

**LAND SOUTH OF A421, WAVENDON, MILTON KEYNES
WAVENDON GOLF CENTRE APPRAISAL**



A FINAL REPORT

BY

PMP

June 2007

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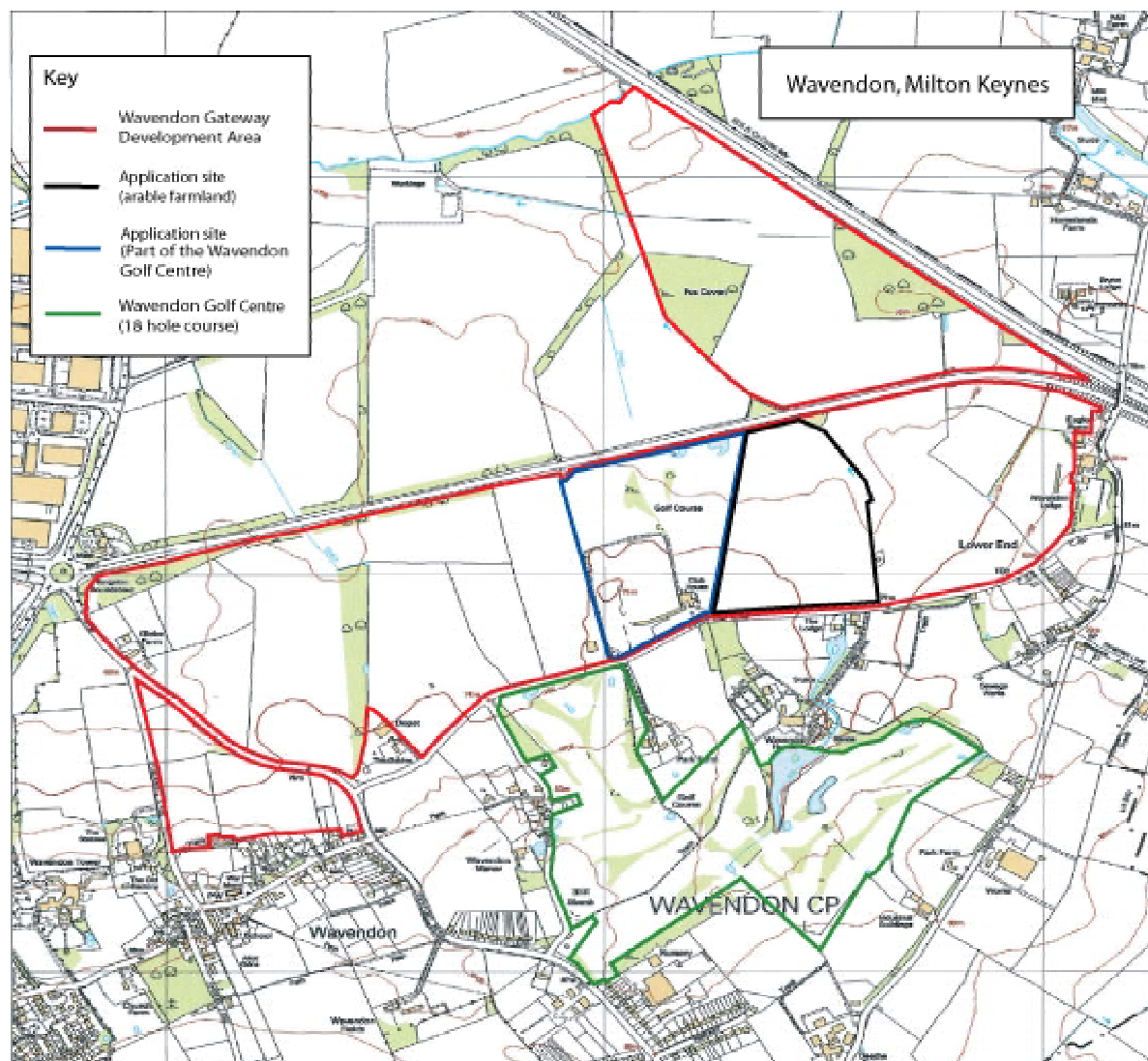
A. Wavendon Golf Centre profile	
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Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Berkeley Strategic is currently preparing an outline planning application for the proposed development of land south of the A421 in Wavendon, Milton Keynes (hereafter referred to as the 'application site') for 850 dwellings and associated uses.
- 1.2 The current use of the application site is split with the eastern part of the site formed by arable farmland (outlined in black on Figure 1.1) and the western part of the site formed by part of Wavendon Golf Centre (outlined in blue on Figure 1.1). The application site is being promoted for residential and associated uses.
- 1.3 The part of the application site formed by Wavendon Golf Centre consists of a par three, nine hole course, a nine hole pitch 'n' putt course, club house, driving range and associated parking.
- 1.4 To the south of this site is the Wavendon Golf Course, which is a full 18-hole course (outlined in green on Figure 1.1). This also forms part of the Wavendon Golf Centre. It is intended that the car parking and clubhouse that is currently located on the application site would be relocated upon land adjoining the 18-hole course should the proposed development of the application site be granted consent.
- 1.5 The proposed development would therefore result in the loss of the driving range, Par 3/ 9 hole course and 9-hole pitch and putt course.
- 1.6 The application site falls within the wider Wavendon Gateway Development Area (outlined in red on Figure 1.1), which incorporates the adjoining Glebe Farm and Eagle Farm sites. The Wavendon Gateway development area has been comprehensively planned to deliver a cohesive neighbourhood extension to Milton Keynes incorporating about 3,290 dwellings, mixed-use local centres and a wide range of formal and informal open space delivering sport, recreational and leisure enhancements.
- 1.7 The application site forms an integral part in the delivery of the comprehensive proposals for the Wavendon Gateway development area. Whilst the proposed development of the application site incorporates a wide range of formal and informal open spaces, these facilities will be further enhanced through delivering links to the Wavendon Gateway area. Together these facilities will provide both quantitative and qualitative improvements to leisure provision in the area, relative to existing provision on the northern site of Wavendon Golf Centre.

