



The Civic Society For Milton Keynes

# **MILTON KEYNES NEW TOWN HERITAGE REGISTER**

A Response to  
Milton Keynes Council's  
Consultation

March 2018

## INTRODUCTION

1. We are pleased to present our suggestions for items to be included on the New Town Heritage Register. The Register comes at an interesting point in the history of Milton Keynes, the more so because of the fortuitous coincidence of the work undertaken by the C20 Society in looking at modern Conservation Areas.
2. We think that it is important that the Register should tell the full story of the development of the New City - people should be able to read it and see those developments that were critical to the way in history of Milton Keynes.
3. The number of suggestions that we have made means that it would have been too time consuming to have provided detailed entries (and, indeed, photographs) to support each of our nominations. However we can provide this if necessary.
4. We have identified the sites using either their original MKDC Site Reference or, in the event of one-off buildings, the name of the original occupier. We feel it is important to be able to document the historic thread so that people looking into archives in the future will be able to identify the site accordingly. We are conscious that names and occupiers continually change but the one fix is the original description.
5. Each residential site has been further identified by the name of a main road that (if possible) is entirely within the development itself.
6. We are conscious that our entries are restricted to the knowledge of our members. We are particularly weak upon Bucks County Council schools and the Open University, for example, and we hope that others may be able to fill this void, as well as others that may exist.
7. As well as individual buildings we think that there are a number of larger areas (which we have termed "Character Areas") that should be included on the Register, because of their importance. We feel that these should be included on the Register in their own right.
8. We are aware that the Council is currently undertaking a review of the existing Conservation Areas and would reiterate our earlier proposal that appropriate enlargements should be considered to incorporate appropriate entries on the Register: Great Linford Cricket Green and Woughton on the Green are two particular examples that have occurred to us in our work.
9. We also feel that it is appropriate to consider new Conservation Areas, taking the recent work undertaken by the C20 Society as our lead. We have already proposed (as part of our response to Plan:MK) that the three exhibition villages should be designated as such and,

following the Society's recommendation for Eaglestone we think that the discussions around the Register are an ideal time to look at this whole subject.

10. It is not our wish, in making any of our proposals, that the Register should be used as a process by which existing buildings should be fossilised – far from it – we accept that a dynamic city has to grow and change. However, it is our intention that the inclusion of entries on the Register will draw attention to them; that residents and others will appreciate that they are special in some way and that any alterations or replacements will be more sympathetic than might otherwise result.
11. We have proposed, as part of our response to Plan:MK, that the Register should be used as a benchmark and that, if it is proposed that an entry upon the Register should be demolished, then its replacement must be of a sufficiently high standard to anticipate inclusion upon the Register in subsequent reviews. This will ensure that the architectural quality of the city (which has resulted after much time, effort, heartache and expense) will not be diluted on a dripfeed basis
12. We see this and other submissions as being very much the first part of compiling the Register and look forward to working with the Council to develop it into its final form.

## **PROPOSED REGISTER ENTRIES**

The following pages contain nominations from the Forum for inclusion in the Register.



































## SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

The entries listed in the previous pages are, by and large, single schemes or buildings with a single architect. In addition we think that the register should contain a number of "Special Character Areas" which span a number of different sites and where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, particularly in the way that they tell the story of Milton Keynes. We therefore propose the following (NB we have not identified individual schemes or architects but are happy to do so if necessary):

REF	SCHEME	COMMENTS
MKF220	Citywide Infrastructure	The original street furniture installed by Milton Keynes Development Corporation was part of a carefully considered package - some of which were off the shelf items and some of which were purpose designed. We are concerned about the way that this cohesion has been eroded by unsympathetic replacements - in particular for the gridroad signage with its square section columns (which, we believe, is unique to MK) and the square section lighting columns within the gridsquares. We accept that it is impossible to list all of these items individually, however they are clearly the type of feature appropriate for inclusion within the Heritage Register, although we are uncertain about how this should be achieved. One solution could be to have a standard infrastructure handbook that is agreed following public consultation. This is a key, important issue as a consequence of the continuing renewal programme that is underway at present.
MKF221	Central Milton Keynes - Classic Infrastructure	This is the infrastructure as defined in the CMK Business Neighbourhood Plan. It is essential to the structure of the city centre and should be recognised as an entry of the Heritage Register in its own right.
MKF222	Central Milton Keynes - D1.1-D1.4	These four blocklets form the first phase of development in CMK and the detailed design of the infrastructure (eg the quadrant planters and parking kerbs) was changed as lessons were learnt and development progressed. It is important that the original infrastructure design remains to demonstrate the original design intention at the outset.
MKF223	Central Milton Keynes - Green Frame	The landscaped frame to CMK - essentially the grid road corridors of H5 Portway and H6 Childs Way between the Canal and Railway line - is essential to the character of the city centre, as are the crossings (always at grade on the CMK side) into the adjacent gridsquares, by either footbridges or underpasses. It will be

