

Little Brickhill Parish Council

Chair: Dave Lewis

Local Transport Plan 5 Consultation
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East
Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ

Clerk: Mr. Alan Kemp

**57 West End
Long Whatton
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE12 5DW
Tel. 01509 844241**

Email: clerk@littlebrickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.littlebrickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Local Transport Plan 5 Consultation

I have been asked by my Parish Council to respond to the above-mentioned Local Transport Plan 5 Consultation and our comments are noted below:

We were encouraged to read its comprehensive content and acknowledgement of the need to evolve and modernise public transport across Milton Keynes, but very disappointed to note that there is no reference to Little Brickhill and no plans to improve local transport for the village within the draft document. We request specific reference to address:

- Provision of safe non-motorised travel options connecting Little Brickhill to the citywide network.
- Improved bus services to and from Little Brickhill.
- Provision of safe and practical home-to-school transport for the children of Little Brickhill.
- With the Government's recent announcement of development of a mass transport system for Milton Keynes, we would like specific provision for Little Brickhill to be considered when planning for this.

We were extremely concerned to read that Milton Keynes is considering a vast increase in parking fees within the City centre, to bring it more in line with other UK cities. In our experience, the public transport in other cities is much more comprehensive. We were surprised to read of this approach whilst noting that our village was not mentioned in the document and there was no reference to improving the public transport for villagers. Any changes to parking charges to encourage people away from driving to the City would unfairly target our villagers who have extremely limited options.

Little Brickhill Parish Council regularly receives feedback from villagers that Little Brickhill is a forgotten part of Milton Keynes and we are overlooked and omitted from plans and improvements. Addressing the needs of Little Brickhill within the Local Transport Plan 5 provides a good opportunity to demonstrate that this is not the case.

Little Brickhill Parish Council has previously been in communication with the Transport Policy Team in June 2020 and again in 2021 regarding Government funding for cycleways and the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, but was disappointed that our concerns and requests were not addressed, whilst nearby new housing developments at Newton Leys were prioritised and celebrated. In summary, we highlighted our concerns that bus services were declining and that there was no safe non-motorised option for people travelling from Little Brickhill to the citywide network.

Since then, the MK Connect on-demand bus service has been introduced we understand to connect more rural areas to the rest of the city. Whilst the removal of the scheduled bus service within Little Brickhill was extremely disappointing, the MK Connect service is welcome and we are keen to see this retained and improved in terms of service availability (both decreased average time to collect and decreased journey times) and increased operating hours. We note that the opposite has happened to date.

Currently, the only viable pedestrian / cyclist route connecting Little Brickhill to the rest of the city is via the redway / footpath that runs north alongside the A5 towards the McDonalds roundabout. This route endangers the lives of users and needs attention for the following reasons:

- There is no safety barrier between dual carriageway traffic and the redway/footpath which runs directly and very close alongside.
- The grass to the non-roadside has encroached the redway meaning that users are forced to position themselves closer to speeding traffic.
- That section of the A5 has no streetlighting.
- The speed limit in that section of the A5 is 70 mph (perplexingly, the rest of the A5 south between Little Brickhill and Dunstable has been reduced to 50mph, but the speed limit increases at the slip road to our village).

To be clear, it is dangerous to walk or cycle along the route between Little Brickhill and the McDonald's roundabout at any time of the day, especially at night. The redway is in regular use by villagers to walk to the petrol station – our closest convenience store – or by village teenagers walking to their part-time work at McDonalds.

With no home to school transport currently being provided to the secondary schools that the village children attend, and with the proposal for a new secondary school to be built in South East Milton Keynes imminently, which will be the closest secondary school to Little Brickhill, we wish to understand the Council's plans with regards the provision of safe transport to that school, as well as any other proposed new primary school.

We note that the new Milton Keynes plan 2050 includes developments at Levante Gate, which, if approved, will become the location of our village's closest primary school and the land south of Bow Brickhill, which is proposed to house what will be our closest secondary school and health centre. We would urge the council to be proactive and joined up in its planning and ensure that villagers have safe and sustainable transport options for both, with safe and direct footpaths for those who would prefer not to travel by car.

We would welcome your thoughts and consideration on ways to link Little Brickhill to the rest of Milton Keynes via a safe and usable Redway. These could include:

- Installing barriers alongside the A5 that not only meet safety standards but also provide Redway users with confidence and feeling of safety.
- Installing streetlighting along the length of the Redway provision
- Reduce the speed limit to 40mph on the A5 dual carriageway going north between the exit slip road coming north-west out of Little Brickhill and the McDonald's roundabout.
- Relocate or create a new path alongside the A5 dual carriageway away from the road, either:
 - o To the left (going north-west) of the dual carriageway.
 - o Create a new path to the right, away from the dual carriageway.
 - o Upgrade and tarmac the existing footpaths going west towards Eaton Leys Farm then north to join Watling Street near Bletchley Rugby Club
- Installing CCTV / monitoring cameras.
- Encourage the bicycle/scooter hire companies to extend their service radius to include Little Brickhill.

We would like to request that Little Brickhill be specifically considered and referenced within the Local Transport Plan 5 and the above concerns addressed.

Yours sincerely

A J Kemp

Clerk to the Parish Council