playing field, green corridors), integration of the fragmented blocks of existing mature vegetation on-site and the incorporation of safe and inclusive public access. The GI Strategy should also seek to allow safe movement for wildlife through a network of connected habitat.
- 6.9 Whilst the majority of the existing green infrastructure exists around the perimeter of the Site, those components (hedgerows and woodland) which exist within the Site are laid out in strongly defined arrangements. The masterplanning approach retains these as far as possible with the exception of a stretch of hedgerow in the Southern Part running north-south perpendicular to the A421 (see Annex 1), which would be removed only to make efficient use of land to enable the delivery of primary infrastructure connections. Further replanting will also be encouraged through the SPD. The hedgerows and woodland are incorporated into the open space network through a series of inter-connected green corridors which also provide the required protective buffers. Whilst forming part of the open space network, these features can also begin to define movement routes and development parcels.
- 6.10 A Linear Park, running east-west along Tattenhoe Brook, will be required to connect Milton Keynes to the open countryside through the Site. This Linear Park presents an opportunity to create a high-quality public space, extending the design and layout principles established in the existing Tattenhoe Valley Park, through the creation of an integrated network of walking and cycling routes, planting and green spaces. Naturalistic stormwater attenuation features can be sympathetically integrated into the linear park to preserve, as far as is practical, the existing / natural landform. Following the design approach employed within the linear park further east, in order to achieve good surveillance and a positive relationship between buildings and their landscape setting, the linear park should be fronted on to by development parcels to its north and south, with the visual prominence of buildings within the park reduced by new tree planting. The linear park will extend westwards beyond the link road, and will include walking, cycling and potentially horse-riding connections towards the countryside beyond.
- 6.11 In line with local policy, enhancements to the Briary and Bottlehouse Plantations will also need to be secured to preserve / enhance their ecological value and to integrate them within the Site's green infrastructure network.
- 6.12 The MK Boundary Walk green corridor along the Site's eastern edge is a positive landscape feature and asset which can be enhanced and used as a reference to inform/generate the design of landscape and habitat links through the development.

Blue Infrastructure

- 6.13 Surface water flood risk exists in both halves of the Site, courtesy of the agricultural ditch in the North and Tattenhoe Brook in the South. Where possible, existing watercourses and other surface water features shall be used as a framework for the Site layout. This flood risk will be mitigated through the design and layout of development and its open spaces in addition to the creation of a comprehensive site-wide blue infrastructure network.
- 6.14 Within the Site, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are considered an integral component of the development at all scales from individual buildings/plots to the attenuation basin. Where it leaves the Site, the surface water will be drained in a controlled manner to reduce flood risk downstream.
- 6.15 Through the use of suitable plant species for the SuDS, the aforementioned Linear Park will mitigate flood risk along Tattenhoe Brook both from the Shenley Park development and the adjacent Tattenhoe Park neighbourhood. Shenley Park's green and blue infrastructure will connect to the SuDS measures installed as part of the Tattenhoe Valley Park and therefore should be consistent with the approaches to water management, and other issues.
- 6.16 More widely, SuDS shall be sensitively incorporated across the Shenley Park development to provide storm-water attenuation functionality in streets (through elements such as swales), development areas (such as formal ponds) and open spaces and will follow a holistic design approach integrated with landscape and ecology.
- 6.17 These SuDS features shall be designed to provide biodiversity value through habitat creation and contribute to the visual amenity of the development as well as incorporating learning opportunities such as wildlife nature conservation ponds with boardwalks and access to water where appropriate. SuDS features within the open space network shall appear as natural as possible, with engineered elements well-designed to minimise their visual prominence.

Archaeology

- 6.18 Oxford Archaeology undertook a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (April 2023) which confirmed that an assessment of the archaeological remains, supported by an inter-site comparison, has determined that the settlement is of local significance and does not warrant preservation *in situ*.
- 6.19 Therefore, the archaeological remains are not considered to be a constraining factor affecting the development extent/capacity in the southern part of the Site.

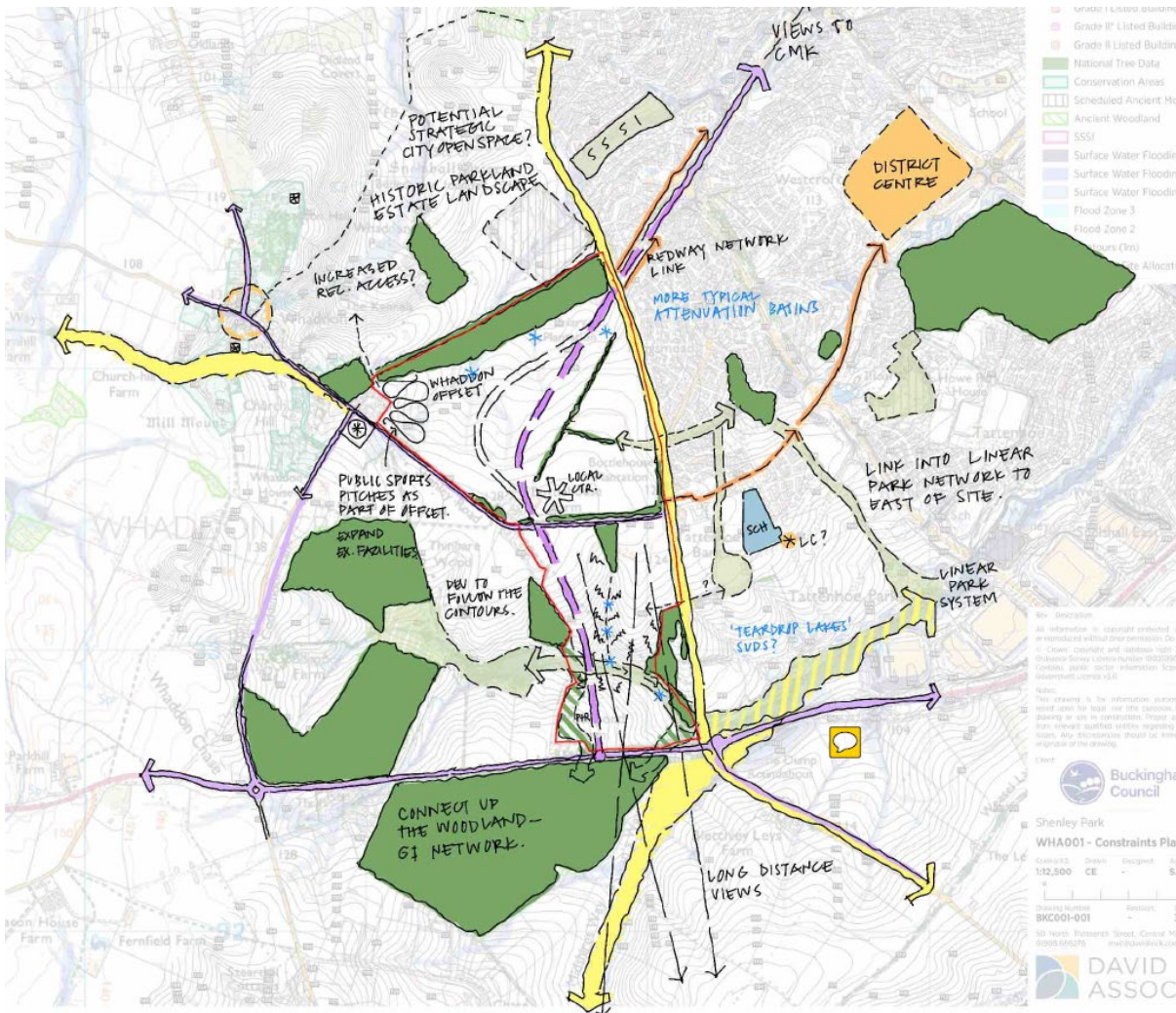


Figure 2: Initial Sketch Design Concept (Oct 2022)

6.20 Bringing together the overarching design influences set out above has generated an initial spatial design concept for the creation of place (see Figure 2 below). This was evolved from initial stakeholder discussions to articulate the key design aspirations to be tested through more detailed design evaluation as part of masterplanning activity.

Consideration of Specific Landscape Structuring Elements

- 6.21 Policy WHA001 identifies a number of criteria governing development of Shenley Park which play a key role in shaping design thinking.
- 6.22 Two specific landscape structuring elements for the Site are defined in policy. The development design and layout are required to:
- “Conserve the setting of Whaddon village and Conservation Area by creating a *substantial, well-designed and managed countryside buffer (not formal open space) and enhanced Briary Plantation Woodland between the development and the village of Whaddon*”; and
 - “*integrate[s] the site into the landscape and the existing network of green infrastructure within Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire. It will provide a **long term defensible boundary** to the western edge of Milton Keynes*”;
- 6.23 The implications of each of these landscape elements for the masterplanning of the site is considered below:

Relationship with Whaddon and the Buffer

- 6.24 Whaddon is surrounded by open countryside and this landscape contributes to the setting of the village and the Conservation Area. Visual connectivity between Whaddon and the Site is already very limited due to the village’s layout, the Site’s topography and the existing mature vegetation but a buffer is required to retain an appropriate separation and space between the village and the new development to protect the rural identity and conserve the setting of the village and prevent the perception of coalescence. However, the scale, character and quality of built development, landscape and open space design at Shenley Park all remain important considerations for how this separation is ultimately maintained – for example a large expanse of open space may provide less visual separation than a smaller space heavily planted with trees.
- 6.25 Three design elements need to be considered in the establishment of an appropriate buffer: *scale* (distance); *landscape treatment* (including visible connectivity) and *uses / activities* within it. **Annex 3: Buffer to Whaddon – Emerging Thinking** – sets out the design analysis and alternative design responses relating to each of these design elements:

Scale of the Buffer

- 6.26 The distance between the southern edge of the village and the northernmost extent of built development is an important consideration. Perception of distance and separation depends to a great extent on the character of the space but is also influenced by the desire to interact and traverse the space to access facilities within both the village and new development area.

6.27 There is already a requirement for a 50m offset from Ancient Woodland and, with the proposed buffer planting (and associated 25m offset), this extends along the entire southern boundary of the Plantation to the north of the Site. A number of possible offset distances beyond this 50m were assessed and explored with stakeholders as part of initial design workshops comprising 100m, 200m and 300m offsets, all of which could be defined as 'substantial' and in compliance with policy (see images in Annex 3). The design implications of each approach (to be read alongside the diagrams in Annex 3) are set out below:

'100M OFFSET'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing agricultural ditch effectively forms the edge of the offset, but would likely be lost within new tree belt / screen planting This could result in the perceived loss and constriction of the existing field pattern Potential for open parkland landscape and areas of tree cover to provide visual containment / separation between Whaddon and Shenley Park The constrained width of the space limits the likely success of both parkland and woodland typologies The distance between Whaddon and the new development would encourage walking and cycling
'200M OFFSET'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to reflect existing field pattern within the layout of the space through the retention of the agricultural ditch within an open setting Opportunity to incorporate an informal cricket pitch (requires circa 120m diameter) within the parkland character of the open space to provide recreational benefits to residents of Whaddon and Shenley Park (although this would need to be designed so it does not constitute formal open space) Potential for open parkland landscape and areas of tree cover to provide visual containment / separation between Whaddon and Shenley Park The distance between Whaddon and the new development may feel too wide for walking and cycling outside of daylight hours
'300M OFFSET'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to retain all of the existing ditch and field pattern in north-western corner Combination of structural tree blocks and smaller copses to provide visual containment / separation between Whaddon and Shenley Park Opportunity to incorporate an informal cricket pitch within the parkland character of the open space to provide recreational benefits to residents of Whaddon and Shenley Park along with surrounding meadow/parkland/ trees and woodland Potential for northern-most field to remain agricultural in character

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The distance between Whaddon and the new development would likely feel too wide for walking and cycling outside of daylight hours
--	---

- 6.28 Design analysis has concluded that a minimum of 150m offset is able to provide an appropriate level of separation whilst enabling a substantial and varied landscape zone to be created and still within the distance of being an attractive proposition for walking and cycling between Whaddon and Shenley Park.