		necessary to define this accurately on a plan which, we would suggest, in done in consultation with the community.
MKF224	Eaglestone - North	The northern half of Eaglestone (ie the housing designed by Ralph Erskine as well as the Local Centre, Harrier Court housing and Falconhurst School) has been the subject of a detailed study by Historic England with a recommendation that it be designated a Conservation Area. We support this but would add the Local Park and <i>Griffin</i> sculpture by Lesley Bonner.
MKF225	Great Holm - Kensington Drive	By the time that development started in Great Holm in the early 1980s MKDC had properly hit its stride. Its own housing had abandoned the idea of flat roofs and it was no longer table to build rental housing, so it turned instead to shared ownership and two storey forms that would appeal to the market (but still using a mix of its own architect and those in private practice). At the same time Milton Keynes was a prosperous place to develop and the Corporation was able to use its influence as landowner to secure high quality designs from those to whom it sold land. This period coincided with a review of the way in which gridsquares were structured and the concept of a Main Local Route (which would thread from gridsquare to gridsquare and contain the main movement routes and facilities) was developed. No single gridsquare demonstrates this more successfully than Great Holm and, whilst we think that it would be appropriate to include the whole gridsquare on the Register to ensure that it is properly recognised, we would accept a lesser designation of the Main Local Route (ie Kensington Drive) and the developments along it including Holmwood School, Hilltop Medical Centre, the Kensington Public House (formerly The Grebe), the housing (including Petworth House Sheltered Housing), the Small Meeting Place, local Park, Obelisk feature and the Macintyre Centre. We are uncertain as to whether the "red line" would be drawn around purely those buildings fronting the Drive or would be extended to include the balance of each scheme as appropriate.
MKF226	Great Linford - Cricket Green and surrounding development	The cricket pitch is the heart of the quintessential English village and the pitch in Great Linford is surrounded by a number of high quality developments with houses by MacCormac, Jamieson and Prichard, Tuckley Walker and others as well as an excellent cricket pavilion by MKDC.

MKF227	Linford Wood	The change in planning regulations in the 1980s that led to the introduction of the B1 Use Class presaged the construction of "high tech" units combining offices within the Employment gridsquares for the first time. It was an important step change in the development of MK and Linford Wood was chosen as the first location for such units (having been originally designated for housing). It has a very good collection of buildings and, whilst disfigured to a certain extent by the later addition of security fencing, we believe that it is appropriate for further consideration as a whole.
MKF228	Neath Hill/Pennyland Local Centre	The Neath Hill Local Centre is widely admired as one of the best in MK both through its design and the way that it responds to the grid road in the manner envisaged in the Plan for Milton Keynes. However, we think that the Heritage entry should include the development within Pennyland (the Sovereign Medical Centre and Sovereign Lodge Sheltered Housing) as well as the connecting bridge cum underpass and bus stops.
MKF229	Springfield - MKDC Housing	The three schemes designed by MKDC (Springfield 1, 2 and 3) show incredible variety and thoughtfulness with 17 individual housetypes, with living accommodation arranged to capture the sun. It is a level of sophistication that was not exhibited elsewhere on such a scale by MKDC and deserves to be recognised as such.
MKF230	Woughton on the Green	The new housing in Woughton on the Green is of a consistently high standard and, in our discussions we came to the conclusion that, rather than identify individual schemes, it would make sense to include the whole area of new development in the Register ie Goodman Gardens and all the development accessed from Baskerfield Grove