Figure 1.1 Wavendon Golf Centre and surrounding area plan



Project objectives

- 1.8 The proposed development of the application site for residential and associated uses will result in the loss of the driving range, Par 3/ 9 hole course and 9 hole pitch and putt course at Wavendon Golf Centre, which, as open space (categorised as ‘outdoor sports facilities’), is subject to PPG17.
- 1.9 In line with PPG17, an appraisal of the potential impact of the loss of this facility has therefore been undertaken to inform the planning application process.
- 1.10 This appraisal process has considered the following:
 - the supply of / demand for golf provision within an appropriate catchment area and consideration of whether the facilities noted above are surplus to requirements

- if these facilities are surplus to requirements, is there any demand for alternative sporting or open space uses of the land that could not be met elsewhere
- if the facilities are still needed, how this need could potentially be met on alternative sites.

Our approach/ report structure

1.11 Our approach to this appraisal process has incorporated the following key tasks:

- dialogue with Wavendon Golf Centre and leisure, planning and park / open space officers from Milton Keynes Council to understand the nature of the current provision, its importance in meeting the golf and wider leisure needs of local and Milton Keynes residents, and key planning policy issues – **summarised in Section 2**
- a review of the local and national leisure, open space and planning context of Wavendon Golf Centre, to understand its importance in addressing local golf facility need, other potential open space requirements in the local area, and relevant planning policy issues – **summarised in Section 3**
- an audit of other golf provision within a 30 minute drive time of the site to understand the importance of Wavendon Golf Centre in meeting local need – **summarised in Section 4**
- synthesis of the findings from the above tasks to establish conclusions on the key study objectives – **summarised in Section 5.**

Consultation findings

2.1 We have consulted with Wavendon Golf Centre as well as leisure, planning and park / open space officers from Milton Keynes Council to explore the nature of, and need for, the current provision as well as other open space facility types, in addition to identifying key planning policy / issues.

2.2 The consultees were as follows:

Table 2.1 Study consultees

Name	Role	Organisation
John Drake / Ron Maydon		Wavendon Golf Centre
Jonathon Lee	Leisure Services Officer	Milton Keynes Borough Council
Shelagh Muir	Leisure Services (Golf Specialist)	Milton Keynes Borough Council
Steve Crowther	Parks and Open Spaces Officer	Milton Keynes Borough Council

2.3 The findings from this consultation process are summarised below.

Wavendon Golf Centre

2.4 A profile of the Wavendon Golf Centre is provided in Appendix A.

2.5 The Centre is split across different sites, which include the following facilities:

- Wavendon Golf Centre (north site, forming part of the application site):
 - Par 3, 9 Hole Course
 - 9 Hole Pitch and Putt Course
 - 36 bay covered and floodlit driving range
 - Putting green
 - Clubhouse with bar, restaurant, conference room and function room.
- Wavendon Golf Course (south site):
 - 18 Hole Course in a traditional parkland setting, designed by J Drake / N Elmer (Yardage: 5460, Par: 67, SSS: 66).

Condition of the facilities / future investment requirements

- 2.6 The Wavendon Golf Centre opened in 1989 and has continually been maintained.
- 2.7 A key issue for the club is that the main 18-hole golf course lacks a specific clubhouse and associated facilities as these are located north of Lower End Road.
- 2.8 This is a disadvantage both to players (as golf buggies & all associated facilities are located north of Lower End Road) and the operation of the Golf Centre (as mowers and associated machinery are kept on the site north of Lower End Road).
- 2.9 A new clubhouse and car park to the south of Lower End Road and on the same site as the 18-hole golf course is therefore considered essential to the future sustainable development of the club.

Target market

- 2.10 The Par 3 course and driving range generally cater for beginners and casual users including older age groups.
- 2.11 Whilst there is a membership system for regular users, non-members can also access the facilities on a pay and play basis. However, rounds have to be booked in advance, especially for busy tee-off times, for example Saturday & Sunday a.m.
- 2.12 The Golf Centre does not have a specific (formal) dress code.

Usage

- 2.13 The Wavendon Golf Centre is generally well used.
- 2.14 Tee-off times need to be booked and paid for in advance, especially in busy periods. These are the traditionally busy times for a golf club i.e. Saturday and Sunday mornings. During these times the 9 and 18-hole courses are usually full.
- 2.15 Other times of the week the facilities are well used but with some spare capacity.

Competing facilities

- 2.16 Milton Keynes and the surrounding area have a varied range of golf facilities. Those that provide similar facilities include:
- Abbey Hill Golf Club (open to public / reasonable dress code)
 - Windmill Hill Golf Centre (open to public / reasonable dress code)
 - The Three Locks Golf Club (reasonable dress code)
 - Aspley Guise and Woburn Sands Golf Club (reasonable dress code).
- 2.17 In addition there is a championship course at Woburn Golf and Country Club with exclusive membership and strict dress code.
- 2.18 Other facilities include:
- The Millbrook Golf club
 - The Bedfordshire Golf Club

SECTION 2 – CONSULTATION FINDINGS

- Leighton Buzzard Golf Club
- Tilsworth Golf Centre
- Chalgrave Manor Golf Club.

2.19 These facilities are subject to further review in Section 4.

Milton Keynes Borough Council

Leisure

2.20 Leisure Services consider their two public golf course facilities, Windmill Hill and Abbey Hill, to adequately address local public access / pay and play golf facility needs and therefore have not identified a need for additional provision within current sports or leisure strategy documents (reviewed in Section 3).

