



"The Annual Report looks good."

Annual Report to Little Brickhill Parish Council

MK2050 and the local plan – the new local plan for MK moves on apace. What is known as the section 18 consultation has concluded, and the results are being analysed by MKCC at the moment. The next stage of this work kicks off in September and will lead to a second, what is known as a section 19 consultation, and a timetable leading to the inevitable enquiry before the planning inspectorate, probably in late 2026 with a final decision in early 2027.

The Reg 19 consultation is likely to close by the end of October. Following this MK City Council will need to review the responses and consider if it should propose any main modifications to be submitted alongside the plan to the Inspector for them to consider through examination (any Main Modifications the Inspector considers are necessary to make the plan 'sound' would be subject to a form of public consultation during the Examination).

The examination of the current Plan:MK, from submission to the Inspectorate to formal adoption by Full Council, took just under a year so, as I say, we may have an adopted plan by early 2027. However, recent ministerial directions and advice to the planning inspectorate indicate shorter examinations will become the norm, e.g. nine months. As I say, it's all guesswork at this point really.

The land known as Levant Gate (1250 homes designation) and land south of Bow Brickhill (1500 homes designation) remain in the plan despite direct government guidance reducing the overall number of houses that are required to be included in the overall plan between now and 2050.

The A5 Slip Road

Google and Apple have agreed to amend their audio prompts after a double fatal crash appeared to have been caused by incorrect directions from a sat-nav.

A coroner warned tech companies, external, including TomTom, to a risk of future deaths after a woman drove the wrong way onto the A5 near Milton Keynes.

During the year, National Highways prepared a detailed scheme with drawings.

Attached to this report is one of the designs MKCC received from National Highways in April (2025), and they hope to do the works in July, subject to a streetworks permit. The signage is certainly improved, but it doesn't go as far as the MKCC Highways Officers would like – although they have already made this point to them, without managing to convince them otherwise!

Just to recap, National Highways met with senior MKCC Highways officers over the winter to discuss the proposals about other related speed management and safety matters. In the meantime, I asked MKCC for some feedback on the likelihood of the council carrying out resurfacing ahead of road marking improvements.

All the interested parties have an agreed layout between National Highways, Thames Valley Police and MK City Council and they need to confirm availability of funding to deliver the scheme, along with timescales. There will at that stage be a stakeholder engagement exercise involving the Parish Council and local MKCC ward members and any revisions that may result from the feedback from all stakeholders.

Personally, most observers have been rather underwhelmed by the proposals thus far, and I am not entirely convinced that this will solve the observed problems that we are all too aware of. Although residents will of course make up their own minds about that when the drawings are made public.

Therefore, I continue to lobby for a 'stronger' solution here as best can be achieved – although at the end of the day MK City Council and we as parish and city councillors are only consultees and National Highways are not obliged to take any of our comments on board.

The Broader Overall Situation

At a meeting I attended at MK City Council Scrutiny committee held on 23rd April, the representative presenting to the committee on behalf of East West Rail described the Universal Studios announcement as truly game changing. How right he is as it impacts fundamentally our lives here in Little Brickhill and its neighbouring communities – in both a positive and potentially (in some ways) negative way.

The consequence of the Universal Studios announcement literally has a knock-on consequence and impact on each of the headings in my report. Let me explain.

I will headline each of the major issues I covered off in my monthly written report to the town council as ward councillor over the past twelve months. Looking back over the year a mention of Universal was included in all but one report.

Let me turn now to East West Rail. We saw the most recent consultation running from the latter part of 2024 to its culmination at the extremely well attended meeting in the Summerlin Hall (in Woburn sands) in January. The report on the outcomes and findings of the informal consultation will be published later in the summer and (currently) it is anticipated that the formal, Statutory Consultation will commence in January 2026.

Initially it seemed the future of the level crossing in Woburn Sands was secure although it became very likely that a new station would be constructed a few hundred metres to the west of the location of the existing station. Residents expressed some concerns regarding how the new station might be accessed from Newport Road via the access route being constructed at the Redrow, Woburn View site and how that might ultimately also become a link into the SEMK expansion area.

However, there is an update on this in light of, as you would perhaps now expect, the Universal Studios announcement. It would appear that, following said announcement, that

- The frequency of trains will greatly increase to perhaps one every 10 minutes (in each direction)*
- The relocation of Woburn Sands station is now almost a certainty.*
- The level crossing will almost certainly have to close.*
- The line improvements at Bletchley will be such to allow trains to run direct from Manchester and the Midlands to Stewartby*

The project will be brought forward by one or more years and the Statutory Consultation may be cancelled in the terms set out in the emerging Planning and Infrastructure Bill the purpose of which is to do away with the need for extensive consultation on national infrastructure projects to speed up their delivery and help boost growth in the economy.

The project is what is known as a Special Development Project (and I believe is the first private project to be included under this heading) and the 400+ hectares included under those terms. Elements of the project outside of that area will still

be subject to normal planning. There will be a very informal, voluntary consultation on the scheme in the autumn.