Landscape Character and Activity within the Buffer

- 6.29 The proposed character of the buffer is also an important design consideration. In terms of landscape treatment, a number of alternative design responses could be considered for the character of this open space including: retaining the existing agricultural character (arable fields) of the Site; restoring the historic woodland of Whaddon Chase, a medieval hunting forest or creating an extension of the parkland landscape associated with Whaddon Hall and/or providing a multifunctional amenity landscape with informal play opportunities and the creation of paddocks and agricultural fields (a recognised Parks Trust typology found elsewhere in the local area) and providing a connection or continuity to the western defensible edge /buffer and wider GI corridor. The buffer would need to provide a transitional landscape character with informal routes to and from the site and appropriately responding to views and vistas.
- 6.30 The buffer could include shared space to create community integration. This may include an informal cricket pitch which can have a more village/rural character—which could be successfully assimilated within a green buffer between settlements (and indeed, can stimulate positive interaction between established and new communities) but as it would prevent tree planting in this area, its incorporation would need to be carefully considered as part of the overall character of this buffer area. To accord with the policy criteria and wording, formal open space will need to be accommodated elsewhere within the development area rather than as part of the buffer. The topography of the site and the need to retain a more open character in the west of the site in response to the landscape evidence, suggest that the north-west part of the Site is the optimal location for formal open space, associated with but outside the buffer, and that a co-location of sports pitches adjacent to the landscape buffer will further increase the distance between Whaddon and the edge of built development within Shenley Park.
- 6.31 Other considerations include:
- The relationship with any link road alignment/design or safeguarded grid reserve adjacent/within the buffer (60m) (see sections within Annex 3);
 - Framing of views and vistas;
 - Safety and security of the space / adjacent properties; and

- The character of the adjacent plantations and historic Whaddon Chase landscape further north.

6.32 It was clear through the workshop discussions that there is a compromise to be made between accessibility and screening between the village and new development and protection of the village identity. A preference was expressed by stakeholders for a landscape treatment for the buffer which comprises a mix of parkland / woodland screen planting (meadow grass and trees) reflective of the historic character of the retained Briary and Bottlehouse Plantations, incorporating active travel/leisure routes connecting the Site both to Whaddon and Milton Keynes. This could also fully retain the existing agricultural ditch in situ (with a 10m offset for the ditch itself). A parkland character could also reinterpret the 19th century parkland associated with Whaddon Hall, as described earlier on in this report and the baseline evidence. This buffer landscape should also extend to meet the defensible edge buffer creating a continuous GI corridor.

6.33 Whilst not forming part of the 'Whaddon buffer', the creation of an H6 reserve corridor and arrangement of playing fields / pitches (see **Section 7.0** below) would set back development within Shenley Park from Whaddon, further increasing the physical separation between the two settlements.

Long Term Defensible Western Boundary

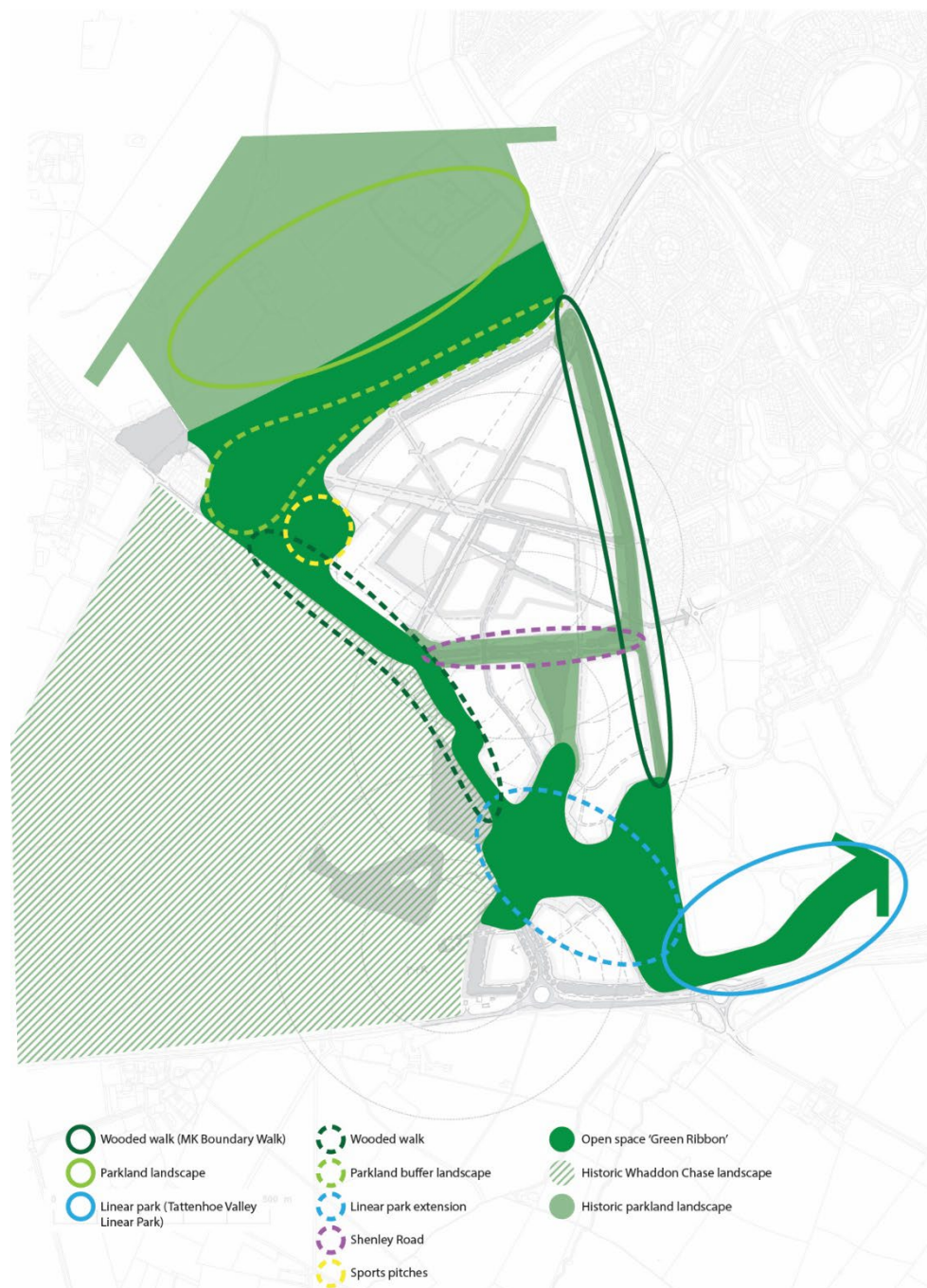
6.34 There was considerable discussion during stakeholder and officer workshops about how the development design and layout might 'provide a **long-term defensible boundary** to the western edge of Milton Keynes'.

6.35 At a **site level**, the western boundary of the allocation is already well-defined on the ground by field boundaries and can be reinforced with a combination of a well-designed development edge and landscape design. The approach and treatment should also reflect the 'plateau' characteristic of the northern parcel and the 'valley' characteristic of the southern parcel. Landscape evidence prepared in relation to the Local Plan allocation of the Site (BMD Study) identified that tree planting and woodland creation would reinforce the local landscape character and soften views of the potential development edge in views from Whaddon Conservation Area and minimise the impact/effect on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity.

6.36 A reinforced landscaped edge should also incorporate potential access for walking, cycling and horse riding as well as providing biodiversity benefits and could also include orchards or allotments which would be productive and of direct benefit to residents and which can help form an appropriate transition between the built form and countryside whilst still providing a defensible edge. The width of any landscaped corridor need not be fixed in the SPD although a consistent woodland block is more appropriate to the western edge of the northern parcel, and to the southern parcel, there is scope for a more flexible and organic width of woodland buffer along its length responding to the topography and to existing

landscape features to the west, integrated with the design of adjacent built development – thus balancing landscape as screening and setting; well-designed built development creating a 'rural edge' character; and the efficient use of land for development within the site. It should also transition and blend into the Whaddon landscape buffer and filter into Tattenhoe Park through the southern part of the Site creating a 'green ribbon' of landscape infrastructure from the northwest to southeast wrapping around the development, with distinct characters which transition along its length (see Figure 3 below which illustrates the above principles).

Figure 3: Overarching Landscape Strategy



Anticipating Future Development

- 6.37 Draft *AVA Design Guide* Principle DES16 supports design approaches which consider and anticipate future development.
- 6.38 As such, the ability of the Site to contribute to an *area-wide* defensible boundary to the urban area of Milton Keynes should also be considered. Wider opportunities exist to create a strategic green boundary between the urban edge of Milton Keynes and the rural area to the west, and have been identified for some time as part of wider Green Infrastructure Strategies and plans, relating to the wider Whaddon Chase landscape extending between the A421 and the more open landscape to the north west of Whaddon [ref: 2009 *Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy*].
- 6.39 Therefore, in addition to creating a well-designed landscape edge to the allocation site itself, consideration has been given to how a landscape strategy for the allocation site might contribute to longer term strategic green infrastructure objectives for a re-established Whaddon Chase.
- 6.40 The landowner appetite for some future development to the west is already evidenced through the Council's 2022 Call for Site exercise. Considering the Shenley Park site in this context may offer a greater opportunity to create a permanent western landscape boundary to the city of Milton Keynes west of the site, incorporating the series of woodland belts north and south of the A421 up to Oakhill (north of Whaddon village) and beyond.
- 6.41 This opportunity has already been identified by Whaddon Parish Council and was shared with the team during workshop discussions. Figure 4 at the end of this section shows how Shenley Park might sit within a longer term green and grey infrastructure framework, and commentary on the potential to consider futureproofed infrastructure is explored further in this section.
- 6.42 Whilst the SPD cannot include specific requirements for land outside the Shenley Park allocation, in terms of design considerations care should be taken so as not to unreasonably prejudice or act counter to such longer term objectives through site-specific design responses.

Settlement Context, Built Character and Local Vernacular [Ref. AV Design Principles DES4, 6, 7]*Settlement Context*

- 6.43 There are a number of nearby Buckinghamshire settlements from which design inspiration should be drawn to inform the design character and form of Shenley Park. **Annex 2** includes design analysis showing how development on slopes is a feature of Aylesbury Vale, reflected in local, historic hillside villages such as Nash and Quanton where development and streets work with the topography. In contrast, the flatter northern part

of the site, accommodating the local centre and community facilities, should draw inspiration from larger nucleated settlements such as Winslow. This considered approach to the settlement pattern will ensure that Shenley Park reflects the characteristics and responds to the local vernacular evident in Buckinghamshire settlements.

