

Wards Affected:

Stony Stratford, Wolverton, Loughton Park, Eaton Manor, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford,

STONY STRATFORD AND LAKES ESTATE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA DESIGNATION

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Executive Summary:

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, in October 2012 Stony Stratford and Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Councils submitted applications to designate Neighbourhood Areas for the purpose of preparing Neighbourhood Plans. Applications were advertised for six weeks public consultation between 29 October and 10 December 2012. Only one response was received on each application.

This report recommends that the proposed Neighbourhood Areas are approved as originally submitted.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Neighbourhood Area applications for Stony Stratford and the Lakes estate, as shown in figures 1 and 2 in Annex A, be approved in accordance with section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (as amended).

2. Issues

- 2.1 Stony Stratford and Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Councils submitted applications to Milton Keynes Council in October 2012 to designate Neighbourhood Areas for the purpose of Neighbourhood Planning. These areas are shown in Annex A. These applications were made in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, which requires a Parish/Town Council submitting an area application to include:

- A map which shows the area to be designated;
- A statement explaining why the Parish Council considers the area appropriate for designation; and
- Confirmation that the Parish/Town Council concerned is the relevant body for the purpose of neighbourhood planning in that area.

- 2.2 The two area applications vary in that the Stony Stratford application proposes the whole Town Council area as a neighbourhood area, whilst the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council application identifies the area of the Lakes Estate, not the whole Town Council area. Both approaches are valid and are in

accordance with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

- 2.3 In accordance with Regulation 6 of those regulations, Milton Keynes Council published the area applications and held a six week public consultation period between 29 October and 10 December 2012. This was advertised in the MK News, on the Council's website and through information circulated to all members and Parish and Town Councils.
- 2.4 There was only one response on each of the area designation applications. These were from Emberton Parish Council, offering support for the proposed area designations. Therefore no concerns or objections were raised in relation to the proposed designation of the areas for the purpose of neighbourhood planning.
- 2.5 Having regard to this, it is therefore considered appropriate to designate the neighbourhood areas as originally proposed by the Town Councils, in Annex A.

3. **Options**

- 3.1 Once a Neighbourhood Area designation application is submitted, the 2012 Regulations require the Council to come to a view on it and publicise that decision. This report recommends that the areas originally proposed by the Town Councils are approved as Neighbourhood Areas for the purpose of Neighbourhood Planning. This is seen as the most appropriate option given that applications have been made in accordance with the regulations and there have been no objections to designating the relevant plan areas.
- 3.2 However, if it is considered that this recommendation is not appropriate, the Neighbourhood Area applications could be refused. If this is the case, the Town Councils could then choose to submit a revised application to Milton Keynes Council which would then be subject to further advertisement and consultation.

4. **Implications**

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. In Milton Keynes, the strategic policies are set out in the adopted Milton Keynes Local Plan and the emerging Core Strategy.
- 4.1.2 Once a Neighbourhood Plan has successfully passed all of the stages of preparation, including an examination and referendum, it is 'adopted' by the local planning authority, forms part of the authority's Development Plan and is a material consideration when considering development proposals. In terms of the planning policy hierarchy, a Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted carries more weight than a Supplementary Planning Document

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 The Localism Act and the 2012 Regulations place new duties on local planning authorities in relation to Neighbourhood Planning. These new duties have implications for staff resources as the Council has a duty to support Parish Councils wishing to undertake Neighbourhood Planning. Staff resources to support Neighbourhood Planning will come from the existing staff within the Development Plans team. Decisions on any significant resource issues for the Council as a result of officer involvement in Neighbourhood Planning will be taken separately, as necessary.

N	Capital	N	Revenue	N	Accommodation
N	IT	N	Medium Term Plan	N	Asset Management

4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

4.3.1 The proposal does not impact on carbon and energy management.

4.4 Legal

4.4.1 Neighbourhood planning is part of the Government's initiative to empower local communities to take forward planning proposals at a local level as outlined in Section 116 of the Localism Act, 2011. The Act and the subsequent 2012 Regulations confer specific functions on local planning authorities in relation to neighbourhood planning.

4.4.2 At its meeting of 25 July 2012, Cabinet agreed the decisions in the Neighbourhood Planning process that would be delegated to the Cabinet Member responsible for Strategic Planning. This scheme of delegation included the decision of whether to accept and designate a Neighbourhood Area, as is recommended in this report.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 The proposed Neighbourhood Area application has been the subject of consultation for six weeks and the views of stakeholders are reported in this report.

4.5.2 Consultation and involvement of stakeholders is an important part of the neighbourhood planning process and will ultimately be tested by a single issue referendum at the end of the process.

N	Equalities/Diversity	N	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	Y	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Annex A: Figure 1 – Stony Stratford Neighbourhood Area

Annex B: Figure 2 – Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Area