Now I must be clear that this is all informed speculation on the part of EWR and subject to confirmation over the coming months.

20,000 jobs during the development phase and 8000 moving forward cannot be sniffed at and the additional benefits to business and leisure in a broad hinterland to the site will offer opportunities to the wider community for generations to come – potentially, but there will be some pain before the gain.

Let me turn briefly to the other major issues I have attempted to address over the past 12 months.

Little Brickhill Interests as represented through the Woburn Sands Futures – and SEMK issues. *I attended the meetings of WSF over the past twelve months during which we had the benefit of presentations from O&H and L&Q the developers, and indeed from East West Rail (pre-Universal). Outline permissions for land south of the railway have been waiting for formal approval but the application for the land north of the railway (bordering Wavendon, Old Farm Park and Woburn Sands) has been delayed until 2026 due to a dispute between Network Rail and O&H regarding the extent of the land that Network Rail has identified for compulsory purchase in line with the EWR project. Decisions on the outline applications have still to be issued (I suspect June / July of this year) and the devil regarding SEMK will be in the detail and perhaps there will now be changes in the layout of the infrastructure (Roads/bridges) in line with the changes EWR may have to announce to meet the elements of the Universal Studios impacts. For example, the bridge over the line at a site adjacent to Woodleys Farm may be part now of a broader Woburn Sands bypass.*

Whilst I would not expect to see any houses on SEMK until 2027, I would expect to see reserved matters applications (where the detail of the infrastructure and house layout etc will be revealed and debated) and more information in terms of density and support structures such as schools, GP surgeries, dentists and retail would be set out. I would expect to see these in the first half of 2026. And then expect to see heavy pant starting work on roadways and drainage etc etc, works by mid to late summer 2026.

On the 'northside' MK City Council would like to see the first phase of the H10 through Church Farm being constructed by the end of 2025, but that could also possibly stretch well into 2026. Technically this initial phase is within the delayed element of the SLA contained within the 2001/2011 local plan and as such will not

reach into SEMK (stopping as it does within the confines of the Church Farm development) but it does technically open up the SEMK site.

The complicating factor remains East West Rail, but I think given the Universal announcement of a couple of weeks ago, they are now under the same pressures that the council now faces to move things forward. You will possibly see some works on the railway in 2026 but MK City Council is not yet sure if these will be starting in the SEMK area or further to the east. These would be works already consented under the Transport Works Act Order that Network Rail already have.

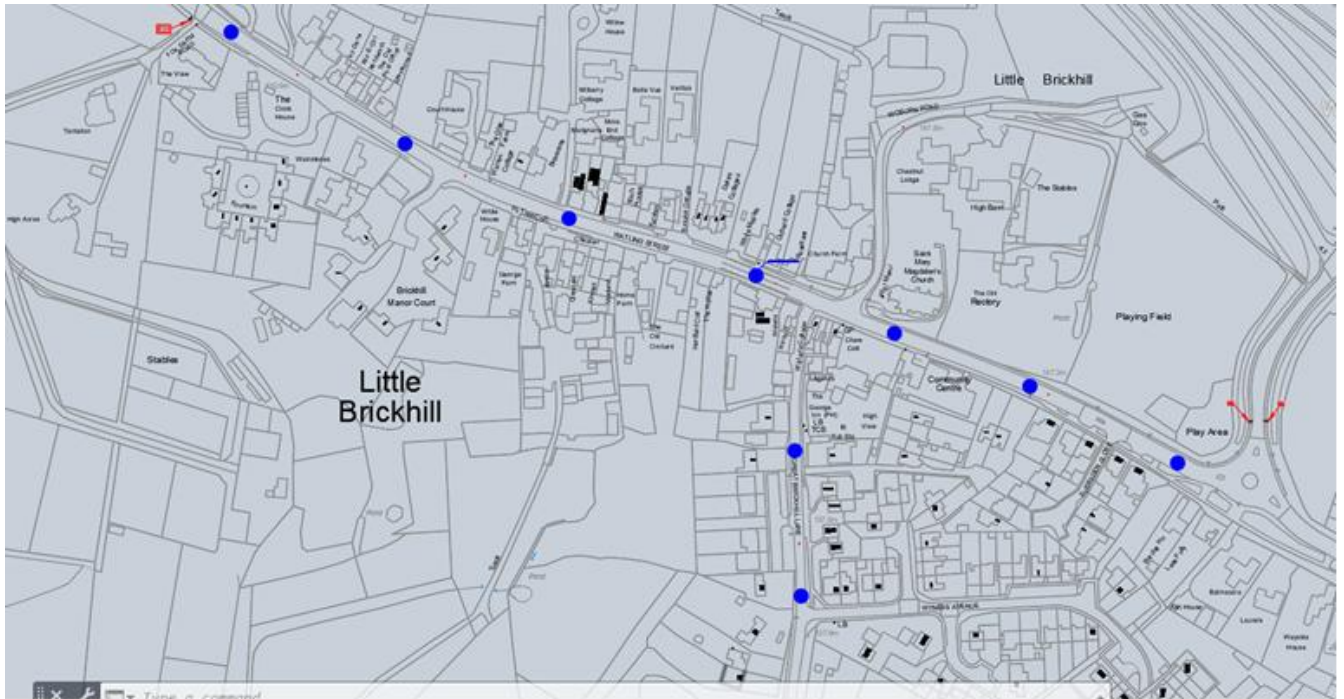
Can I pay tribute and thanks to Michael Geddes who organises and chairs the WSF meetings quite expertly and among those attending has been representatives from our local schools and our local health surgery, among others.

