



**Bedfordshire, Luton
and Milton Keynes**
Integrated Care Board



Feasibility Study: The development of additional health and care services in Leighton Buzzard

17 May 2023

What's the background to this Study?



- On 09 February, the Chair and Chief Executive of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (“the ICB”) were pleased to meet with and listen to local residents at Cedars School.
- At the meeting, the ICB reconfirmed that **no decisions had been taken about the development of new health and care hubs**, and discussed the ongoing work to increase recruitment and retention of primary care staff in the Town.
- We heard directly from local residents about many of the issues they face in using primary care, including access to GP appointments.
- We’re listening to these concerns. The ICB is committed to working with local partners to explore increasing primary care capacity in Leighton Buzzard - and this Feasibility Study is one part of the plan.

What's the purpose of this Study?



Respond

Respond to concerns from residents that there is not enough primary care capacity in Leighton Buzzard.



Review

Review what is currently provided to residents



Assess

Assess the options available to determine how we could support the delivery of additional services in the town.

What are local residents telling us are their main concerns?

There are problems getting to see a primary care clinician (e.g. GP or nurse) in Leighton Buzzard

The telephone systems means that there is either a backlog at 8am or people can't get through to the practices to get an appointment.

People are struggling to get a blood test in the town.

There is a significant amount of house building in the town and many local residents are concerned this will increase problems with access.

People have to travel to access urgent care services, and routine hospital specialist care.

- Next month, we look forward to receiving the results of a survey, undertaken by Patient Participation Groups, which will provide more detail on the views of local residents about their health and care services. We are grateful to local PPG representatives for their continued engagement with the ICB on behalf of their patients. Given this study was undertaken during the pre-election period of sensitivity it is especially important for us to discuss with residents the findings of this work now the election is complete.

How have we approached this Feasibility Study?

Project Brief:

- Within a window of six weeks, we have worked with our partners to consider the feasibility of additional health and care services in the Town, where any additional services could be located and an initial exploration of what these services could be, subject to affordability and other considerations. We look forward to discussing findings with local residents.
- This is an exploratory document. It does not set out any formal decisions taken by BLMK ICB

Our approach:

- We have commissioned external expert support to provide the detailed financial and technical advice required to progress this work. This follows conversations with Health Ministers about the potential release of value from NHS land off Vandyke Road in the town
- We have built upon previous scoping work completed in 2019 by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and the former Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

What are the key findings of the Study?

1. The ICB is listening to local people. We understand that local health services are an emotive topic and that it can be distressing to not be able to access the support needed.
2. We need to future proof services in Leighton Buzzard. The scale and pace of housing development in the Town is causing concern, and, while access to primary care services is consistent with other areas in BLMK, we want to make sure services are fit for the future.
3. The Study shows that a new health facility could potentially be built in one of two locations in Leighton Buzzard. Additional facilities could include more space for primary care services and increased diagnostic capacity, subject to affordability, planning and other considerations.
4. The facility could be part-funded by value released from the sale/part-sale of land on Van Dyke Road held by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.
5. The ICB will, however, be likely to need additional capital funding for a new facility.
6. We will be working closely with local and national partners, and local residents, to discuss the detailed findings of this Study and further develop the options it presents.

What is currently provided?



Primary Care Services of the 3 GP practices are delivered from 4 sites, and Primary Care Network services are delivered from Leighton Buzzard Health Centre

The Health Centre is also the base for community nursing services, therapy and nurse-led clinics (ELFT) and the Community Dental Service