- 6.44 Whilst the site is located entirely within Buckinghamshire, as with many of the settlements to the west of Milton Keynes, Shenley Park also needs to function as part of the urban area of Milton Keynes and provide an effective interface between the urban and rural built characters. Occupants of the development will use many of the local facilities across the boundary in the western parts of the city by nature of their proximity, as well as help support existing local facilities in Whaddon village and make use of new facilities to be provided as part of the mixed-use centre on site.
- 6.45 Therefore, in accordance with policy, a priority for the design and layout of Shenley Park will be to provide a choice of safe and accessible connections – first and foremost for walking and active travel modes, but also by public transport and the private car - to both local and then on to higher order destinations. The design and character of these links will reflect those of the existing connections where possible, and there are opportunities to re-purpose Shenley Road as a priority route for ped/cycle and public transport to discourage through car movement and ensure priority is given to active travel between the site and local facilities to the west (see **Annex 5** for more details).

Heritage Context

- 6.46 There are a number of built heritage features on the margins of the site which to a greater or lesser degree provide useful design references for new development. Heritage assets play an important part in peoples' perception and experience of place and in accordance with Design Principle DES17, designs will seek to appropriately respond to the surrounding historic characteristics and assets, on and adjacent to the site.
- 6.47 The existing farmstead of Bottlehouse Farm comprises a mix of buildings including a red brick farmhouse and several larger agricultural barns, which it is understood has recently been locally listed. The buildings will be conserved and set within the surrounding woodland block and there is potential for them to be refurbished or enhanced as part of the Shenley Park development.
- 6.48 Site visits have confirmed that the visual impact between the Site and Snelshall Monastery SAM to the north is already mitigated by the Briary Plantation (100m). The required offset to the ancient woodland (50m) together with the green buffer required in the north west of the site will give further visual mitigation and providing a sensitive landscape planting design is incorporated, no further mitigation is considered necessary. The SPD will require conformation of this approach through the Heritage Statement/LVIA assessments prepared as part of Outline Planning Application(s) for Shenley Park.

6.49 Now we understand the significance of the archaeological remains on the southern part of the site, and that its significance does not warrant preservation *in situ*, this approach will be included in the SPD.

Built Character

- 6.50 Engagement through workshops has evidenced that there is a desire for Shenley Park's built character to more closely reflect the local vernacular of Buckinghamshire's villages rather than that of the Milton Keynes urban area, particularly in the western parts of the Site which have a closer visual relationship with the rural area.
- 6.51 However, officers also consider that there is an opportunity in the eastern parts of the site to also reflect the densities and character of the adjacent developments in Tattenhoe Park and Kingsmead which reflects the approach set out in criteria (a) of policy WHA001 which advises that dwellings are at a density that respects the settlement character and identity
- 6.52 Therefore, there is a need to take design cues from both the urban and the rural setting of the site. Part of the masterplanning evolution undertaken to inform the SPD includes the identification of Buckinghamshire settlement pattern precedents to evolve context-specific design principles for the Site, being mindful of the local contemporary context of MK neighbourhoods such as Kingsmead and Tattenhoe Park as these also have a place within the built character of Shenley Park.
- 6.53 Whilst we suggest that it is entirely appropriate that two distinct design responses are developed for the Site's two halves, it will be critical that their design is coordinated in order to create a coherent and legible new neighbourhood at Shenley Park. Further, whilst the urban form / layout and materials should reflect existing Buckinghamshire settlements (particularly Whaddon), the architectural design and detailing can also incorporate contemporary features reflecting Milton Keynes' architectural precedent and style. This will help reinforce the existing sense of place, distinctive local identity and effective transition between its urban and rural setting. This will need to guide and inform proposals that are prepared later in the design process to reinforce local identity and a sense of place.

Movement Network, Connectivity and Location of Mixed Uses, Non Car Modes and Anticipation of Future Development [Ref Design Principles DES14, 15, 16, 19, 21]

- 6.54 Engagement with officers and local stakeholders has flagged that a key structuring design element – and one which will have a significant influence on the layout, extent and function of development and green infrastructure – is **access and connectivity**, both for the site and within the surrounding area.
- 6.55 We have taken each connectivity element in turn below:

Active Travel Routes

- 6.56 A critical component of a movement strategy for the Site is defining an integrated network of active travel (walking/cycling) connections to, within and through the Site to facilitate a genuine choice of travel modes and which link into the existing public rights of way network. The provision of safe and convenient connections is integral to ensuring Shenley Park is an inclusive, connected and permeable settlement. In line with local policy objectives, these active travel routes (in addition to public transport) will be prioritised over vehicular transport to support the shift to more sustainable modes of travel.
- 6.57 Shenley Park's open space network should accommodate a range of new and enhanced active travel routes for walking, cycling, wheeling and potentially horse-riding, some of which are potentially segregated from vehicular routes. This will also entail creating connections into Milton Keynes' redway network and Public Rights of Ways around the Site's periphery in addition to extending connections to the Tattenhoe Valley Park along the existing watercourse.

Shenley Road

- 6.58 There is a strong case for the stopping-up of Shenley Road as a vehicular connection between Whaddon and Milton Keynes as part of an access and connectivity strategy which prioritises active and sustainable travel. This would also have the effect of reducing the quantum of traffic moving through the village of Whaddon.
- 6.59 Local access along parts of Shenley Road can be retained to existing properties, with vehicular access traversing Shenley Road north-south, to link the southern and northern parts of the Site.
- 6.60 Shenley Road, and its rural character, would then be retained as an active travel route with walking and cycling connectivity to the wider Shenley Park development.

Vehicular Connectivity

- 6.61 In respect of vehicular connectivity, site specific local plan policy is less defined in this respect but policy WHA001 states:

"p. provide for a Link Road connection through the site to Grid Road H6 Childs Way and or H7 Chaffron Way, which shall include .. a Redway providing direct connection through the site to the existing Redway Network, and...a public transport route to incorporate Mass Rapid Transit through the site to H6 Childs Way and or H7 Chaffron Way";

- 6.62 The 'link road connection' is not defined in policy in terms of either its anticipated capacity or purpose (whether for local or more strategic vehicular movements) and whilst it is worded 'and/or' further exploration will also be needed as to whether both connections need to be safeguarded in relation to the final development proposals and result of

transport modelling. It is also clear that the optimal arrangement of connections into and through the site to accommodate and/or mitigate vehicular traffic from the new development is (a) dependent on what may or may not happen in the surrounding area (including other strategic developments, outcomes or impacts from which are not yet evident), and (b) will involve a compromise between the different transport outcomes sought by the number of local authorities and stakeholders involved.

- 6.63 Relevant to this is the policy wording of Plan:MK Policies SD15 and CT8 (MKCC) in the context that for the scheme to be deliverable, connections into the MK highway network will also need to be assessed against MKCC policies. These provide a clear requirement for new transport infrastructure extending to cross boundary locations such as at Shenley Park to follow the MK grid design and ethos.
- 6.64 Masterplanning should not be dictated by highway design; the primary driver for a well-designed development is the creation of place. However, unless explored at an early stages of design evolution, subsequent choices around vehicular capacity and purpose of streets can have a detrimental impact on the effective functioning and quality of a new place.
- 6.65 This is particularly pertinent at Shenley Park where there are 'extremes' of access and movement scenarios within and through the site. At one 'extreme', a 60mph fully functioning strategic grid connection for traffic between the A421 and the dual carriageway Childs Way to and from Central Milton Keynes could be incorporated. At the other 'extreme, an 'inner street' which is designed to retain all through traffic on the A421 and provide a low key access for vehicles other than public transport between the new development and adjacent neighbourhoods. At its extreme, a link could even be severed for private vehicles so that there is no vehicular connectivity between the A421 and MK grid network other than for public transport, although this option was discounted as it was considered not to comply with policy wording requiring a 'link road connection'.
- 6.66 There are a number of possible alternative design responses which meet policy requirements to a greater or lesser degree, but which result in variations in masterplanning outcomes, both in terms of the interactivity between the built form and proposed land uses and in terms of the integration of Shenley Park with the existing Whaddon and MK neighbourhoods. These were explored with stakeholders at an early stage of engagement, and are summarised below. In addition, different connectivity scenarios have different impacts on the existing highway network (in terms of operation and mitigation) as well as affecting the feasibility and delivery of future public transport connections. However, it is expected that new/improved public transport services will need to be in place from the early part of occupation of the site (and any interim public transport services) to ensure modal choice is available to residents from the start and to encourage its use and embed behavioural patterns. These service(s) could potentially make use of any future MRT infrastructure provision.

Wider Context for Design Decisions

- 6.67 Any preference expressed in the SPD in terms of the form and function of the highway infrastructure through the site may have consequences (for good or ill) for (i) the delivery of effective public transport priority in the area and (ii) the management of capacity and/or congestion on the A421 (through dualling, Park & Ride or vehicular restraint to favour public transport).
- 6.68 In respect of access and connectivity, the site cannot reasonably be considered in isolation because a number of the decisions to be made in the SPD (and delivered through the OPA) will impact upon emerging wider strategic and cross boundary transport strategies currently being considered by MKCC and BC and will impact on the design/location/function of transport infrastructure for this part of SW MK and NE Bucks.
- 6.69 Most notably, these are:
- (a) the future of the A421 as an integral part of the Strategic Route Network now the O2C Expressway is no longer a government objective (a joint MKC/Bucks A421 study is underway);
 - (b) a Mass Rapid Transit system for MK which is being progressed as part of the MK strategy to prioritise a move to sustainable transport as a key spatial driver for the design of new growth as set out in MK's Strategy for 2050 and the emerging New City Plan;
 - (c) the potential for a P&R within NE Bucks to support MRT/PT in the wider Bucks / MK / Bletchley area; and
 - (d) any consequent MKC/Bucks policy decisions around the approach to meeting and/or suppressing future highway capacity requirements to support investment in MRT / PT and deliver meaningful mode shift across the area.
- 6.70 Engagement during 2022 has revealed that the authorities' transport strategies - and any resultant future growth decisions - are unlikely to be resolved/endorsed as a basis for policy or development management decisions within the original time period of the SPD preparation.
- 6.71 In this case, if local authorities and stakeholders cannot move quickly to an agreed 'in principle' position, then those elements of connectivity to be safeguarded pending further work on the Councils' transport strategies, joint/aligned modelling, Local Plan Reviews or through negotiation on OPA(s) should be included in the SPD, and any implications or uncertainties which might arise as a consequence identified.
- 6.72 Taking the above into account, the SPD preparation should:
- i. support any wider agreed ambitions about a move to more sustainable travel;

- ii. not prejudice the effective progression and successful delivery of Mass Rapid Transport within MK and if appropriate, its extension beyond the current MK boundary (a current policy requirement of MKCC);
 - iii. not prejudice decisions about the future capacity, role and function of the A421 (including the potential for Park & Ride provision linked to the MK city road system) and pending the outcome of the A421 study);
 - iv. not prejudice or work against associated policy decisions on the degree to which future highway capacity is to be met or suppressed (the strategy for which is as yet undecided by either authority).
- 6.73 Any decision to adopt the SPD as supplementary guidance (and any subsequent outline application) can then be taken in the full understanding of the implications for future sustainable transport, access and connectivity, and enabling future mitigation of traffic impact to be realised effectively through the safeguarding of land and connections.
- 6.74 As part of background masterplanning and transport analysis, a number of potential access and connectivity scenarios have been explored for the Site, as summarised below:

Anticipating Future Development

- 6.75 As mentioned above, AVA Design SPD Principle (DES16) supports design approaches which consider and anticipate future development. Given its location adjacent to the settlement of Milton Keynes, and in the context of the need to boost housing supply in general in locations which can secure appropriate transport and infrastructure connectivity, it is important that development at Shenley Park is designed in cognisance of potential future growth options (whether that be development and/or transport connections). Taking a long term view and strategic approach to design 'futureproofs' this flexibility to accommodate future growth or infrastructure options, ensures options are not unnecessarily closed off or precluded and enables positive responses to emerging, changing and future policies as necessary. Annex 9 illustrates how the emerging development framework for Shenley Park would not prejudice long term sustainable growth in the future, including green and grey infrastructure ambitions.