2.21 They do not have any formal role in relation to the planning of private sector golf or other sporting facilities in the borough, and do not take account of these facilities within their strategic leisure planning.

Parks / open space

2.22 No parks/ open space strategy documents currently consider golf facility provision and the PPG17 Open Space Strategy currently being developed will also not specifically consider golf provision. Nor will it address private sector leisure facility provision.

2.23 The only strategy that is likely to take private sector golf provision into consideration is the proposed 'Milton Keynes Green Infrastructure Plan', which is currently in its infancy (initial reporting due in July 2007). This will be the only strategy to consider both public, private and other green space provision including golf courses, as they are considered to have a public benefit, over and above that of the golfing activity which they accommodate. However, the likely outcomes and recommendations of this study are unknown at this stage.

2.24 Despite this lack of strategic planning context, there is a general recognition that changes in the use of private sector open space facilities will need to demonstrate that any loss will not have a negative impact of addressing leisure needs, in line with national planning guidance.

Summary

2.25 Development of a clubhouse on the 18-hole course is considered critical to the future of this facility to enable the club to operate more effectively and ensure long-term viability.

2.26 Whilst all current facilities are generally well used, provision in the south of the site is the focus of the clubs development activity.

2.27 Loss of the driving range, 9 hole Par 3 course and 9-hole pitch and putt course are not expected to have a significant overall impact on golfing participation.

2.28 More significantly, the Leisure Services department confirms that the two Council-operated facilities meet the current and anticipated future demand for publicly accessible/ pay and play golf provision. Driving ranges, 9 hole Par 3 courses and 9-hole pitch and putt course typically fall into this category of golf facilities.

SECTION 2 – CONSULTATION FINDINGS

- 2.29 Golf provision is not considered in any of the leisure/ parks/ open spaces strategic documents, indicating that it is not a priority for the Council.

Strategic context

- 3.1 A review of the local and national leisure, open space and planning context of Wavendon Golf Centre was undertaken to understand its importance in addressing local golf facility need, other potential open space requirements in the local area, and relevant planning policy issues.
- 3.2 The summary findings of this strategic context review are summarised below, structured as follows:
- National Planning Guidance
 - Regional Strategy
 - Local Strategies
 - Overall strategic summary
- 3.3 Some sample case studies are also provided to illustrate examples of where golf clubs have been developed on and some of the lessons that can be learned from an open space/sporting facilities provision point of view.

National Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Guidance 17, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002)

- 3.4 This guidance replaced previous guidance issued in 1991. The document is supported by the companion guide, which provides guidance on carrying out a PPG17 compliant assessment.
- 3.5 The guide emphasises the need for local authorities to undertake robust assessments of both the current and future needs of their communities. Local standards should be set including:
- quantitative element
 - qualitative component
 - accessibility.
- 3.6 It also states that:
- existing open space should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken that clearly shows the land to be surplus to requirements. This should include all the different functions that the open space can perform. In the absence of a local authority study, applicants seeking planning permission may wish to demonstrate through an independent assessment that the land is surplus to requirements
 - where land is shown to be surplus in its current form, development may provide the opportunity to exchange the use of one site for another use. Any land and facility should be at least as accessible to current and potential new users

- where recreational land and facilities are under used and / or of a poor quality this does not necessarily indicate an absence of need. Local authorities should seek opportunities to improve the value of existing facilities.

Assessing Needs and Opportunities, A companion Guide to PPG17, Kit Campbell Associates (2002)

- 3.7 This companion guide to PPG17 provides a clear means of judging whether a site is surplus to requirements. Figure 3.1, overleaf demonstrates that for the open space in question to be developable, the following issues should be addressed:
- it must be surplus to requirements in terms of its present primary use, taking account of the various functions which open space can perform
 - there should be no deficiency of any other form of open space or sport and recreation provision
 - it should not provide local amenity, recreation or play opportunities or community resource
 - it should have no wildlife or bio-diversity benefits.
- 3.8 The companion guide breaks down the PPG17 assessment process into five steps. The first step seeks to identify local needs. This is primarily through consultation and key groups include the local authority department, local sport and recreation groups. This consultation will help form a qualitative vision for open spaces. It is important to determine what is “reasonable” in terms of public expectations and requirements.
- 3.9 A review of key strategic documents should be undertaken, at a national, regional and local level. The study should also review any existing planning policies and provision standards, these will typically be based on national standards such as the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) six-acre standard.
- 3.10 Step two relates to auditing local provision. Typically all open spaces or public value over 0.2ha are included. Concurrently, effective catchment areas are identified. It recognises that catchment areas change from person to person and from day to day.
- 3.11 Step three relates to the setting of provision standards for quantity, quality and accessibility. Typically the quantity standard is set as a hectare figure per 1,000 people (1ha of playing pitches per 1,000 population).
- 3.12 Qualitative standards are not an absolute measure but reasonable aspirations and benchmarks against which to measure the quality of existing open spaces. Accessibility standards use GIS systems in order to impose a distance threshold around an open space. It is recognised that different urban and rural thresholds may be applicable for some local authorities.
- 3.13 The fourth step applies the local provision standards. This allows for the identification of quantity shortfall and surpluses, areas outside of accessibility catchment areas and sites which exceed or fail to meet the quality standard.
- 3.14 The final step relates to drafting policies. This is primarily related to studies undertaken by local authorities. Typically this part of the assessment will have four main components:
- existing provision to be protected

- 3.15 Table 3.1 below summarises the relevance of the above national planning context review to the proposed development of the north site of Wavendon Golf Centre.

