

Appendix F

Stakeholder Consultation

Consultation with Stakeholders

In addition to in depth discussions with the client group (Milton Keynes Council and English Partnership) and Sterling Maynard Transportation (the client's project managers for the project), a stakeholder consultation session was held on 26th September 2002 which included all groups which have an interest in the transportation issues in Milton Keynes. These ranged from planners through public transport operators to developers and Council members.

The consultation session started with a presentation by the consulting team to set out the key issues and challenges which needed to be taken account of in considering the long term vision and related practical options for development of the public transport in the City.

The presentation followed by discussions within three workshop groups and discussions within the workshop groups were recorded.

Overview of the Stakeholders discussions

A number of important and relevant points with respect to the attitudes to land use development in Milton Keynes, types of development and appreciation of the linkages between economic growth, land use and viability of different forms of public transport emerged from the discussions. An overview of these discussions is set out below:

Appreciation of the challenges

It was clear that the consultees as a whole had a good appreciation of the enormity of the challenge of achieving significant modal shift. It was pointed out throughout that Milton Keynes residents and employees value the free and easy car travel as an advantage of the City and would find it extremely difficult to replace the use of their cars with public transport.

An appreciation of the need for maintenance of access as the City grows

There was also a clear wish to sustain the historic growth rates enjoyed by the City and the fact that growth will lead to further need for travel to and from CMK and within the City as a whole. There was also a clear appreciation of the fact that continuation of the growth of private car use, in line with the economic growth of Milton Keynes, would not be sustainable in the medium and the long term and therefore increased public transport use will be necessary.

A keen interest in significant improvement in PT

There was overwhelming support for significant improvement to public transport services and an appreciation of its current (relatively) poor offer.

Appreciation of the importance of a high quality mass-transit system to attract people to public transport

There was significant support for a high quality mass-transit style public transport system as the view was that a system of this type will have the image necessary to attract car users.

Appreciation of the need for land use intensification to justify a high quality mass-transit style system

There was some understanding of the need for the high patronage required to enable the financial viability of a high quality track based or guided public transport facility.

Concern about deliverability of the required land use intensification

There was extensive concern about the public opinion and political acceptability of a policy of intensification of land uses within and around the grid squares. The current difficulty with obtaining approval for a relatively modest reduction of parking ratios was cited.

Land use intensification along specific corridors

In general it was considered that land use densification even along one or two corridors may be difficult to implement – again cited public opinion pressures and the lack of political commitment. Although this (focusing along specific individual corridors) was considered as the best chance for developing the land use conditions required for a step change in public transport usage.