Role, Function and Capacity of the A421

- 6.76 The A421 forms a key arterial route between north-east Buckinghamshire, MK and the M1 (and further east). Following the demise of the Oxford-to-Cambridge (O2C) Expressway (which would have likely delivered an offline strategic alternative to the A421 between M1 / M40 and relieved pressure on the existing A421), there are a number of opportune options for the future role and function of the A421. These options will be considered

further as part of an A421 Study, with commissioning by MKCC and BC⁶ aiming to take place in 2023/24.

6.77 In the interim, and with specific relevance to the Shenley Park SPD, the following have been considered:

- Salden Chase has recently secured an outline planning permission for c. 1,850 homes to the immediate south of the A421, accessed via the B4034 off Tattenhoe Roundabout junction and via Whaddon Road off the Bottledump Roundabout junction. This OPA did not have an SPD (and was not at the time of submission an allocated site in the Local Plan), so it was not shaped by wider transport strategy discussions around the A421, but it does safeguard a future grid corridor connection from the A421 to the East-West Rail line, and thereby safeguards future connectivity options beyond the development site ;
- A southern bypass for Bletchley has long been a strategic connectivity aspiration for the area. Following the demise of the O2C Expressway, the potential for the delivery of the Bletchley Southern Bypass (connecting A4140 with the A421) has re-emerged as a local stakeholder ambition. Although the Bypass is not enshrined in current policy, it is one of the strategic transport items anticipated to be explored through the A421 Study, and/or the reviews of Plan:MK and also potentially the next Buckinghamshire Plan. Depending on its routing, design and connections, this may relieve pressure on the A421 or draw more traffic onto it and into the northeast Buckinghamshire area.

6.78 Both the BC and MKCC strategic traffic models are undergoing update and are not at present available for further high level testing of the impacts of any interventions considered either in adopted Policy or the SPD.

Cumulative Transport Impact and Committed Development

6.79 It is understood that the Transport Assessment submitted in evidence for the Salden Chase Appeal modelled a 35% reduction in the number of trips on the A421 as a result of diversion through the planned Shenley Park development, stating that *"a significantly higher diversion rate would be more realistic to conclude that the business case for provision of a new grid road would be acceptable"*. This 35% was assumed to be redirected through a grid corridor from the A421 to the V1/H6 junction (Snelshall Street / Childs Way) and then onto the wider grid network, which it was anticipated in the Transport Assessment would need to be enhanced/upgraded as part of agreed highway mitigation measures for Shenley Park determined through planning applications.

⁶ Scope and Programme of the A421 Study is yet to be confirmed.

- 6.80 It is anticipated that the modelling undertaken as part of planning applications for Shenley Park will be expected to address any issues of wider highway impact arising from the combination of committed development and that proposed at Shenley Park. Rather than being a determinant of highway design, modelling will test proposed highway and sustainable transport connectivity solutions proposed by the applicant, taking into account the placemaking design principles set out in the SPD and then identify any residual highway impacts to be mitigated.

Dualling of A421

- 6.81 Policy WHA001 criteria o states; *"More detailed traffic modelling will be required to inform on the extent and design of off site highway works and to determine whether the section of A421 between the Bottledump roundabout and the site access roundabout needs to be dualled"*. The modelling work needed to determine what and when dualling may be required will need to be undertaken by applicants as part of the transport assessment for outline planning applications (OPA) and agreed with both MKCC and BC as highway authorities.

- 6.82 The site promoters Crest Nicholson have advised in workshops that the preliminary modelling undertaken to inform OPA preparation suggests that dualling is not required as a result of development traffic impact. However, modelling outputs have not yet been tested with the highway authorities and in the absence of agreed modelling, the SPD will need to ensure that the design of development and infrastructure does not preclude the dualling of the A421. The A421 study would also seek to understand all possible options for maximising the road capacity vs dualling or safeguarding for future consideration. It may be determined later through modelling that dualling is required as part of this or any future development, and land within the site alongside the northern boundary of the existing A421 would need to be safeguarded for dualling.

Milton Keynes Mass Rapid Transit

- 6.83 MKCC is currently undertaking a business case for the MK Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system referenced in Policy WHA001 criteria p. The scope and outcome of this work may also impact on decisions on:
- whether traffic levels coming into MK on the A421 need to be managed;
 - the role of the A421 in accommodating any infrastructure relating to MRT; and
 - how traffic from Shenley Park development is expected/desired to connect to the MK network.
- 6.84 Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that a programme of managed vehicular traffic restraints coupled with Public Transport (PT) priority infrastructure may be needed to support a commercially-viable shift to PT for residential areas on the outskirts of Milton Keynes, including Shenley Park.

- 6.85 In support of the MRT and a shift to more sustainable travel, and in line with Plan:MK Policy SD15, MKCC expressed a desire to explore the potential for a Park-and-Ride (P&R) facility to the southwest of MK which, if it is to be effective, should look to take traffic off the A421 onto PT priority routes and into the city westward of the current 'bottleneck' west of the Bottledump roundabout. This may also affect the role/location/design of any connection through the Shenley Park site.
- 6.86 In the absence of an agreed/definitive P&R location/site, the SPD will need to ensure that the design of development and infrastructure does not preclude the ability to connect a future P&R route/services into the site. A safeguarded link within the southwest of the Site to its western boundary should be incorporated into the development framework to facilitate a future connection with an A421 P&R west of the Site.

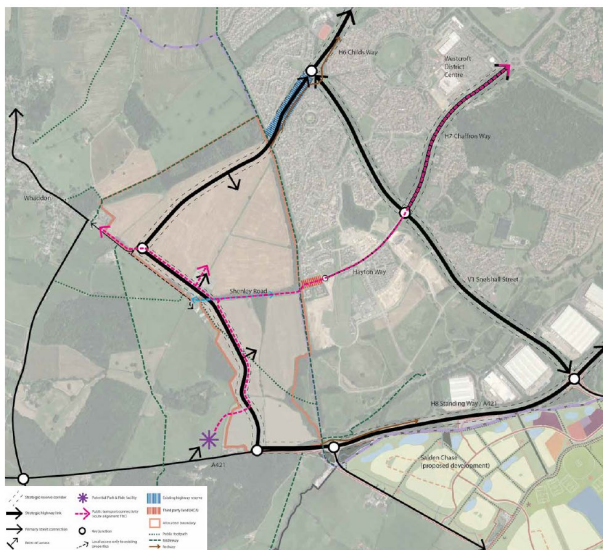
The form, function and character of the 'Link Road' through Shenley Park

- 6.87 No detail is provided in VALP Policy WHA001 on the desired capacity, function or design of the 'Link Road' connection required between the A421 and the H6 and/or H7 grid corridors. Plan:MK Policy SD15 requires that new developments adjacent to MK are well-integrated with, and accessible from, MK and reflect the principles that have shaped the existing city, especially the "*grid road system, redways and the linear parks and strategic, integrated flood management*".
- 6.88 As aforementioned, the alignment, function and design of the Link Road is a critical element of the spatial framework for development to be fixed through the SPD, and will influence other development, design and placemaking principles.
- 6.89 There are a number of possible design responses in respect of connectivity around and through the Site, that reflect different approaches to:
- Whether the A421 is dualled now, safeguarded for later, or its capacity deliberately restrained (which will be determined following more detailed traffic modelling and the outcome of the A421 study);
 - Whether a P&R can be supported, safeguarded and/or implemented in this location (on land outside the site but related to it);
 - Whether a Grid Road connection from A421 around/through the site to H6 is required now or land safeguarded for future provision;
 - Whether a future grid extension between H6 and the A421 via a route further west is safeguarded;
 - Whether local access to the development is orientated around its margins or runs through the development;
 - Whether Shenley Road is downgraded, stopped off to private vehicles, or becomes priority PT infrastructure (connection to H7 for PT/Redway/peds only);

- Whether the connectivity strategy for the site determines that more than one connection is required to mitigate significant impacts on the wider highway network and how this is balanced with placemaking and active travel priorities.

6.90 In order to articulate the potential design responses to effective connectivity solutions and analyse any consequential effects on development forms and layout, as part of the design evolution a series of potential connectivity scenarios were prepared to aid discussions.

6.91 The characteristics of these scenarios are set out below, but are provided in full in **Annex 5: Connectivity Scenarios – Emerging Thinking**.

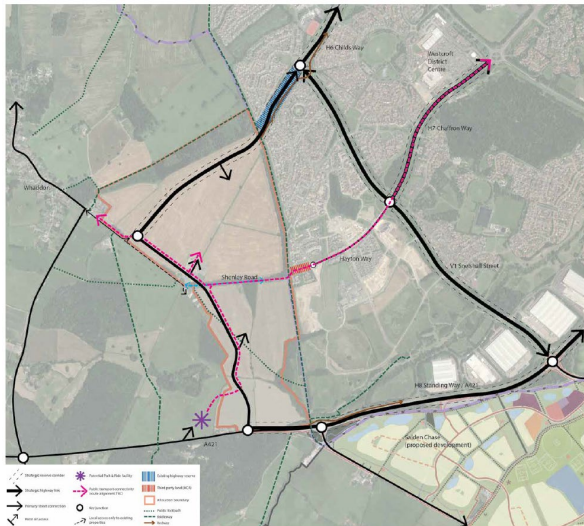


Connectivity Scenario 1:

Requirement to provide a full grid connection between the A421 and H6 grid corridor

'FULL GRID CONNECTION'

- Ability to accommodate A421 improvements west of Bottledump roundabout
- Conversion of H6 to grid standard east of site to Whitney Roundabout H6/V1
- H6 grid road extension around periphery of site linking H6 to A421 (60m reserve, 60mph, high capacity, grade separated crossings)
- Access into development areas via limited no. of T junctions (as per adjacent grid squares)
- PT priority along grid road and/or through site via downgraded Shenley Road to H7
- P&R/PT link into site safeguarded/facilitated

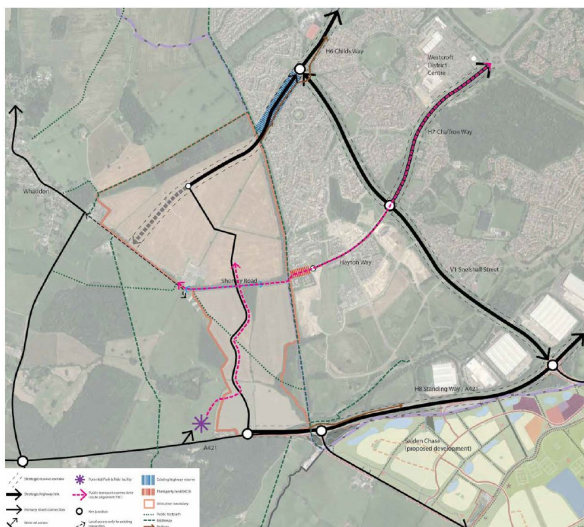


Connectivity Scenario 2:

Requirement to provide a full grid connection between H6 and Shenley Road with direct link to A421 at outer edge of site

'GRID & OUTER LINK'

- Ability to accommodate A421 improvements west of Bottledump roundabout
- Conversion of H6 to grid standard east of site to Whitney Roundabout H6/V1
- H6 grid road extension along northern extent of the site (60m reserve, 60mph, high capacity)
- North-south peripheral link outer ring road (cf. NW Bicester), 40m corridor width, at-grade crossings/light controlled junctions
- Access into site via limited no. of T junctions (as per adjacent grid squares)
- PT priority along grid road and/or through site via downgraded Shenley Road to H7
- P&R/PT link into site safeguarded/facilitated



Connectivity Scenario 3:

Requirement to provide a partial grid connection from H6 to northern

- Ability to accommodate A421 improvements west of Bottledump roundabout
- H6 corridor extended west into site, with safeguarded strategic reserve corridor west of junction with internal primary street (flexibility)

The map illustrates the proposed rail corridor from Woking to Guildford. The route is shown as a thick black line, with various colored lines (blue, orange, green, purple) indicating different types of land use or planning boundaries. Key features include the Woking Station, Wokingham Station, and Guildford Station. The route is marked with a thick black line, and various colored lines (blue, orange, green, purple) indicate different types of land use or planning boundaries. A legend in the bottom left corner explains the symbols used on the map.

[illegible]

Connectivity Scenario 5: No requirement to provide vehicular connection between A421 and H6/H7 other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to accommodate A421 improvements west of Bottledump roundabout • No grid extension; continuation of primary street connection from H6 Whitney Roundabout west into site to serve development north of Shenley Road.
---	--

than for PT 'SEVERED INNER STREET'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal primary street connection from A421 to serve development south of Shenley Road • PT priority along primary street and via downgraded Shenley Road to H7 • P&R/PT link into and through site prioritised and delivered
---------------------------------------	--

6.92 All the above connectivity scenarios allow a consistent design response to the following key structuring elements:

- MK Boundary Walk as green corridor along the site's eastern edge;
- Retention of Briary Plantation and other existing blocks of woodland within the site;
- Creation of a new defensible edge to MK along the western site boundary;
- Extension of the Tattenhoe Valley linear park along the route of the water course;
- Provision of a landscape offset to Whaddon village.

6.93 All but Connectivity Scenario 5 enable a vehicular connection to be made through the site.

Towards a Consensus?

6.94 Following the workshops, Scenario 5 was discounted as officers agreed that criteria p of WHA001 refers to a 'link road' connection through the Site and that this should be interpreted as requiring a vehicular connection through the Site for general traffic.

6.95 Different groups prefer different connectivity design solutions based on local priorities and policy preferences.

6.96 Connectivity Scenarios 2 and 3 provide the 'best fit' design response which balances effective connectivity within and through the site in line with the policy requirements of BC and MKCC whilst also achieving landscape-led design and infrastructure and creating a well-designed place.

6.97 Scenarios 2 and 3 also include the ability to 'anticipate future development' in terms of green infrastructure, connectivity and reducing the reliance on the private car (DES15) through support for the policy objectives of new P&R and MRT infrastructure to serve existing and new development over the plan periods to 2030 and beyond.

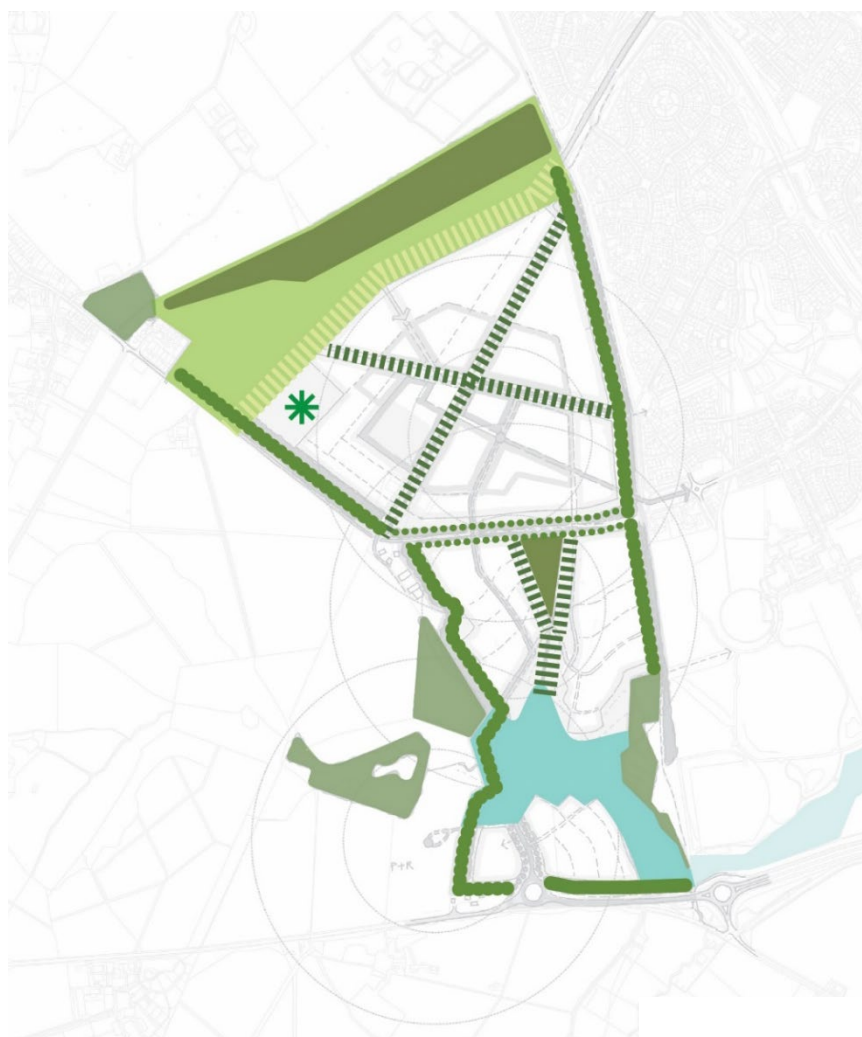
6.98 Each of these Scenarios can accommodate connectivity with Whaddon village (see pages 8 and 9 of Annex 5), but a preferred connectivity solution will depend on the degree of vehicular connectivity and interrelationship sought by new and existing residents.

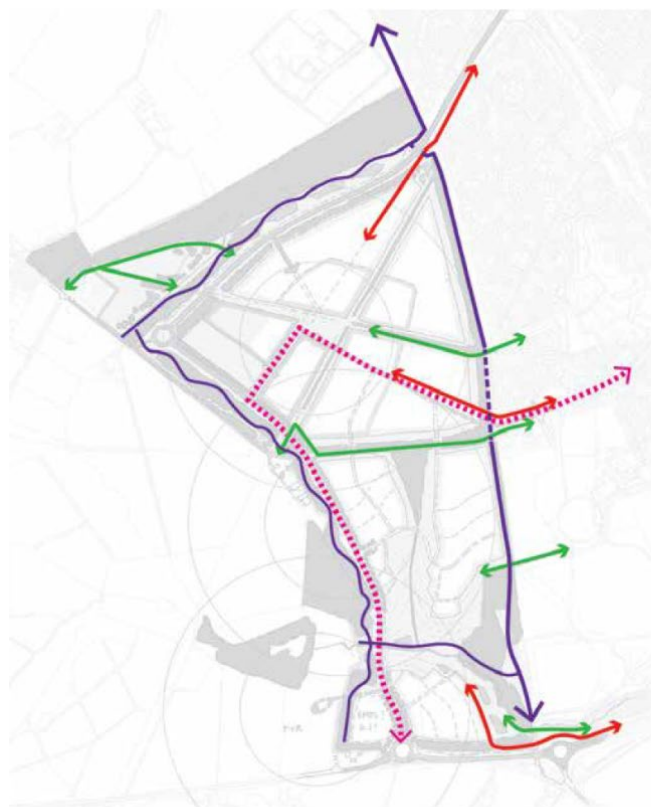
6.99 Specifically in response of prioritising MRT – potentially the greatest benefit that Shenley Park can unlock for a meaningful shift to more sustainable behaviours for communities in this area – Scenarios 2 and 3:

- Support wider agreed modal shift ambitions;
- Do not prejudice the effective progression and successful delivery of MRT within MK and/or its extension beyond the current MK boundary;
- Do not prejudice decisions about the future capacity, role and function of the A421 (including P&R); and
- Do not prejudice or work against associated policy decisions on the degree to which future highway capacity is to be met or suppressed.

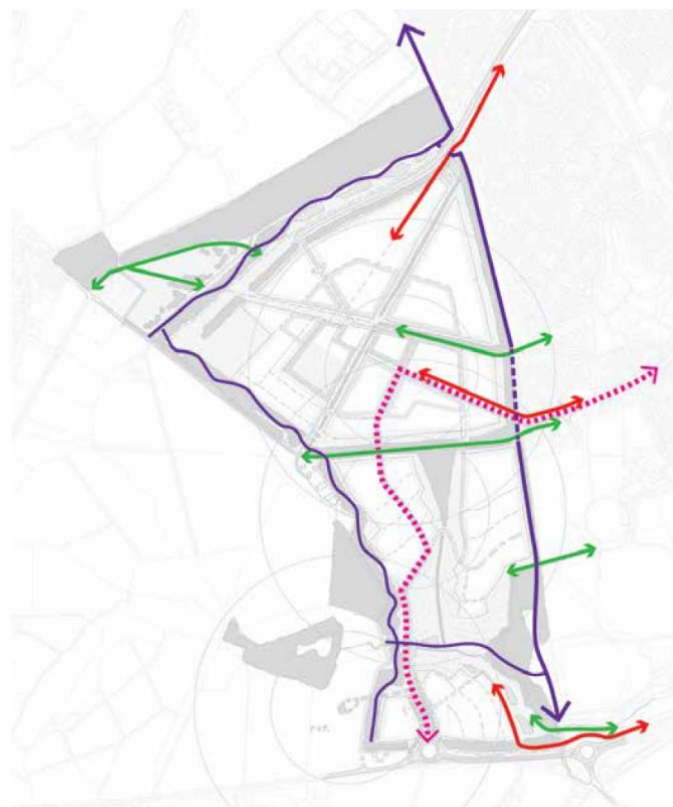
6.100 Both scenarios 2 and 3 were explored as part of baseline masterplanning activity set out below (a) to inform emerging development framework considerations, and (b) to 'capacity test' the site for the quantum of development envisaged in WHA001 (see Section 7.0).

6.101 The diagrams overleaf illustrate how the key development framework principles critical to achieving good placemaking and a sustainable neighbourhood can be achieved regardless of which connectivity scenario is taken forward into the SPD.

