

## Appendix B

Quality audit of current public transport provision

## **Evaluation of current public transport conditions in Milton Keynes**

This section considers the current public transport conditions in Milton Keynes based on two categories of assessment based on Attributes of Effective Public Transport System; and Public Transport Oriented Development (PTOD), and provides a commentary on how well Milton Keynes matches these attributes. Key criteria for each evaluation is set out below:

### ***Attributes of Effective Public Transport System***

- Providing high mode share,
- Serving wide range of trip purposes,
- Accessible to people of all incomes, ages and abilities,
- High quality (see table below for quality attributes)
- Economically viable in the long term – Not included in this assessment as extensive and specific data is required.

### ***Attributes of Public Transport Oriented Development***

- Trip attracting uses (destinations) clustered at nodes in the network.
- Higher intensity residential (trip generators) close to PT stops.
- Direct (not circuitous) PT routes within and between generators and attractors.
- Stops on PT routes are easily accessible from development, with pedestrian routes that are safe and secure, 24 hours a day. (see note on catchments below)
- PT routes unhindered by other traffic (free from delays and unpredictable trip times).
- Door to door PT journey times that are relatively close to car journey times (when parking, walking, waiting are all taken into account).
- Low levels of parking, especially at destinations (trip attractors).
- Park and Ride which reduces car use and does not encourage car as access mode.

An appraisal based on the above criteria is set out in the following Tables.

**Table B1 Appraisal based on Effective Public Transport System Attributes**

<b>PT Attributes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Passenger, Resident and Visitor satisfaction	Poor	Rating based on general comments only. Have surveys been undertaken in MK?
Viability	Poor	Limited hours of operation, and subsidy required for many services
Mode share	Poor	Below 10% of all trips in MK
Range of trips served	Poor	Employment and leisure sites scattered. Retail and employment at CMK, and station interchange, have basic service
Accessible	Fair	Many buses are low floor.
Perception and image	V Poor	Mode of last resort. Public transport is

PT Attributes	Rating	Comment
		"invisible" in much of MK, with poor badging and branding of routes and services, and infrastructure that is either inconspicuous or hidden from view. Most bus stops are not named.
Stability over time of routes and services	Poor	There appears to be little stability in services or routes. E.g. current timetable issued for the period 7 <sup>th</sup> July to August (no end date). A system map issued by MK Metro in April 2002 proved useless for a visit to Kingston Centre three months later. No updated map was available.
Vehicles	Fair	Mixed range of vehicles
Staff	Fair	Personal observation suggested good service, but low morale amongst staff
Information	V Poor	Many bus stops with no information, or not readable. Where information is provided, it gives chronological services by destination, not by route. Traveline information not relevant to MK (redirected through London traveline!!, and two calls necessary for local enquiry). Only automated info point at MK station. Maps and timetables not available at station information centre. They are available at a kiosk, but this is not advertised in any public areas. System map very difficult to use, partly due to small page format.
Ticketing/billing system	Fair	Prepaid smart cards, or pay driver. All-day pass available at £3 but not well advertised. Fares are high – around £2.60 for return journey between centre and edge of MK.
Frequency	Poor	Some services are only hourly, with half hour as more common. Some services operate every 20 minutes.
Clockface timetables	Fair	Some routes operate on clockface times, but many change during the day (e.g. different times in the evening)
Reliability	-	No data
Route coverage	Fair	Coverage is reasonably comprehensive, especially for trips to or via CMK and Bletchley.
Route legibility	Poor	The route structure, and the many variations of most routes, makes the system extremely difficult to understand. People are likely to use only the particular bus that suits their individual regular journey; they will not use the network.
Proximity of stops	Fair or Poor	CMK and railway station, proximity reasonable. At "home" end walking distances to stops are often excessive (i.e. a "coarse" network).
Facilities at stops	Poor	Shelters not always provided, especially at "outbound" stops. Shelters don't have seats. No other facilities at stops (Telephones, CCTV, kiosks, realtime info, etc) Most stops are not named Coachway interchange is extremely poor