Table 3.1 National planning context summary

Document	Relevance to proposed development of CBC
Planning Policy Guidance 17, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002)	<p>PPG17 outlines the need for local authorities to conduct robust assessments of need for open spaces for their communities, as well as setting local standards of quality, quantity and accessibility.</p> <p>In order to develop on an open space an assessment must be made, either by the local authority or independently to prove the land is surplus to requirements.</p> <p><i>Identifying whether the site is surplus to requirements is a key focus of this study.</i></p>
Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion Guide to PPG17, Kit Campbell Associates (2002)	<p>This guide outlines the five-step process that needs to be worked through in order to ascertain whether a site is surplus requirements from an open space point of view.</p> <p><i>This review process draws upon the guidance in this document.</i></p>

Regional Strategy

South East Plan, SEERA (Draft Plan, March 2006)

- 3.16 The South East Plan outlines the strategic spatial development plan for the region up until 2026. It is currently awaiting the Panel Report from the Examination which is anticipated to be published in Summer 2007, with full adoption due in February 2008.
- 3.17 The Milton Keynes & Aylesbury Vale Sub-Region is identified as a development priority area for the region (Section C, 4.6.1) based on employment and population projections. This supports the current proposed development of the application site that incorporates part of the Wavendon Gateway and those adjoining areas identified by the Council.
- 3.18 The importance of fully integrating tourism, sport and recreation provision into strategic developments is noted. This is covered by the Council's SPG on Planning Obligations for Leisure, Open Space and Sporting Facilities and in particular the Playing Pitch Strategy overleaf.
- 3.19 Section D10 outlines the importance of encouraging regionally significant sports facilities, especially those in the Milton Keynes & Aylesbury Vale Growth Area. However, the Wavendon Golf Centre does not fall into this categorisation ('Regionally Significant') as it is not:
- a host of national or international events
 - a UK Sports Institute facilities base
 - identified by the English Golf Union as being of strategic importance

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- a venue with sub-regional significance outside of its role as a golf/sports facility.

3.20 From this we can conclude that the South East Plan supports the proposed housing development and, subject to open space standards being met, there is no evidence within the plan that will prevent such development due to the loss of the sporting facility.

Local Strategies

Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations for Leisure, Recreation and Sports Facilities, Milton Keynes Council (2005)

- 3.21 This document was created in order to ensure that where new developments occur, sufficient open space, sport and recreation provision is made to make such proposals acceptable in land use planning terms.
- 3.22 The guidance is intended for both developers and the public and the scale of contributions is updated annually. The guidance is informed not only by PPG17 but also the Councils Local Plan, Playing Pitch Strategy and Leisure facilities strategy.
- 3.23 Table 3.1, below, provides details of the open space standards in the SPG.

Table 3.1 Open space standards

Category	Per 1,000 population	Catchment
Playing fields	1.5 hectares	Urban part of Council area
Local Play Areas	0.35 hectares	300 metres
Neighbourhood play areas	0.6 hectares	600 metres
Community centres/meeting halls	61.1 sq metres	220 sq metres per 3,600 population
Local parks	0.4 hectares	600 metres
District Parks	0.8 hectares	1200 metres
Swimming pool	7.72 sq metres of pool and associated facilities	Urban part of Council area
Sports halls and associated facilities	0.23 courts and associated community enhancement	Western/Eastern Expansion Areas
Allotments	0.25 hectares	600 metres

3.24 As illustrated, it is important that the proposed development area should allow for open spaces and other leisure facilities in line with the standards in Table 3.1. We believe that this will allow for a greater overall leisure value to both new and existing residents than the value of the existing golf facilities.

- 3.25 Based on this guidance, post development, the redeveloped site will have a large quantity of open spaces and leisure facilities accessible to residents of the proposed development, the comprehensive Wavendon Gateway development area and the wider area of Milton Keynes. These open spaces and leisure facilities will be further complemented by additional open spaces and leisure facilities delivered as part of the overall comprehensive Wavendon gateway development area.
- 3.26 Non-playing pitch outdoor sports facilities, such as golf facilities, are not included within the Council's guidance. This reflects their lower priority for the Council but from a PPG17 viewpoint, separate consideration of these needs is required.

Milton Keynes Council Local Plan, Milton Keynes Council (Adopted December 2005)

- 3.27 The latest version of this plan, which considers the period to 2011, further acknowledges the growing population of the Borough as does the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy and the emerging South East Plan.
- 3.28 With regards to Leisure and Recreation Space, the Wavendon Golf Centre Site is classified as Recreational Space. Government guidance confirms the importance of protecting land for recreation and amenity use, as per PPG17 discussed above. A sequential approach to site selection is preferred.
- 3.29 Four policies are relevant for this site in terms of the loss of open space or recreational land.
- 3.30 Policy L2 states that planning permission will be refused for proposals where open space used for leisure is lost, unless alternative provision is made elsewhere of equivalent size, quality, suitability and convenience. The proposed development at the Wavendon Golf Centre site meets this criteria following the planned creation of playing pitches in the East sub-division (see Playing Pitch Strategy classifications below), as well as the existing strong supply of golfing facilities in the locality (see section 4 of this report).
- 3.31 Policy L3 says new housing development will be required to provide new or improved recreational facilities in accordance with adopted standards. This is the case, as indicated in the Wavendon Development Framework, which shows that the proposed redevelopment at Wavendon can be justified.
- 3.32 There is also an allotment site planned as part of the Wavendon Gateway development area, which incorporates the application site., in accordance with Local Plan Policy L4.
- 3.33 Policy L5 relates to Golf Course provision in the area. The supporting text indicates an undersupply of golfing facilities in the area (Para. 13.27). Our analysis (Section 4 of this report) indicates this isn't the case and that there is in fact a good supply, which was supported by consultations with leisure officers.