Emerging Development Framework Principles*Figure 3(a) Proposed Green Infrastructure Framework**Figure 3(b) Proposed Framework for Public Transport and Active Modes*



OUTER LINK SCENARIO

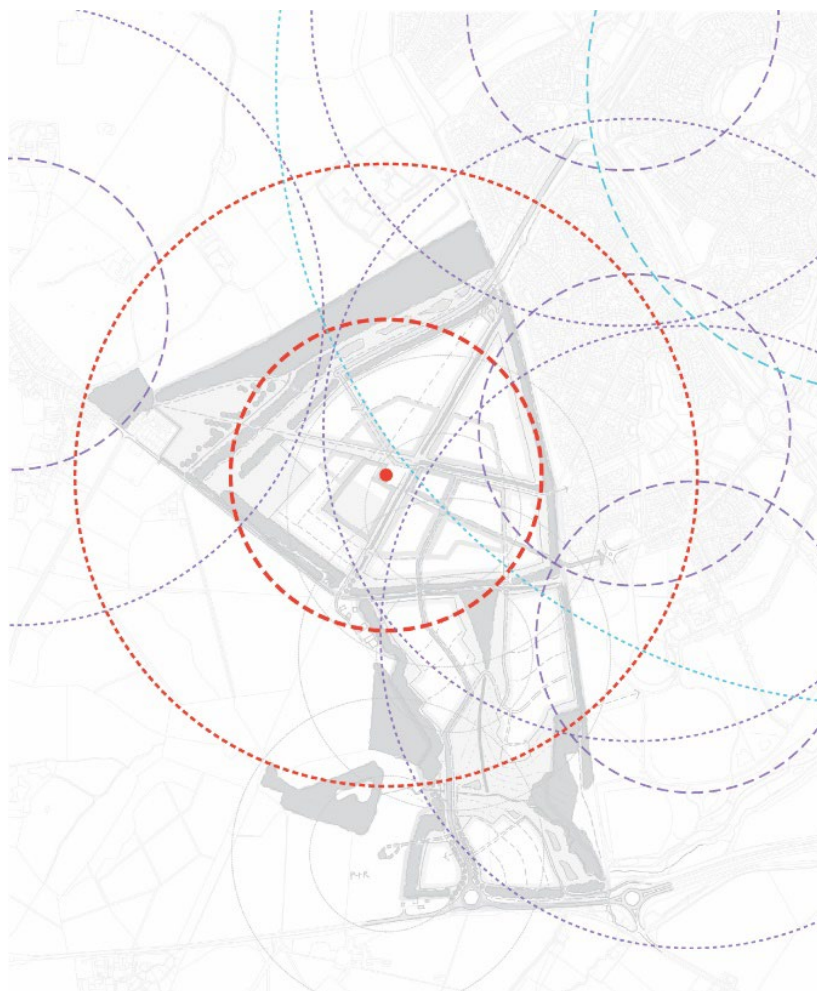


INNER STREET SCENARIO

Note: the principles of connectivity for public transport and active modes are the same under each scenario; the difference relates to the routing of the priority public transport link through the site reflecting each Link Road layout.

- Public transport
- Redway connectivity
- Active travel connectivity
- Existing MK Boundary Walk (off road)
- Existing MK Boundary Walk (on road)
- Recreational routes / bridleway network

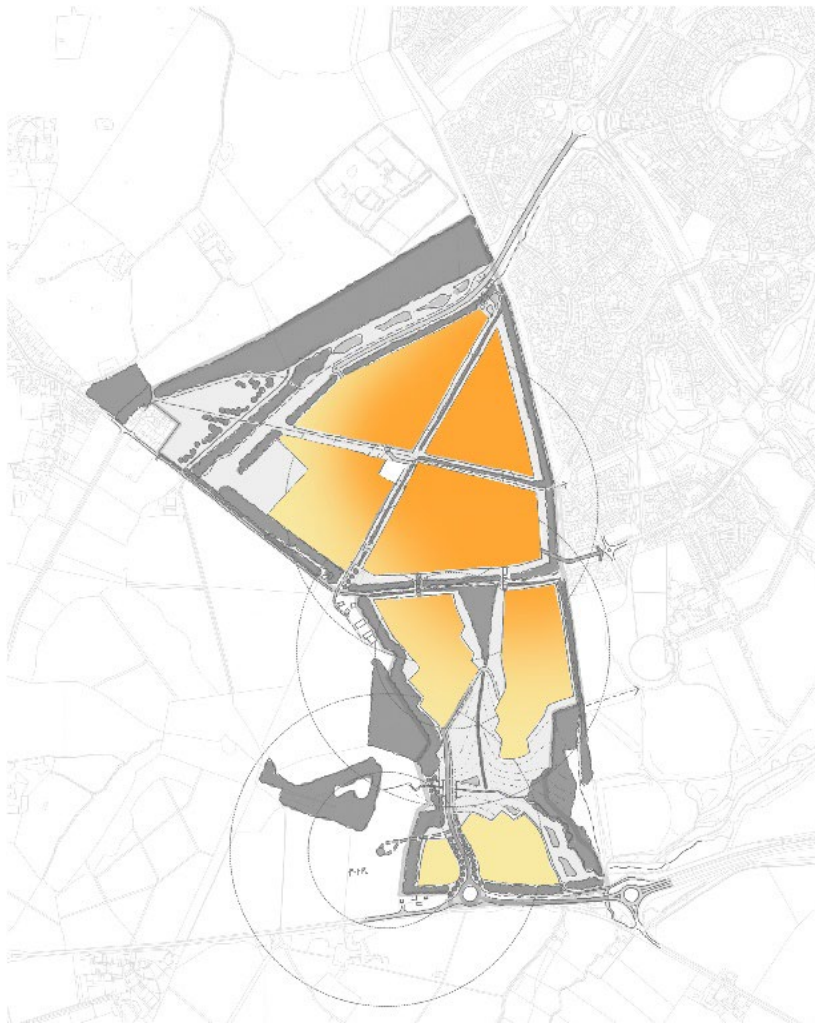
Figure 3 (c) Walkable Catchments (Local/District Centres)



Note: A location for the mixed use local centre centrally within the northern neighbourhood of Shenley Park optimises the residential walkable catchment relative to both the Site and other local facilities in the adjacent village/residential areas.

KEY

- Shenley Park local centre 400m walking isochrone
- Shenley Park local centre 800m walking isochrone
- Surrounding local centre 400m walking isochrone
- Surrounding local centre 400m walking isochrone
- Westcroft district centre 800m walking isochrone
- Westcroft district centre 1600m walking isochrone

Figure 3(d) Proposed Intensity of Activity/Residential Density**KEY:**

Darker Orange = higher intensity of activity (neighbourhood centre/mixed use) and higher density development forms reflecting proximity to MK edge and adjacent development character

to

Yellow = lower intensity: rural edge, landscape interface

Anticipating Future Development: Longer Term Futureproofing Considerations

- 6.102 As noted earlier, Draft *AVA Design Guide* Principle DES16 supports design approaches which consider and anticipate future development.
- 6.103 At Shenley Park, there are a number of matters where considering a wider design context for the site will enable a better design and placemaking outcome not only for the Site but for the adjacent communities – most notably in respect of green and grey infrastructure considerations (see paras 6.37 to 6.42, 6.75 to **Error! Reference source not found.** above).
- 6.104 Whilst the SPD cannot include specific requirements for land outside the Shenley Park allocation, it is appropriate to consider whether any design decisions made for Shenley Park in the SPD and OPAs might unreasonably prejudice or act counter to longer term design and delivery objectives.
- 6.105 Annex 9 illustrates the longer term futureproofing elements which should be considered and discussed in the progression of design solutions and placemaking opportunities for Shenley Park.

7.0 DEVELOPMENT EXTENT, LAND USES AND OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Overall Development Extent

- 7.1 The application of key structuring elements generates an outline framework for the split of developable land and green infrastructure.
- 7.2 Section 6 shows how key elements can come together effectively to create a landscape-led design regardless of the choice around connectivity through the site.
- 7.3 Taken together with design and placemaking references set out earlier in this Report, the Site is capable of creating a legible and locally-distinctive place, sitting appropriately within its context. However, in confirming design principles and drawing together a development framework for the SPD, there is also a need to 'sense check' the design approach against the requirement to deliver the land uses and development quantum set out in policy.
- 7.4 Set out below is an outline assessment of indicative development extent, using a number of high level assumptions to generate a 'developable area' within the site.
- 7.5 This has been undertaken for the inner and outer connectivity scenarios set out in Section 6; the reason being that the design of the highway infrastructure to be provided in each scenario will generate a different requirement in terms of land take and to further understand implications of taking forward a preferred connectivity scenario into the SPD.



OUTER LINK SCENARIO

INNER STREET SCENARIO

Figure 3(e): Indicative Development Extent – Development Parcels

- 7.6 On the basis of the extent of developable area shown above, and assuming average densities across the site of between 30dph and 40dph, the quantum of built development required in WHA001 can comfortably be accommodated within the Site. The SPD will offer additional guidance on residential densities and housing typologies. Further design discussions, coupled with detailed technical assessment and consultation as part of outline planning application preparation, will determine the precise quantum of residential development which generates a well-designed place, the impacts of which can be appropriately mitigated.
- 7.7 Shenley Park will need to deliver a suitable mix of types and tenures in accordance with the latest evidence available. At the time of writing, this is the Buckinghamshire *Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment* (HEDNA) (December 2016) and the HEDNA *Addendum* (September 2017). These specify a calculated need for 15,200 market dwellings and 4,200 affordable dwellings in the Aylesbury Vale area, with an affordable housing tenure split of 83% affordable rent and 17% intermediate tenures.
- 7.8 Housing at Shenley Park will vary in density to respond to the Site's characteristics, to aid placemaking and support walkable neighbourhoods, and achieve appropriate design responses to the 'shared edges', for example alongside the A421, linear park, Boundary Walk and the Whaddon edge. The dwellings' layout, appearance and scale must also accord with the principles set out in the emerging Aylesbury Vale Design SPD.

Land Use

Local Centre, Primary School, Care Home

- 7.9 Policy WHA001 stipulates the delivery of a local centre (including community hall) and a contribution to a healthcare facility (either on-site or direct funding). The policy also makes provision for a 110-bed care home, a 2FE primary school and an associated nursery within the Site which are best situated in close proximity to this Local Centre.
- 7.10 It is prudent to recognise that several local and district centres already exist within accessible distances from the Site and therefore, the Shenley Park Local Centre will only be of a scale that provides sufficient goods, facilities and services to meet residents' day-to-day needs⁷ without creating competition with existing centres. This provision also serves to implement the '15-Minute Neighbourhood' principles to reduce the need to drive.
- 7.11 As part of the design evolution a series of precedent studies have been undertaken (see Annex 6: *Local Centres, Primary Schools & Care Homes*, (November 2022) which provides an overview study of local / district centres (with integrated schools) and care homes for developments of similar scale and type to Shenley Park in the local context, with the

⁷ Including Whaddon

services they provide. Annex 6 includes some best practice examples as design references for each of the main local centre components. The common thread underlying their success is their scale, public realm quality, accessibility, mix of uses and co-location of services.

