



Robert Bridgen  
Milton Keynes Planning  
Civic Offices  
Milton Keynes  
MK9 3EJ

29<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Robert,

**Application no: 22/00524/OUTEIS**

**Proposal:** Outline application (matters of principle and access to be considered with matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reserved for later consideration) for a Mixed-use urban extension comprising up to 1920 units of residential development, secondary and primary schools, local centre (including retail, commercial and community uses), landscaped green infrastructure and public open space, access roads and associated highways improvements, surface water drainage and associated infrastructure works.

**At:** Land Forming Part South East Milton Keynes Strategic Urban Extension South of Milton Keynes North of Bow Brickhill, North of Bow Brickhill Road And Woburn Sands Road Milton Keynes

Woburn Sands Town Council welcomes some of the changes to the original planning application of the same number, made as a result of the various responses submitted to MKCC planning.

It would seem there is some commitment of L&Q/Fox to tackle the lack of connectivity between the area south of the Marston Vale railway line (MVL) and the rest of Milton Keynes to the north of it, both in terms of active travel arrangements and vehicular access. They appear to agree to do this via Milton Keynes Council's Tariff Agreement that they and O&H, the developer to the east of the site, would contribute to. Two grade separated links across the MVL are proposed: one for Redway use in the central area of the L&Q/Fox site linking into Old Farm Park for cycles and pedestrians and the other accessed through the O&H site at the northern end of Woodleys Road linking into the northern section of SEMK SUE. This will presumably join with the planned extended H10 which will connect through to Newport Pagnell Road south of Wavendon. This rail crossing would be an all-vehicular route; possibly also designed for equestrian use. Should these connections be built, there would be greater accessibility from the SEMK site to the rest of Milton Keynes and less likelihood that Woburn Sands will be swamped with traffic from the site wanting to access both Milton Keynes and the M1 at Junction 13.

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**However, there are still aspects of the revised planning application that are causing the Town Council concern.** The first six of these concern connectivity and access, the seventh the location of the all-through school and the final two concern housing numbers and density

1. Without the Woodleys Road bridge linking the area of MK south of the MVL to the north of it, the increase in traffic through Woburn Sands would be unacceptable. This refutes the statement 3.3.9 of Reference Document GB01T211E61 – TN08, that the impact on traffic without a bridge would be acceptable. WSTC and in particular, residents of Theydon Avenue, The Leys, Hardwick Road and Aspley Hill would certainly disagree with this statement, especially as the present Traffic Assessments are extremely suspect in the way they dealt with the flows on the double mini-roundabout at the foot of Aspley Hill. (See Appendix A of GB01T211E61 – TN08 and the ARCADY manipulation of data). In another portion of the same Traffic Assessment, it admits that the double roundabout is operating at over-capacity. **Before any development is approved, there needs to be a full SEMK traffic assessment of present and potential future traffic flows in the whole of the area round the SEMK site.**
2. The road bridge (and presumably also the bridge with the Redway link) across the Marston Vale Line (MVL) would be delivered through the Tariff Agreement by Milton Keynes Council on land reserved by the developers for this purpose. What assurances do the residents of Woburn Sands have that these bridges will be built by Milton Keynes Council in a timely manner considering present budget constraints, which may not improve in the foreseeable future. **Woburn Sands Town Council would like to see the whole development of the SEMK site hinging on these links and without the certainty of this, no development should take place. There must be a legally binding, future proofed commitment on the part of either the developers or Milton Keynes Council to build an all-vehicle bridge over the MVL at Woodleys Road linking to the Grid system north of the railway line before any application for development is granted before any other development takes place.**
3. Unless the infrastructure of the spine roads and the bridges are built **before** the rest of the developments (on the two sites) construction traffic will increase congestion both through Woburn Sands (and on up Aspley Hill into Central Bedfordshire) and Bow Brickhill. The roads in these communities are not designed for such an increase in traffic and in particular, for HGV traffic. None of these communities have separation of pedestrians and vehicles, so there are massive Health and Safety concerns of such traffic flows. **Woburn Sands Town Council would support the common adage of 'Infrastructure before development' to avoid this.** Construction



traffic on the residential sites would then be directed to access/leave the sites either via the Bow Brickhill bypass at the western end of the site or across the Woodleys Road bridge to/from the grid roads north of the MVL, and **not** via Bow Brickhill road at junctions 2, 3, 4 and 5. (See access maps)