I am now going to rattle on with headings and a one-line update.

New Towns Taskforce - the government has commissioned a New Towns Taskforce, chaired by Sir Michael Lyons, to look at possible sites (up to a dozen) that might be suitable for the large-scale development of new towns across the UK. There has been much speculation that north MK may turn out to be one such site. The report is due to be published by September this year when we shall know more but yet again the Universal Studio development may have more than a passing bearing on any such decisions.

20 MPH – MKCC looked at implementing a 20mph zone for Little Brickhill. Initial speed counts showed that the existing average and 85th%ile speeds (The 85th percentile speed) is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers travel at. Motorists traveling above the 85th percentile speed are exceeding the safe and reasonable speed for road and traffic conditions) are too high for a 20mph without vertical traffic calming features. 20mph zones and speed limits should be self-enforcing - this guidance is given to us by the Department for Transport.

The city council looked at the option of road humps for Great Brickhill Lane and Watling Street – see image below showing the proposed hump locations in blue. As part of any traffic calming proposal the Council is required to undertake a street lighting assessment. The assessment has been carried out, and unfortunately without significant improvements to the existing lighting in the village any traffic calming scheme can't be installed. There is only a limited amount of budget available to the Council for 20mph zone schemes, and our budget doesn't stretch far enough to implement the required street lighting changes. So it looks like the speed limit remains as is for the foreseeable future.



Greensand Ridge and the Greensand Fort - *As a member of the Greensand Partnership Board (as well as local ward member) I have been working to ensure the protection of the Danesborough Fort ancient monument and to protect the ridge for future generations as a key leisure (and sport) option for local residents. MK City Council has undertaken to implement the suitable protective designation(s) for the ridge as it passes through MK and that will impact (potentially) how close development might be allowed on its immediate boundary.*

Ward Boundary Changes – *the boundary commission has recommended (subject to approval) changes to the various ward boundaries across MK. It is likely that Danesborough & Walton ward will become once again simply the Danesborough ward from 2026 onwards with the new ward consisting of the parishes of Wavendon, Bow Brickhill and Little Brickhill and the town of Woburn Sands. Walton Parish will become a ward in its own right. There are likely to be all out elections for 60 councillors to be elected to MK City Council in May 2026.*

Fly Tipping & 'Anti Social' Behaviour – *I have dealt (through MK City Council) with repeated incidents of reported fly tipping in the woods and along sites on Woburn Road.*

Bus Service – *Have had some success in lobbying Arriva to provide a new and very much enhanced bus service for the other parts of Danesborough I have been lobbying them now for some sort of timetabled bus for Little Brickhill.*

Local Policing – *There have been changes to the personnel from TVP monitoring the policing of our streets. PCSO Amy Ryan has moved on to pastures new within*

the local force and I would like to thank her for her diligent and hard-working attitude to the policing of our area over several years. PC Matthew Phillips is leading the Danesborough team matthew.philips@thamesvalley.police.uk

Green Bin collections – *From May this year residents will be charged for the collection of a second green bin if they put out more than one green bin per week. The first green bin remains free for households. The 2025/26 subscription cost is £55 per bin and the service will run from 12 May 2025 to 31 March 2026.*

The city council will issue a permit sticker for each subscribed additional green bin within 10 working days of the subscription start date. Additional green bins without a valid permit sticker will not be collected after May 2025.

Top of the Requests from residents

...and the most frequent emails and enquiries I receive from residents

- 1. Potholes and highways matters generally*
- 2. Parking – various sites*
- 3. Pah clearing and spraying, overhanging vegetation, fly tipping and litter.*
- 4. Tree and Seat at Wyness*
- 5. Signs missing on A5 bridge.*
- 6. New Street Light on Watling Street – which MKCC has committed to provide.*
- 7. Powered scooters on the footpaths*
- 8. Establishing a reinvigorated Neighbourhood Watch across the village.*

And on a positive note, starting this month is the Annual Greensand Festival and, in the summer, the Bi Annual Milton Keynes International Festival, both of which I have information with me this evening, should you require it.

To conclude, can I thank the Parish Chair Dave Lewis for his excellent job of chairing the parish council and representing the village so ably over the past twelve months. And, as ever, thanks to Parish Council members and to our hard-working parish clerk all of whom do all we can to make Little Brickhill the great place to live we all know and love.

It is always an honour and a privilege to represent our community at MK City Council.

Cllr David Hopkins

Representing Little Brickhill at MK City Council