

Press Release

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MK Waterway Park Plans Approved

The Development Control Committee of Milton Keynes Council have given Outline Planning Permission for the first stage of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway. This stretch (known as the Milton Keynes Waterway Park) is the subject of a BIG Lottery Bid. Plans were given approval after Planning Officer's concluded that "The proposed Waterway Park has been designed to blend with the existing topography of the route."

The waterway stretches from the Grand Union Canal at Campbell Park and runs for 6.5 kilometres to the M1 near the Bedfordshire boundary. The route runs through Willen Lake under Childs Way by the proposed Hidu Centre at Atterbury before turning into the Broughton Brook. It passes under the iconic "cable-stay bridge" near Broughton and runs alongside the new developments at Broughton Gate before reaching Kingston and passing under the A509 into the Eastern Expansion Area.

Concerns regarding the affect to the circular route around Willen Lake were addressed by a new 'Green Bridge'. This will be built so that users of the lake will be able to walk around the lake without realising that they are walking over water. This and many other ingenious designs were incorporated into the outline plan to minimise disruption of the landscape and maintain the environment.

Graham Mabbutt, Director of the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust said: "We are delighted that the Development Control Committee has given the Waterway its blessing with unanimous cross-party support. We are hoping that MK Partnerships whose Planning Committee also have to approve the plans will do the same."

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Bedford & Milton Keynes
Waterway Trust

www.
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Bedford Borough Council
Bedford Group of Drainage Boards
Bedford River Users Group
Bedfordshire County Council
British Marine Federation
British Waterways
Country Land & Business
Association & NFU
Countryside Agency
Cranfield University
East of England Tourist Board
East of England
Development Agency
English Nature
English Partnerships
Environment Agency
Forest of Marston Vale
Great Ouse Boating Association
Grand Union (South) Angling Club
Inland Waterways Association
Mid Bedfordshire District Council
Milton Keynes Council
Milton Keynes Parks Trust
Renaissance Bedford
South East England
Development Agency
Sport England
Sustrans
The Ramblers Association
The Waterways Trust
The Wildlife Trust for Beds.
Cambs, Northants & Peterborough





Background details

Link to planning application containing technical drawings and proposed route:

<http://cmis.milton-keynes.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic/Binary.ashx?Document=20473>

Notes to editor...

The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway is a proposed linear Water Park, to be developed in conjunction with the Forest of Marston Vale and Milton Keynes Parks Trust. It will provide enormous benefit to the area in terms of stimulating the economy, providing people with attractive places to live and work, and improving the quality of the local environment.

The project has made significant progress over the last five years. Partners have invested some £200K in development studies, and nearly four times that amount has been contributed in pro-bono professional work and volunteer time. Last year the Trust became a charity and limited company.

The project has a 20-year timescale. The Waterway will be built as opportunities become available on an agreed and secured route, and funding can be found through public, business, charitable and development sources. Plans exist to build first in Milton Keynes, then in Bedford and finally through Marston Vale.

The Waterway is now securely in the Milton Keynes Local Plan, is included in the draft East of England plan, is in the draft L D F's of Mid Beds and Bedford, and is actively supported by the county in terms of contributing, along with the forest, to economic development and the 'green corridor' in the Vale. The Milton Keynes Waterway Park has been short listed under the Big Lottery Living Landmarks fund and the Trust has been awarded a £250K development grant to undertake further studies that will support a full bid for £25m in 2007.