4. As the applicants' site forms the most southerly section of SEMK; is the furthest south that Milton Keynes will ever reach; and is on the rural fringes of the city without any links to major settlements on that southern side, there should be no need for either the spine roads nor the bridge over the MVL to be double carriageway roads. It is easier to install traffic calming measures on single carriageway roads, resulting in a less urban environment and the possibility of installing taller screening trees along Woodleys Road and in particular along the run up to the bridge. At present, the proposed bridge will be very visible from the eastern flanks of Woburn Sands, so any measures to screen it would be welcomed. Even better, considering that the railway runs along banked up land, a road tunnel crossing would be preferable.
5. If the two main developers (L&Q/Fox and O&H) agree on a common approach to the Tariff Agreement, which would fund both bridges, there could be a positive outcome. This would mean extensive cooperation as and when the O&H revised planning application of 22/02528/OUT is evaluated. **Without such cooperation between the two main developers, there should be no approval for any planning applications.**
6. The proposed junction between Woodleys Road and Bow Brickhill Road was originally a three exit roundabout. This has been altered to a traffic light controlled junction. It is claimed that the setting of the lights will discourage traffic turning from Woodleys Road towards Woburn Sands and then on to the M1, encouraging them instead to use the Woodleys Road bridge to access the wider road network in Milton Keynes north of the MVL. However, in another part of the same document it claims that the signalised junction will facilitate residents of SEMK to access the facilities within Woburn Sands (and vice versa) while also reducing through traffic. This must be a very clever signalling system if it can distinguish between the two!
7. The all-through school on the L&Q/Fox site has been moved away from the MVL, which in the light of there being no plans to electrify the line is applauded, but is still a split site, divided by a parcel of land not controlled by L&Q/Fox. Until there is a unified land ownership across the whole site, the cohesiveness of the site will be compromised. **There is no way that an all-through school should operate on a split site.**



8. The number of houses in the application site has increased from 1700 to 1920 (and possibly up to 2000). The given reason for this is that the site has been expanded outside the original area to take into account a different road layout to the west of Bow Brickhill. If the number of dwellings in this application are added to that of the O&H site in the east, along with the Swan Hill site to the north of Woburn Sands plus the Church Farm development in Wavendon (both technically in SEMK), the whole is exceeding the approximate 3000 of the original SPD. Then, if the potential number of houses on land not at present owned by L&Q and O&H is also allowed for, totals are far exceeding the SPD. **The number of houses should be reduced to levels that demonstrate a willingness to take into account other developer's plans and to reach a compromise.**
  
9. For a development on the fringes of Milton Keynes and bordering The Greensand Ridge to have densities of housing verging on the urban scale and exceeding in places that of Broughton and Brooklands, which are further into the heart of Milton Keynes, is not acceptable. It is obvious that the developers are trying to maximise their returns in every which way they can, and are also exceeding the general Milton Keynes targets for Social Housing, with up to 31% of dwellings in this category. **Woburn Sands Town Council urges the developers to reduce the density of housing along with the heights of some of the housing on the access roads before planning permission is granted.**

**Considering the above, Woburn Sands Town Council are not in favour of granting planning permission for this site. Cooperation between the main developers and other landowners on the layout, access, housing numbers and density, community facilities, public transport and environmental considerations still need to be sorted out.**

Yours sincerely,

Alison Jordan  
Town Clerk  
on behalf of Woburn Sands Town Council