Milton Keynes Playing Pitch Strategy (Milton Keynes Council, 2003)

- 3.34 Milton Keynes Council Playing Pitch Strategy was adopted in 2003. It outlines the strategic need for playing pitches in the Borough based on supply and demand analysis and an assessment of the need for playing pitches in the area.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 3.35 The comparison is made between the supply of pitches in 2002/03 and those predicted to exist in 2011, taking into account developments planned in the interim period.
- 3.36 The Milton Keynes unitary authority is broken into a number of sub-divisions, which help to classify the need for pitches across the Borough. The Wavendon Golf Centre site is located in the 'East Milton Keynes' sub-division.
- 3.37 The audit indicates an undersupply of football pitches (two adult and six junior football pitches needed), cricket pitches (two needed) in the East sub-division, and a single softball/baseball pitch needed across the Borough as a whole.
- 3.38 The Strategy indicates how planned developments will meet this increase in demand for pitches as outlined in Maps 2-7 within the strategy.
- two new senior football pitches in the East sub-division, as well as four new senior football pitches on the boundary between the East and Central sub-division. (NB: the Strategy also notes the very good road network within the authority which would assist with accessibility to pitches outside the sub-division)
 - five new junior football pitches in the East sub-division
 - four new mini football pitches in the East sub-division
 - two new cricket pitches will be provided in the east sub-division
 - no new synthetic pitches will be provided in the East sub-division but there will be an over supply for the Borough as a whole
 - there is no information regarding baseball/softball pitch provision.

Milton Keynes Sports Strategy, Milton Keynes Council (2003)

- 3.39 The Sports Strategy, adopted for the 2003-2008 period, outlines the five-year vision for sport in Milton Keynes. The aspiration is for a 'sporting city'.
- 3.40 Golf is not recognised as one of the six 'focus sports' within the strategy that would receive special attention and development priority. Additionally, the Wavendon Golf Centre is not included in the Council's 'Passport to Leisure' scheme – which aims to promote wider participation in active and health related activities for residents.

Milton Keynes Leisure Facilities Strategy, Milton Keynes Council (2003)

- 3.41 Running from 2003-2008, this strategy 'sets the clear aspirations of Milton Keynes Council to provide leisure facilities for communities throughout Milton Keynes, whether through the private, voluntary or public sectors.'
- 3.42 The Wavendon Golf Centre site falls under both the categorisation of 'Countryside Leisure' and 'Outdoor Specialist Leisure' given the facility mix on the site.
- 3.43 Further acknowledgement is made, with reference to the Council's Corporate Strategy, that high quality sustainable housing should include provision for leisure needs. This is proven to be the case as is shown in PMP's analysis in section 4, which shows that there is a good supply of golf facilities in the area.

Year 1 Strategies Progress Review (Milton Keynes Council Leisure Services, 2004)

- 3.44 The previous three strategies summarised above were reviewed one year on to check on their progress and amend where appropriate.
- 3.45 There were no acknowledged changes to the three policies that would change our conclusions for this report.

Overall strategic summary

- 3.46 Table 3.1 summarises the strategic context that supports the proposed development of the Wavendon Golf Centre site.

Table 3.1 Strategic Context Summary

Document	Relevance to proposed development of Wavendon Golf Centre
Regional Strategy	
The South East Plan, SEERA (draft report 2006)	<p>The local area is identified as a core Growth Area for the region. Appropriate leisure provision is needed alongside housing developments.</p> <p><i>As golf provision is not identified as a core leisure facility type, the proposed development of the site with other types of leisure provision is considered to be in accordance with this guidance.</i></p>
Local Strategies	
Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations for Leisure, Recreation and Sports Facilities, Milton Keynes Council (2005)	<p>This document ensures new developments provide sufficient open space to satisfy land-use planning demands.</p> <p><i>This document informs developers as to the form of prevailing open spaces that will be required in the development, the nature of which is informed by Table 3.1's outlined standards. The proposed development of the site and also that of the proposed comprehensive Wavendon Gateway area, which incorporates this site accords with this guidance.</i></p>
Milton Keynes Local Plan, Milton Keynes Council (2005)	<p>Three Leisure policies designed to protect open space provision are outlined as being relevant to the proposed development of part of the Wavendon Golf Centre.</p> <p><i>The research findings in this report indicate that the imposed criteria for protecting these spaces has been met and passed for this proposed development, through new open space creation, prevailing golf facilities and new playing pitch provision as part of the proposed development of the site, the comprehensive Wavendon Gateway development area and the wider growth areas of Milton Keynes.</i></p>
Milton Keynes Playing Pitch Strategy, Milton Keynes Council (2003)	<p>This document outlines how by 2011 the demand for playing pitches will be met in the East Milton Keynes sub-division.</p> <p><i>Therefore the Wavendon Golf Centre site does not need to be designated as a site for playing pitches on a strategic level.</i></p>
Milton Keynes Sports Strategy, Milton Keynes Council (2003)	<p>Milton Keynes has ambitions to be a 'sporting city'. However golf is not a 'focus sport' nor is referenced within the document as having a need for facility development.</p> <p><i>PMP analysis demonstrates that golf provision in the area is</i></p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document	Relevance to proposed development of Wavendon Golf Centre
	<i>sufficient to satisfy demand (section 4)</i>
Milton Keynes Leisure Facilities Strategy, Milton Keynes Council (2003)	This document further supports leisure provision in the area in terms of the supply of facilities meeting the demand. <i>This is proven to be the case in section 4 through PMP's analysis and research, as well as the Playing Pitch Strategy results.</i>
Year 1 Strategies Progress Review, Milton Keynes Council Leisure Services (2004)	The report offered an opportunity to update the Playing Pitch, Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategies after a year.

