

The Parish Council would like to comment on the information that has been made available following the recent MK City Plan briefing meeting in Olney, and some of the discussion circulating as a result.

Members of the PC did attend that briefing on behalf of Sherington and have also attended a number of previous consultation meetings about the City Plan 2050 generally. The briefing meeting in Olney was possibly the most important of these consultations from the point of view of Sherington in that it very specifically dealt with the potential in the MKCC strategic plan for housing growth that would directly affect the village.

Relative to Sherington, the Parish Council is aware that the possible areas of development of most concern are an area at Chicheley Hill with a potential 800 – 1,000 new homes, and a total of 7 sites within boundaries of Sherington village with a total potential 370 – 615 new homes.

Probably the most important consideration at the moment regarding these potential sites and figures is that all of the possible sites disclosed at the briefing have been promoted to MKCC by developers and/or landowners. None of them have yet been approved or allocated.

MKCC have emphasised that they are duty bound to consider all promoted sites under the process of delivering their housing target for 2050, and these sites are among those that have been proposed to them. There is no guarantee that all of them will be allocated, and in fact a good likelihood that many of them won't be. It is also acknowledged though, that there is the possibility that further sites could be promoted up until the planned date for the closure of proposals for land assessment in summer 2025.

Until the detailed information and mapping for these promoted sites is made available to us by MKCC (advice at the briefing was that this will be during March), the PC can't progress any formal response.

Because of this, the PC has written and requested a commitment from the MKCC Head of Strategic Planning & Infrastructure that they formally provide us with full details immediately the information is available.

The PC has over the last few months been in the process of preparing a review of the current Sherington Neighbourhood Plan for submission to the community. It's clear that this recent news will have a significant effect on that review. We have therefore requested MKCC to also commit to working with us with the development of this review in an attempt to ensure that any allocation within the village gives due consideration to the spirit of our NP, and to the aspirations and concerns of our community.

Whilst this recent news about potential development is obviously concerning, we were advised at the briefing that MKCC considers that housing growth within rural villages is the least likely to be allocated due to the difficulties with tying such growth in with the strategic plan for infrastructure.

This advice of course doesn't necessarily mean anything in terms of our village, unless it turns out to be accurate and they can find their total allocation in the larger strategic expansion zones that have been identified MK-wide.

The MKCC strategic plan for infrastructure is obviously a matter of vital importance in terms of any further growth anywhere in and around MK. The existing problems with transport, schools, doctors, hospital etc are already known and much debated, and will only worsen with housing growth unless radical steps are taken to deal with them. The promise given at the briefing was that this plan will be completed and published in full in the summer this year and will clearly set out how infrastructure will grow to accommodate the proposed growth in housing.

The Parish Council will continue to monitor these plans and will do everything within their power to limit the impact on our community. All members of the Sherington community are encouraged and welcome to make any comment and to make the PC aware by the appropriate channels of any specific points or concerns as these possible plans unfold over the coming months.