- 7.12 These examples, comparable to Shenley Park in terms of their size and proximity to existing centres, also present good examples of a coordinated, contemporary palette of materials in a high-quality landscaped public realm setting.
- 7.13 The optimal arrangements of uses to generate well-designed local centre facilities can be characterised by:
- i. a compact two- to three-storey local centre with a foodstore and ground-floor mixed uses (upper floor residences)
 - ii. A location that benefits from high footfall from other non-residential uses (such as the educational and care home facilities at Shenley Park).
 - iii. Enclosures and frontage onto a multifunctional public realm (particularly when addressing shared parking needs through flexible hardstanding areas designed as attractive places within which parking could occur at different times of the day according to uses it serves, but for which parking is not the primary design driver).
- 7.14 VALP Policy H6b allocates 1ha of land for the 110 bed care home required at Shenley Park. Depending on the layout of development – and particularly if well-located relative to other local centre uses – our experience suggests that a smaller site is more than capable of accommodating a well-designed facility of the size required. Design drivers should determine the most appropriate site and scale of land take required.
- 7.15 Flexibility in the masterplanning of the local centre means that provision can be made on site for primary health care facilities if required. Further discussions with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Boards would be required at the time of any application to confirm if this is required or the extent of off-site contribution required. Similarly, discussions will need to take place with Bucks and Milton Keynes Health Trust to secure appropriate and proportionate offsite contributions to reflect the reality that the population are likely to use a mixture of health care facilities in both areas. It is anticipated that offsite contributions will be secured (at timing trigger points to be agreed) for secondary school provision.

Formal Open Space

- 7.16 While policy WHA001 does not specify the level of provision of on-site formal open space and/or sports facilities, the VALP requires provision by virtue of the scale of the new development.

7.17 Policy I1 requires the provision of publicly-accessible green infrastructure for all new major housing developments, in line with the ANGSt standard (VALP Appendix C) unless otherwise justifiable. Formal outdoor sports areas, play areas, and allotments all serve a specific purpose and may be located within or outside ANGSt but, to ensure financial sustainability, such facilities should be located on land that is *additional* to the ANGSt and be complementary to it.

7.18 Therefore, the open space and sports facilities requirements at Shenley Park are derived from the following:

- VALP Appendix C – the standards for *Accessible Natural Green Space* (ANGSt)
- VALP Appendix D – the Standards for *Sports and Recreation*
- AVDLP *Ready Reckoner* (2005) Update (2022)
- Fields in Trust (FiT) *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2017)⁸

7.19 In order to inform overall development capacity and the optimum arrangement of built and open land within the site, set out below is a calculation of the assumed requirements for open space and community/sports facilities based on the above standards and an assumed population growth of 2,782 – 4,142. This figure is based on a minimum and maximum assumed number of new homes (at average densities of between 30 and 40 dph) with an average household size of 2.46⁹. This also accounts for the *Ready Reckoner's* recommendation of on-/off-site provision.

Table 4 - Calculated Need for Open Space and Community/Sports Facilities

Facility	No. per 1,000 population	Max. Travel Time/Distance	Calculated Need	On-Site (✓) / Off-Site (+)	Comments
Major Open Space	1.2 ha	-	3.3 – 5.0 ha	✓	These will also need to comply with the ANGSt requirements as at VALP Appendix C.
Incidental Open Space	1.4 ha	-	3.9 – 5.8 ha	✓	
LEAP/NEAP	0.25 ha	100-1,000m	0.7 – 1.0 ha	✓	-
MUGA	0.30 ha	700m	0.8 – 1.2 ha	✓	-
Badminton Courts (Sports Hall)	0.28	20 mins	0.8 – 1.2 ha	[+/-]	Shenley Leisure Centre is less than a 20-mins drive away and includes a sports hall. The calculated need is therefore [met]. [To be provided off-site].
Swimming Pool	0.2 lanes	20 mins	0.6 – 0.8 lanes	+	Woughton and Bletchley Leisure Centres are within a 20-mins drive, so the calculated need is [met].
Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP)	0.03	6 miles	0.1	-	Tattenhoe Astrotrurf pitches are less than 6 miles away so there is no need to provide AGP at Shenley Park.

⁸ This Guidance is referred to in VALP Appendix C with respect to quantifying the need for equipped play areas.

⁹ HEDNA Addendum (September 2017)

					Will not be provided.
Grass Playing Pitches*	0.73	15 mins	2.0 – 3.0	✓	[3 pitches] to be provided on-site.
Cricket	0.28 wickets	15 mins	0.8 – 1.2 wickets	+	Furzton Cricket Ground is less than 15-mins drive away. The calculated need of 1 wicket is better secured through off-site contributions although an informal cricket pitch could be provided as part of the Whaddon buffer.
Outdoor Tennis (floodlit)	0.7 courts	10 mins	1.9 – 2.9 courts	✓	[3 pitches] to be provided on-site.
Community Centre	1 centre per 5,300 population	1 mile	0.5 – 0.8 centres	✓	A number of Local/District Centres are available less than a mile away but Policy WHA001 requires the provision of a Local Centre on-site.

Source: FIT Guidance (2017), VALP Appendices C and D (2021) and AVDLP Ready Reckoner (2005) Update (2022)

* adult equivalent pitches

- 7.20 Pitches should be built to the standards described under the relevant Sport England Guidance. There is potential to deliver co-located pitches for dual or shared educational / community use, secured through the provisions of a Community Use Agreement.

South-western Parcel and Connectivity

- 7.21 Emerging masterplanning for the Site suggests that due to topographical constraints and highway design requirements, the optimal location for access into the Site off the A421 would result in a small parcel of land lying west of the point of access. Because of its location to the west of the link road, initial masterplanning had identified the opportunity for non-residential land uses on this parcel as an alternative to residential development, albeit that acceptability of any non-residential use would depend on local/commercial demand, assessment against policy, and consideration of the relationship of this parcel with the landscaped edge and wider residential neighbourhoods at Shenley Park.
- 7.22 Regardless of the preferred connectivity scenario governing the nature of the link road, ensuring effective connectivity of the southwestern parcel with the remainder of the southern residential neighbourhood will be critical to its acceptability in design, landscape and placemaking terms. This point merits further consideration in the SPD and in the context of planning applications.

8.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 The increasing recognition of the climate emergency means that the government is now committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Buckinghamshire Council has also made a commitment to support the government in its ambition and which includes an aspiration to deliver sustainable development and a resilient future which needs to be embedded in development proposals.
- 8.2 The evolution of masterplanning for the Site has embedded sustainability intrinsically to design considerations, particularly in respect of landscape-led design, priority for active and sustainable travel, scale of mixed uses to serve day to day needs on site, and walkable catchments ensuring ease of access to these key facilities. Hence, the thematic topics outlined in this Section and measures are proposed to further Shenley Park's sustainability ambitions. Below, the approach to sustainability is expanded on by its economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 8.3 Crest Nicholson, as applicant and master developer, will need to prepare and submit the requisite technical assessments, as listed in VALP policy WHA001(s-x), adhering to the relevant guidance (e.g. Buckinghamshire Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy) and continue the consideration of sustainability throughout the design process.

Economic

- 8.4 The delivery of at least 1,150 dwellings on this allocated site and in a sustainable location on the edge of Milton Keynes will support sustainable growth. It will allow for significant local employment opportunities in the short-term (pre- and during construction) and steady streams of revenue to the local economy in the long-term (derived primarily from Shenley Square's Local Centre and Care Home).
- 8.5 The provision of at least 1,150 dwellings will provide much needed housing to meet and accommodate new household formation and population growth. The occupants of the new development will also inject expenditure into the local economy.
- 8.6 The use of sustainable materials to reduce the impact on the environment will also be considered as well as how to minimise construction waste, reuse and recycle. The use of locally sourced materials, reinforcing local character and reducing transport related impacts would also be appropriate in accordance with DES48.

Social

- 8.7 The SPD provides for a mixed-use development which includes a strong local centre to serve the new community, offering a high degree of self-containment within the site for day to day activity, minimising the need for wider travel and supporting sustainable living. The location of the local centre centrally within the Site means that it will be easily accessible for new occupiers and be served by a street layout which allows for easy

pedestrian and cycle connections, prioritising these over the private car. The development of a safe and accessible development and high quality public open space with extensive green infrastructure, sports provision and allotments will enable and support healthy lifestyles and contribute positively to wellbeing needs.

- 8.8 For access to wider facilities and services in nearby settlements, the site will also be readily accessible by and offer travel by various modes of transport – which may include contributions to sustainable transport initiatives including P&R and off-site public transport priority measures, facilitating a genuine choice of transport modes. This approach will support and encourage modal shift and can also help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.

Environmental

- 8.9 The emerging development framework integrates a number of environmental objectives into the spatial framework for the site, with an emphasis on extending and strengthening existing green infrastructure and biodiversity networks at the strategic, local and micro scale.
- 8.10 The design of the Site will be expected to reflect the landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise construction impacts, energy consumption and overheating and maximise the opportunity to benefit from the use of renewable technology and to reduce greenhouse gases as the design develops. This includes:
- Developing a positive strategy for energy from renewable sources;
 - Retention of, and strengthening of hedgerows through and around the site;
 - Boundary Walk enhancement for increased use;
 - Shenley Road environment/treatment;
 - Green Buffer opportunities including productive landscapes;
 - Valley Park Extension (blue and green, SuDs and flood attenuation);
 - Woodland enhancement and protection/offset;
 - Design of new Open Space and school playing fields for biodiversity;
 - Delivery of 10% biodiversity net gain;
 - Potential for green roofs or walls to improve the sustainability of buildings through managing runoff and increasing biodiversity;
 - Long term management and stewardship arrangements considered at the outset, and provision made for funding/endowment.
- 8.11 The applicant will also need to demonstrate compliance with the environmental provisions established in the *joint Biodiversity Action Plan to 2030* and the Biodiversity SPDs of both Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes (in respect of any synergies with the biodiversity strategy for the adjacent linear park and SUDs networks into which Shenley Park functionally connects).

9.0 CONCLUSIONS OF BASELINE DESIGN ANALYSIS WORK

- 9.1 The culmination of the design analysis, considerations and workshops with stakeholders set out in **Section 6.0** has resulted in the consideration of two iterations of the emerging draft development framework in **Section 7.0**, reflecting the differing design response to connectivity (scenarios for inner or outer link) through the site depending on the extent to which accommodation of an element of strategic as well as local connectivity is to be supported to meet policy requirements of both the authorities who will be responsible for the consenting of development and access proposals at Shenley Park.
- 9.2 Whilst the two scenarios (inner or outer link) generate a varied design response to the layout of development and land use primarily in the northern part of the Site – and may have an impact on overall development capacity depending on the extent to which densities can be flexed to mitigate any reduction in overall developable areas – both iterations share consistent **overarching design elements**, including:

Landscaped Edges and Connections

- Creation of a well-designed defensible edge to the urban area along the Site's western boundary¹⁰;
- Enhanced treatment and use of the MK Boundary Walk green corridor along the Site's eastern edge;
- Retention of all existing mature vegetation and green infrastructure in situ with the exception of the southern-most hedge (running north-south perpendicular to A421) which is suggested will require removal due to the resultant inefficiencies in land use presented by its retention;
- Extension of the Tattenhoe Valley linear park through the southern part of the Site along the route of the watercourse;
- Provision of a landscape offset / buffer to Whaddon village, to be supplemented by the siting of the sports pitches and/or primary school playing fields to the south of the buffer (generating an open character in the northwest part of the site to contribute to the sense of separation between Shenley Park and Whaddon);

¹⁰ Currently, there is a degree of uncertainty around the scale/extent of the landscaped western edge to the site required by the Council, and the degree to which this forms part of a strategic green infrastructure framework for the edge of the urban area more widely. Whilst this has implications for the overall development capacity (in terms of drawing back the western boundary of built development from the allocation edge), the design principles for the approach and integration of landscape within the development framework remain relevant.