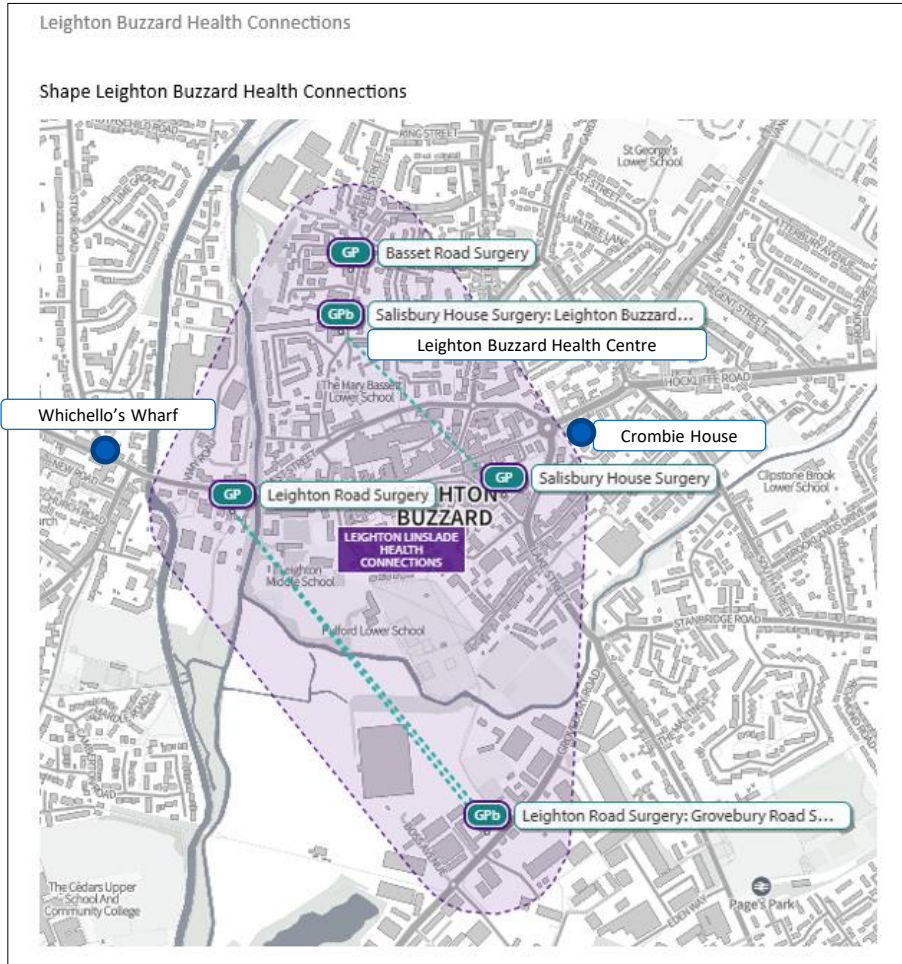


Community Mental Health Services (ELFT) are delivered from Crombie House

Talking Therapies and CAMHS (ELFT) are provided from Whichello's Wharf



What is currently provided?



Services Delivered in Leighton Buzzard	Delivered from GP practice premises	Leighton Buzzard Health Centre	Crombie House	Whichello's Wharf	Delivered in own patients' homes	Other location in Leighton Buzzard
Core primary care capacity	✓				✓	
Space for shared services across the PCN		✓				
Talking Therapies				✓		✓
Eating Disorder Service				✓		
Community Mental Health Services (severe & enduring mental illness)			✓			
CAMHS clinics				✓		
0-19 universal child health services		✓?			✓	
Podiatry		✓				
Speech & Language Therapy		✓				
Phlebotomy	✓	✓			✓	
Community midwifery	✓					
Community nursing		✓			✓	
Palliative care					✓	
PCN additional roles - social prescribing link workers, care coordinators, physios, paramedics, clinical pharmacists	✓	✓				
Non-obstetric ultrasound (NOUS)	✓					
Spirometry	✓					
Community MSK	✓					✓
Adult social care						✓
Rehabilitation therapy services					✓	
Specialist Nurses, e.g. Epilepsy, MS, Parkinsons, Diabetes, Heart Failure		✓			✓	
Continence Clinics		✓			✓	
Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Services						✓
Community Dental Service		✓				
Smoking cessation	✓					
Health Checks	✓					
Cancer Screening	✓					✓

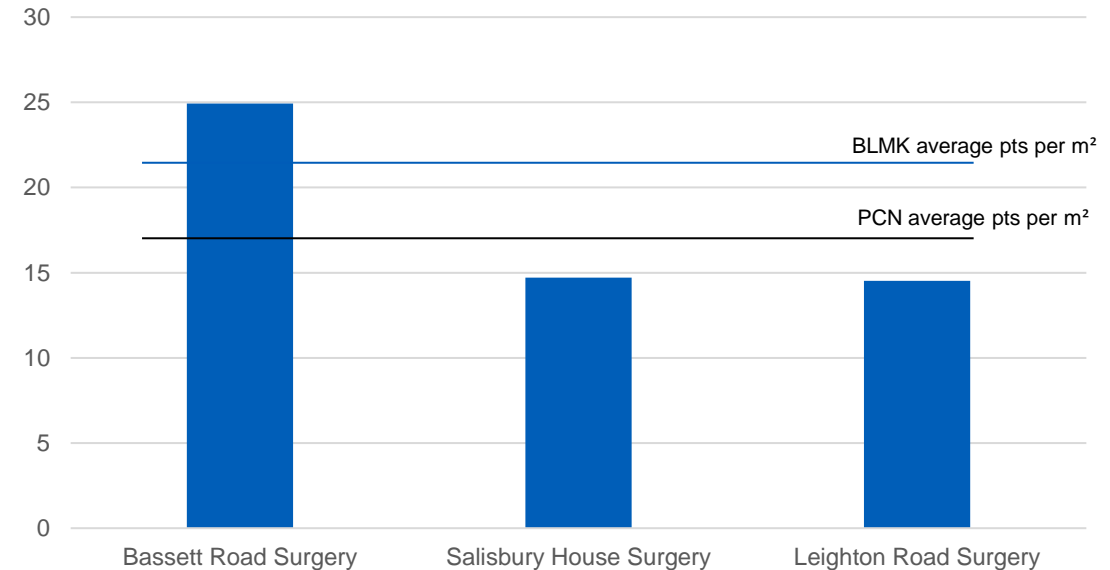
How are our services performing?