<b>PT Attributes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Journey speed	Fair	Roads are mostly uncongested. However, some bus routes are circuitous making for long journey times. Poor access to stops also adds to door-to-door times.
Journey comfort	Fair	Road standards allow for reasonable ride quality, but numerous roundabouts on all routes detract from ride comfort.
Staff attitudes and behaviour	Fair	Personal experiences have all been very favourable, but staff moral is perceived to be low
Hours of operation	Poor	Many services do not operate in the evening or early morning, making buses useless for many trip purposes. Examples are leisure trips, or journeys to work for people working early or late shifts.
Integration with other modes	Fair	Bus-rail and bus-bus interchange is reasonable at MK station. The quality of bus and car interchange at the Coachway is appalling. There is very little integration with cycle mode. Park and ride is poor.
Safety and security on vehicles	Good	Drivers are able to deter or respond to trouble. However, low patronage could result in drivers themselves feeling vulnerable to attack, especially in the evening.
Safety and security at stops, and on access routes to stops.	Poor	People accessing bus stops on the grid roads are extremely vulnerable to attack. Press reports indicate widespread perception of danger on the footpaths and Redways.
Value for money	Poor	Fares are high especially in relation to parking, which is mostly free

**Table B2 Appraisal based on Effective Public Transport System Attributes**

<b>PTOD attributes of MK</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Trip attracting uses (destinations) clustered at nodes in the network.	Poor	CMK shopping is served by a reasonable variety of routes. Most employment areas in the city, and local centres, however, have services from limited origins and are inaccessible from large areas of the city except via interchange at CMK
Higher intensity residential (trip generators) close to PT stops.	V Poor	The opposite is the case – residential buildings are set away from bus stops. The highest densities of development have a negative correlation with access to public transport.
Direct (not circuitous) PT routes within and between generators and attractors.	Poor	Some routes are direct, others are circuitous. But direct routes achieve speed at the expense of accessibility. It is an impossible square to circle in MK. It is a choice between speed or access, the built form and road network does not allow both.
Stops on PT routes are easily accessible from development, with pedestrian routes that are safe and secure, 24 hours a day.	V Poor	Traffic segregated routes enable stops to be reached without traffic danger. But routes are poorly signed, are not overlooked, are circuitous and perceived as very inconvenient and dangerous. Where it is possible to do so, people often ignore the defined routes and walk on or cross the grid roads to reach stops (to avoid

<b>PTOD attributes of MK</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
		subways and other dangerous or inconvenient footpaths.
PT routes unhindered by other traffic (free from delays and unpredictable trip times).	Fair	Low levels of congestion mean few delays to buses at most times of day. However, congestion has been increasing and there is a threat to this particular quality of the bus network. Bus priority has already been thought necessary in some locations (e.g. Grafton Street)
Door to door PT journey times that are relatively close to car journey times (when parking, walking, waiting are all taken into account).	V Poor	Bus journey times compare poorly with car journey times both because of slower running speeds and more circuitous routing. EG CMK to Kingston Centre takes 7 minutes by car, and 20 minutes by bus. When walking and waiting times are included in the calculation the picture is even worse. (The Mott report excludes walk/wait times but still shows bus times to be double car times.)
Low levels of parking, especially at destinations (trip attractors).	V Poor	MK has high parking provision at all destinations. Much of it is free, except in CMK
Park and Ride which reduces car use and does not encourage car as access mode.	N/a	Par and Ride is rudimentary in MK, so there are no significant impacts, either positive or negative

### **Overview of the Assessment**

An overview of the above assessments can be encapsulated within an analysis, named the '5Cs' analysis<sup>1</sup>. This summarises the operation of a network/system based on questioning whether the network/system is connected, convenient, comfortable, convivial and conspicuous. An overall assessment based on this type of analysis is set out as Table B3, below.

**Table B3 "5Cs" Analysis of public transport services in Milton Keynes**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Connected	Poor	Limited range of routes and poor interconnection
Convenient	Poor	Poor access to bus stops
Comfortable	Poor	Buses moderate to good, roundabouts cause poor ride quality. Bus stop comfort is poor
Convivial	Fair	Generally good on-board atmosphere, friendly and helpful drivers (subjective impression)
Conspicuous	Poor	The PT system is not at all prominent..

<sup>1</sup> The '5Cs' concept was developed originally by Tim Pharoah (land use planning expert for this Study) to assess the quality of walking routes. It provides simple criteria that also can be used to assess the quality of other modes, including city transport. (See DETR, March 2000, "Encouraging Walking", Appendix B)