- Location of the point of connection with the A421 at the southern extent of the Site positioned to work with the existing landform; Retention of a landscaped offset from the A421 corridor along the southern boundary of the site sufficient to safeguard land for dualling of the A421 as part of the development or thereafter whilst retaining a robust landscaped setting for development;
- Any vehicular connection along the northern boundary will be offset from the Ancient Woodland, designed sensitively to sit within a wider green infrastructure corridor (c 60m) with the capacity of accommodating a link road of any specification up to grid road standard as part of an east-west link to the H6 Childs Way;
- Downgrading of that section of Shenley Road running east-west through the site to a landscaped public transport/ped/cycle-only route, facilitating public transport priority through the Site and east into the H7 corridor.

Placemaking

- Drawing on the distinct characteristics of a 'Site of two halves', adopting a varied design response to the layout and character of development north and south of Shenley Road:
 - Northern 'Plateau' Neighbourhood – linear layout incorporating existing green infrastructure elements and orientated along lines of existing /enhanced hedgerows, with a higher density mixed use local centre at its heart, focusing public activity, community and education uses around high quality public realm / open spaces designed to foster a lively and welcoming sense of place. Development here could take its cues from more urban and contemporary styles of housing within Kingsmead and Tattenhoe Park in the west and in and around the local centre, transitioning to lower density and more rural edge typologies to the north-west of the site;
 - Southern 'Valley' Neighbourhood – layout and character of buildings and public realm working with and heavily influenced by the topography, with opportunities for development running along, not across, the contours, using the south facing slopes and the linear park as key design influences, resulting in more varied and bespoke design responses and housing styles (which could include self and custom build). The SPD will demonstrate how this can work in more detail.

Preferred Design Approach

- 9.3 Following the exploration of emerging design thinking and connectivity scenarios as part of the baseline evidence, a follow up workshop was held in May 2023 with Buckinghamshire Council officers. This resulted in consensus being reached around a preferred design response to connectivity and placemaking at Shenley Park, and a preferred landscape

design approach to achieve a permanent landscaped edge to the urban area west of the Site.

- 9.4 This preferred design response adopts the connectivity principles in Scenario 3, providing a lower order link road through the development area to provide the required degree of connectivity whilst maintaining an appropriate scale of street from a placemaking perspective. It can also deliver sustainable transport and public transport priority at the outset but safeguards the future provision of an 'outer link'. This offers the ability for the development framework to address transport priorities as they evolve as well as taking a long-term approach to future potential growth options in line with best practice design approach set out in the AVA Design SPD.
- 9.5 From a landscape placemaking perspective, the preferred design response will maintain a distinct approach to the two separate halves of the Site; an approach reflected in the design of the Western Edge - with consistent depths of woodland planting to the northern half and more varied, organic extents of woodland/potential orchard planting along the length of the western edge to the southern half of the Site.
- 9.6 It is therefore anticipated that the design principles shown in the 'Inner Street' sketches in section 6, and in Connectivity Scenario 3, will form the basis for the progression of the emerging development framework in the forthcoming draft SPD prepared for consultation.

APPENDIX A

POLICY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Policy*	Objective	Design Response / Compliance
Access and Connectivity		
WHA001 SD15 CT8	A421 Access Grid Road Connections	The Scenarios provide suitable access to, and within, the Site from the A421 and deliver sustainable connections to the existing Whaddon and MK grid road networks.
WHA001 (n, o) SD15 CT8	Link Road	<p>The Link Road, connecting the A421 to H6 (Child's Way) in Milton Keynes, has been designed to sensitively integrate with the Site's topography and provide satisfactory vehicular access to the Site from the A421 and through to Milton Keynes.</p> <p>The capacity and nature of this Link Road will need to be modelled and tested further, prior to the submission of the OPA, to ensure it does not become a 'rat-run' diverting excess traffic through the Shenley Park Site.</p>
WHA001 (r) CT5 SD15	Public Transport	The Scenarios' integrated PT enhancements will comprise Mass Rapid Transit, connection to a Park-and-Ride facility and a separate access to H7 (Chaffron Way).
WHA001 (h, p, q) C4	Public Rights of Way Active Travel	The Scenarios safeguard the Site's existing Public Rights of Way and extend them into an integrated network of active travel routes connecting to Whaddon and Milton Keynes' redways.
T1	Movement Priority	Active travel (walking/cycling) and public transport routes have been given priority over solitary vehicular movement in the Scenarios to support a modal shift to more sustainable travel options.
T4	Capacity of Transport Network	Given the scale of the proposed development, the Shenley Park OPA will need to prepare and submit a Transport Assessment which models the Link Road Scenarios, assesses the respective impacts and provides appropriate mitigations.
T5 T6 T8	Mitigation	The OPA should ensure that the highway impacts, both on the development and the surrounding area, are wholly mitigated wherever possible and that the proposed parking spaces (vehicular and cycle) meets locally-set standards.
Design and Local Requirements		

Policy*	Objective	Design Response / Compliance
WHA001(f) BE2 NE4	Landscape-led Approach MK Defensible Boundary	The Scenarios adopt a landscape-led approach to designating development areas in order to secure enhancements for existing on-site vegetation and their incorporation into a site-wide green infrastructure network to meet the local policy ambitions such as establishing a long-term defensible boundary to Milton Keynes, sensitively connecting to the MK Boundary Walk and creating a landscaped buffer to separate Whaddon from development at Shenley Park.
NE1	Biodiversity + Green Infrastructure	The Scenarios' creation of an integrated green infrastructure network will enable the provision of public open space and the extension of habitats for protected species to provide a net biodiversity gain.
NE2	Watercourses + buffers	The Scenarios protect and enhance the existing Tattenhoe Brook, maintaining the policy-mandated 10m ecological buffer, in order to secure landscape and ecological gains while enabling recreational use of the corridor.
NE5	Pollution	Both Scenarios include landscaped buffers to mitigate impacts of the development on adjacent neighbourhoods. The Shenley Park OPA should assess the noise, light and contamination effects of the development in further detail and should use this assessment to propose an appropriate package of mitigations.
NE8	Vegetation + buffers	The Scenarios retain all existing mature vegetation in situ, with the exception of one stretch of hedgerow. The relevant policy-mandated buffers (10m, 25m, 50m) are applied to safeguard and expand these assets, and opportunities have been taken to create a network of connected habitats.
WHA001 (j)	Woodland + Plantation Enhancements	With the exception of one stretch of hedgerow, the Scenarios retain all the existing on-site vegetation in situ and secure enhancements for the Briary and Bottlehouse Plantation.
BE1	Protection of Heritage Assets	The Scenarios seek to safeguard and enhance the local heritage assets, where possible, in a manner appropriate to their significance in order to contribute to the heritage values and to local distinctiveness.
BE3 BE4	Residential Amenity Development Density	The Scenarios focus the development around the Local Centre, allowing lower densities around the edges to better integrate Shenley Park into the landscape and adjacent neighbourhoods. This, coupled with landscape buffers and site-wide active travel connections, helps to safeguard residential amenity of current and future residents.

Policy*	Objective	Design Response / Compliance
WHA001 (g, l)	Whaddon Buffer + woodland belt Snelshall Monastery SAM	The Scenarios comprise a substantial, well-designed and managed countryside buffer (not formal open space) and an enhanced Briary Plantation woodland belt to maintain physical and visual separation between the development and Whaddon. Impacts on the Snelshall Monastery SAM will be mitigated by similar physical buffers.
WHA001 (m) BE1	Archaeological Notification Areas	Two archaeological notification areas exist within the Site, neither of which significantly constrain the Masterplan Scenarios provided that the areas' full extents are excavated and recorded prior to the commencement of development in all / part of them. This approach, agreed with BC, is consistent with the precautionary principle set out in both national (NPPF Para. 204-205) and local policy.
Land Use		
WHA001 S5	Providing Social Infrastructure	Here, social infrastructure will primarily comprise the allocated housing, Local Centre, Primary School and Care Home.
WHA001 (a) H6a BE4	Housing	At least 1,150 dwellings will be delivered at Shenley Park to meet the need identified in the local HEDNA. The dwellings will vary in density, concentrating around the Shenley Square cluster of services in the centre and decreasing in density towards the Site's edges.
H5	Self/Custom Build Housing	The Shenley Park OPA must secure serviced plots for sale to self/custom builders – the proportion will be determined based on evidence of demand/feasibility as at the time of submission. This will be subject to a s106 Legal Agreement.
WHA001 (e) I3	Local Centre	<p>The Local Centre will provide community facilities and services to meet the day-to-day needs of residents, within a walkable / cyclable distance for the local catchment.</p> <p>This Centre will benefit from the footfall associated with the nearby proposed Primary School and Care Home, and so will also need to include a suitable range of uses (e.g., ground-floor mixed uses, convenience goods) to create an attractive and viable central hub for the new Shenley Park settlement.</p>
Emerging AV Design SPD	Cluster of Services	Shenley Square's cluster of services is conveniently and accessibly located at the intersection of well-connected streets around a suitably scaled high-quality public realm.
WHA001 (c)	Primary School	The Scenarios' Primary School incorporates two forms of entry (2FE) and nursery provision.
WHA001 (d)	Contributions to Secondary / SEND Schools	The OPA applicant will need to agree contributions with the local Education Authority and BC.

Policy*	Objective	Design Response / Compliance
WHA001 (b) H6b	Care Home	The Care Home will comprise the policy-mandated 110-bedrooms in a well-served, accessible location and will meet policy's design standards to support the delivery of a healthy community at Shenley Park.
	Contributions to Health Services	Bucks, Oxon and West Berks (BOB) Integrated Care Board (ICB) are the health authority. Provision for a healthcare facility is possible on site if required, or alternatively S106 contribution with agreed trigger payable to the Council towards the cost of additional land/buildings. Possible requirement from NHS Bucks Health Trust towards acute and community healthcare, adjusted for the % of population likely to be treated at MK hospital. S106 provisions to be agreed accordingly.
I1 I2 App C and D	Open Space	The Scenarios' landscape-led approach has allowed for the provision of sufficient open space, both as ANGSt and supplementary uses (e.g., formal open spaces, play areas, allotments).
Environment and Climate Change		
WHA001	Technical Assessments	To ensure compliance with other policy provisions (WHA001 and other DM policies), the Shenley Park OPA will need to be supported by a suite of assessments as outlined in the validation list current at the time of submission.
C3	Renewable Energy	The Scenarios adopt a landscape-led approach which seeks to make best use of existing natural resources, wherever possible, and mitigate long-term environmental or visual impacts. The Shenley Park OPA should employ the Council's energy hierarchy to enhance the development's energy and water efficiencies.
I4 I5	Sustainable Drainage	The Scenarios integrate the Site's existing blue infrastructure within a network of SuDS features that serve biodiversity and public amenity functions, in addition to fulfilling their drainage functions.

* Plan:MK policies are in blue