Golf market trends

- 3.47 Key national golf market trends of relevance to the proposed development of the part of the Wavendon Golf Centre that this assessment considers, as identified during the strategic context review, are summarised below:

National golf market trends
<p>The following national market trends have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More regular golfers aged over 55 than under 24 • Golf participation among UK adults remains unchanged from the 1998 level of 12% of the population <p>Sources: Mintel Report on Sports Participation 2003</p>

- 3.48 Local market information on golf and wider leisure participation is summarised below:

Local golf and wider leisure market trends
<p>Key market trends of relevance to the proposed development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Active People Survey shows that the Sport Participation rate for Milton Keynes is 20.2%, below the national average of 21.3%. • the propensity to participate in golf in Milton Keynes is 13.7%, which equates to 20,050 people. This is above the national average of 12%. <p>Sources: Sport England Active Places Survey, Active Leisure Propensity Profile</p>

Case studies

- 3.49 A selection of case studies from other similar golf club redevelopments are summarised below. These are drawn from various sources, but must be used with caution given the importance of the context involved at each site. They do show however, examples of where large-scale development demands have led to the loss of golfing facilities, as well as the subsequent actions taken to address prevailing sporting demand.

Craigie Hill Golf Club, Perth

Land at this famous Golf Course has been allocated for development and arrangements regarding the land release and replacement facilities at Kinnon Park are ongoing. Perth and Kinross Council have long earmarked the area for housing development, a stated priority within the Perth Local Plan.

Meole Brace public golf course, Shrewsbury

A full feasibility study is currently being undertaken by Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council to look into golf provision in the town, following the decision to sell the golf course for housing development purposes. It will look at whether it would be best to relocate Meole Brace Golf Course and establish a new site on the outskirts of town. The Borough is running out of brown field sites, and needs to look at other options to cope with population increase.

- 3.50 A review of the above case studies leads us to a number of conclusions that need to be applied to the proposed development of part of the Wavendon Golf Centre:
- when golf course land is developed on, developers and local authorities must consider the need to provide replacement facilities (be it golf or other sporting), or ensure prevailing provision in the area is sufficient to meet demand. Section 4 considers other provision in the local area and whether there is a need for replacement golf or other facilities
 - The local community importance of a golf course should be assessed and considered when redevelopment is proposed. The Section 4 audit considers local community access issues.

Golf facility audit

4.1 An audit of all golf facility provision within a 30-minute drive time of the site was undertaken to understand the importance of Wavendon Golf Centre in meeting local need.

4.2 This involved:

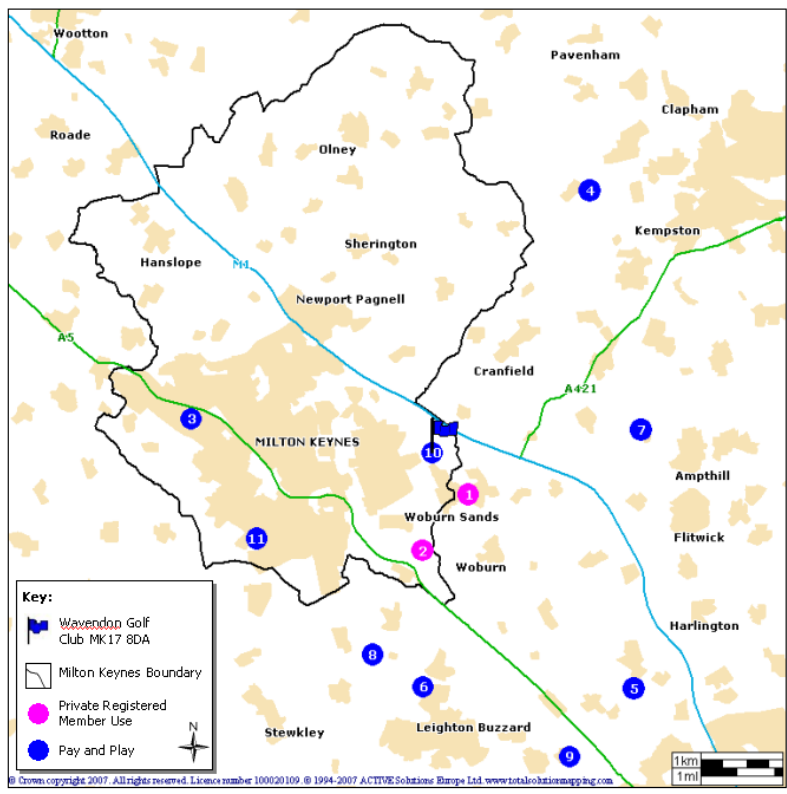
- auditing all golf facilities within the 30 minute drive time catchment
- identifying Wavendon Golf Centre's key competing facilities for each type of golf facility provided
- researching key competing facilities and / or those in close proximity in relation to their accessibility to current users of Wavendon Golf Centre (membership vs. casual / pay and play users, similar types of facilities, spare capacity etc)
- drawing conclusions on the potential displacement impact of the loss of the driving range, Par 3/ 9 hole course and 9 hole pitch and putt course at Wavendon Golf Centre.

4.3 The key findings from this process are summarised below.

Golf facility audit

4.4 Ten golf sites, in addition to the Wavendon Golf Centre have been identified within a 30-minute drive time of Wavendon Golf Centre. These are illustrated below and a full audit is provided overleaf. This drive time has been used based on typical drive times to specialist sports facilities, such as golf facilities..

Table/ Map 4.1 Golf facility provision



- ID Site Name**
- 1 Aspley Guise & Woburn Sands Golf Club
 - 2 Woburn Golf and Country Club
 - 3 Abbey Hill Golf Centre
 - 4 Bedfordshire Golf Club
 - 5 Chalgrave Manor Golf Club
 - 6 Leighton Buzzard Golf Club
 - 7 The Millbrook Golf Club
 - 8 Three Locks Golf Club
 - 9 Tilsworth Golf Centre
 - 10 Wavendon Golf Club
 - 11 Windmill Hill Golf Club



4.5 Of the ten other golf sites identified, there are:

- ten 18-hole golf courses
- one par 3 nine-hole courses
- one 9-holes golf course
- six driving ranges.

4.6 Of these facilities:

- two are private facilities with membership access only
- six are private sector facilities within a combination membership and casual/ pay and play access (as at Wavendon)
- two are public sector facilities within a combination of membership and casual/ pay and play access.

SECTION 4 – GOLF FACILITY AUDIT

Table 4.1 Key competing/ local facilities

Name	Summary of facilities/ size	Access type	Pricing policy	Distance from Wavendon Golf Centre	Capacity for additional members/ casual users	Other relevant information
ASPLEY GUISE & WOBURN SANDS	Yardage: 6079, Par 71	Private membership	Memberships: £590 per annum	2.4 miles	Capacity for 5-day memberships	Privately owned
WOBURN GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB	3x 18 holes championship courses 14 bays driving range	Private membership	Memberships: £1400 per annum	4.8 miles	No – waiting list	Very exclusive course
WINDMILL HILL GOLF CLUB	Yardage: 6720, Par 73 23 bays driving range 3 practice putt greens	Dual use	Memberships: £130 per annum Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £9-£15.50 Weekends: £12-£22 Driving range: 92 balls: £3.50 46 balls: £2.50	6.8 miles		Council owned
THE MILLBROOK GOLF CLUB	Yardage 7021, Par 73 9 holes course	Dual use	Memberships: 5-day: £603 7-day: £844 Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £15-£26 Weekends: £25-£36	8.1 miles	Capacity for 5-day memberships Waiting list for 7-day	Member-owned
THREE LOCKS GOLF CLUB	Yardage: 6000, Par 70	Dual use	Memberships: 5-day: £617 per annum 7-day: £802 per annum Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £13-£19 Weekends: £15-£26	8.8 miles		Privately owned
LEIGHTON BUZZARD GOLF CLUB	Yardage: 6100, Par 71	Dual use	Memberships: 5-day £583 7-day £753 Joining Fees: £1150 Pay & Play per round: Weekdays only £40	9 miles	Waiting list approximately 6 months for 5-day and another 2 years for 7-day	Privately owned
ABBEY HILL GOLF CENTRE	Yardage: 6023 Par 3 course 21 bay driving range	Dual use	Memberships: 5-day £60 + Fee £50 7 day £90 + Fee £75	9.7 miles	Yes	Council owned

SECTION 4 – GOLF FACILITY AUDIT

Name	Summary of facilities/ size	Access type	Pricing policy	Distance from Wavendon Golf Centre	Capacity for additional members/ casual users	Other relevant information
	floodlit		Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £12.50-£15.50 Weekends: £15-£21.50 Par 3 only: Weekdays £4 Weekend £5.5 Driving range: 50 balls: £3.50 90 balls: £4.50			
BEDFORDSHIRE GOLF CLUB	Yardage: 6565, Par 70 9 hole Par 3 24 bay driving range	Dual use	Memberships: 7-day £715 + shareholding 5-day £557 + shareholding Par 3 only: £199 Pay & Play per round: Weekdays only: £25	10.2 miles	Waiting list	Member-owned
TILSWORTH GOLF CENTRE	Yardage 5306, Par 69 30 bay driving range including: 10 Power tees and 2 Explanar Swing Trainer	Dual use	Membership: £150 + either: Discount green fee rates or season ticket £485 Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £17 Weekends: £19.50 Driving range: 25 balls £1.50 50 balls £3 100 balls £4	10.9 miles	Memberships available	Privately owned by Club Professional Nick Webb
CHALGRAVE MANOR GOLF CLUB	Yardage 6398 Par 70 Practice areas	Dual use	Memberships: 7-day £520 5-day £410 Shareholding: £7500 Pay & Play per round: Weekdays: £20 Weekend: £30	11.7 miles	Memberships available	Member-owned

Key competing/ local facilities

- 4.7 Wavendon Golf Centre's key competing / local facilities for each type of golf facility provided have been subject to detailed review and the key findings are summarised below:
- a majority of clubs are privately owned, but the provision of Pay and Play facilities is considered to meet local needs
 - the prices of membership in private clubs are relatively high, but across all facilities they range from £1400 per annum at the Woburn professional course to £130 per annum at the Council-owned Windmill Golf centre
 - the two council-owned clubs (Windmill Hill and Abbey Hill) have spare capacity to take account of future growth in members, at affordable rates and on a pay and play basis
 - the majority of private clubs also have capacity to take account of future growth in members.

Potential displacement impact

- 4.8 Based on the above audit process, our conclusions on the potential displacement impact of the loss of facilities at Wavendon Golf Centre include:
- additional capacity at other clubs in a 30min drive time suggests that any current displaced demand, or future demand for golf provision could be met elsewhere
 - of the 10 other clubs contacted within the 30min drive time, none has identified the need for additional golf provision
 - the facilities that would be lost include a Par 3 course, 9-hole pitch and putt and a 39 bay driving range. These types of facilities are generally used by beginners and casual users. The two Council owned facilities both have driving ranges as well as practice greens and Par 3 courses which it is believed adequately meet the demand for these types of facilities. Both clubs are within ten miles of Wavendon
 - in addition, Bedfordshire Golf Club also has a Par 3 course and a 24 bay driving range, with capacity for additional memberships
 - Tilsworth Golf Centre also has more advanced driving ranges, including 30 bays, 10 Power tees and 2 Explanar Swing Trainers. It also has memberships available
 - both Bedfordshire Golf Club and Tilsworth Golf Centre are no more than 11 miles away from Wavendon and provide appropriate alternative facilities.

Summary conclusions

5.1 The findings from the above consultation, stakeholder review and audit process have been subject to detailed appraisal to establish conclusions in relation to the following three issues:

- the supply / demand of driving range, par 3/ 9 hole course and 9 hole pitch and putt course within an appropriate catchment area and consideration of whether that part of the Wavendon Golf Centre that is proposed for development is surplus to requirements
- if the driving range, par 3/ 9 hole course and 9 hole pitch and putt course at the Wavendon Golf Centre are surplus to requirements, is there any demand for alternative sporting or open space uses of the land that could not be met elsewhere
- if these facilities are still needed, how this need could potentially be met on alternative sites.

5.2 Our conclusions on these three issues are summarised below:

1. The supply / demand for golf provision within an appropriate catchment area and consideration of whether Wavendon golf course is surplus to requirements

5.3 Based on the study findings detailed in this report, we consider that the Wavendon Golf Centre planned for disposal is surplus to requirements. Key reasons for this include:

- the market trends review illustrates that demand for golf has remained constant over the past few years. The percentage of people playing golf in Milton Keynes is higher than the national average, which is reflected in the high number of golf courses in the catchment area
- there is a good range of other golf facilities in the area, providing a range of golfing opportunities and the majority have confirmed that they have spare capacity
- the Council's Leisure Services confirmed that they consider the two council-owned centres at Windmill and Abbey Hill to meet the current demand for pay and play / public access golf provision in the borough, and both clubs have confirmed that they have spare capacity which would meet the requirements for the future
- the South East Plan identifies the need for additional housing development in addition to that required by the Milton Keynes Local Plan. The redevelopment of the Wavendon Golf Centre is in line with the objectives of the South East Plan
- golf is not identified by the Council as a priority sport in its sport strategy and the local strategic leisure context review has not identified any clear case for supporting the retention of this facility
- while Wavendon Golf Centre plans to invest in its 18-hole course, it considers there to be other provision in the local area to meet the need for pay and play access.

2. If the golf course is surplus to requirements, is there any demand for alternative sporting or open space uses of the land that could not be met elsewhere

- 5.4 As part of Milton Keynes standard planning obligations guidance, the proposed housing development will include a number of sporting facilities and pitches, therefore part of the Wavendon site will eventually provide for other sporting or open spaces use. Additionally, it is important to note that these uses will be available for existing and future members of the public and not simply golfers and will also be complemented by further open space and leisure facilities as part of the comprehensive Wavendon gateway development proposals.

3. If the golf course is still needed, how this need could potentially be met on alternative sites.

- 5.5 The golf course is considered to be surplus to requirements and this is therefore not relevant. A wide range of golfing facilities that have been identified as part of this assessment appropriately serve this part of Milton Keynes and the wider area and have sufficient capacity to address the changing needs of the increasing population of Milton Keynes.

Overall summary

- 5.6 Drawing upon the study findings detailed in this report we believe that the driving range, Par 3/ 9 hole course and 9-hole pitch and putt course facilities at Wavendon Golf Centre are surplus to requirements and that there is no current justification in retaining the facilities. The proposed development of this site will enable the council to meet the requirements for housing, allow the club to improve facilities at its 18 hole course (helping to promote long term sustainability of this facility) and will provide additional open space and leisure facilities as part of the proposed development of the application site. Such facilities will be for the wide use of existing and future proposed communities and delivered through standard planning obligations.
- 5.7 The proposed development of this site will also form part of the proposed Wavendon gateway development area which will comprehensively deliver formal and informal open space providing sport, recreational and leisure enhancements, linked to mixed-use neighbourhood centres.
- 5.8 This leisure provision, together with provision as part of the wider Wavendon Gateway development will significantly enhance quantitative and qualitative leisure provision in the area, in comparison to the limited leisure offer of that part of the Wavendon Golf Centre. They will also be accessible to a wider population.

For further information on this report please contact Helen Rowbotham, Principal Consultant, on 0207 5343948 or 079000 57864 or at helenrowbotham@pmpconsult.com.

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APPENDIX A
WAVENDON GOLF CENTRE PROFILE

Location/ contact details

Address:

Wavendon Golf Club
Lower End Road
Wavendon
Milton Keynes
MK17 8DA

Telephone: 01908 281811

Fax: 01908 281257

Email: wavendon-jackbarker@btinternet.com

Website: <http://www.jackbarker.com>



Facilities

Wavendon Golf Centre currently comprises:

Wavendon Golf Centre (north site):

- Par 3, 9 Hole Course
- 9 Hole Pitch and Putt Course
- 36 bay covered and floodlit driving range
- putting green
- clubhouse with Bar, Restaurant and Conference Room and Function Room.



Wavendon Golf Course (south site):

- 18 Hole Course in a traditional parkland setting, designed by J Drake / N Elmer (Yardage: 5460, Par:67, SSS: 66)



Access policy

Club membership is £250 per annum.

Visitors are welcome.

Pay & play available for all facilities

Booking 24 hours in advance.

Green/ lesson fees

Green prices:

	18 Holes	Par 3
Monday – Thursday:	£15.50	£5.50
Friday:	£16	£6
Week-end:	£21	£7

Special offers are available for both the 9 hole Par 3 and 18 Hole courses for tee-off pre 11am on weekdays. These include breakfast or lunch and are priced from £5.99 to £8.00.

Golf society packages are also available.

Lesson prices:

1/2 hour adult lessons from £20 to £25 (plus buy 5 Lesson & Get One Free offer)

Junior group lessons from £5 per hour per person

Group lessons from £10 per hour per person

Driving range:

£1 for 25 balls

£30 for 10 x 90 ball credits

Management/ ownership

Part of Jack Barker's Golf Company.

Reviews

“ Wavendon Golf Course is a challenging course that tests your shot making capabilities rather than power. Fairly flat with few hills, therefore fairly easy walking. The course consists of two par 5's, five short holes and some difficult but not overly long par 4's.”