Access to primary care services in Leighton Buzzard is slightly better than the national average. For the latest reporting period of October 22-January 2023, the three GP practices carried out a total of **75,797** patient appointments, which is an increase of over 3,000 appointments for the same time period last year.

At 17.36 patients per m², the premises capacity across the three GP practices in the town is better than the BLMK average. However, Bassett Road Surgery is considered constrained and the Primary Care Network has plans to expand services which will be difficult to achieve without additional space longer term. Housing growth in the town is likely to impact on primary care estate capacity over the next ten years.

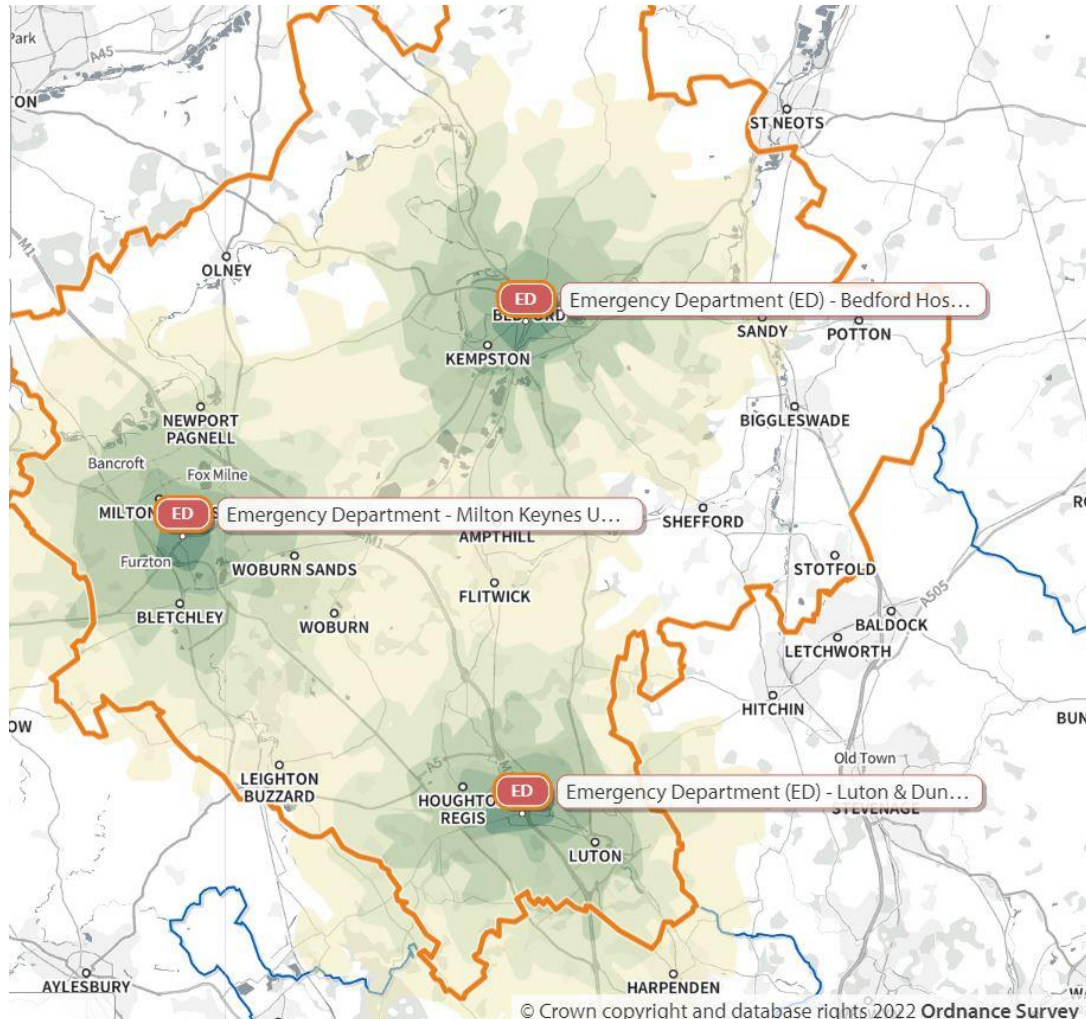
There are a number of services not provided directly within Leighton Buzzard and where residents of the town need to travel to access them. These include some community clinics for example, Tissue Viability, mental health services for older people and the majority of specialist learning disability service provision. Complex diagnostics and specialist care, for example hospital-led outpatient appointments are not delivered directly in the town. Leighton Buzzard has more primary care appointments per 1000 population than the average across England, though fewer of these are same day appointments as the table on the right shows.

GP Practices – Premises Capacity: Patients per m²



October 22 – January 2023	Leighton Buzzard	England Average
Appts per 1,000 population	1,468	1,405
% Face to Face Appts	87%	69%
% Same Day Appts	39%	45%

How far do residents have to travel?



Average travel times to the two nearest hospitals (Luton and Dunstable Hospital and Milton Keynes Hospital) are 25-35 minutes for residents of Leighton Buzzard.

Local access to urgent care services is a key priority for the residents of the town, who have indicated that these travel times can be longer at peak traffic times.

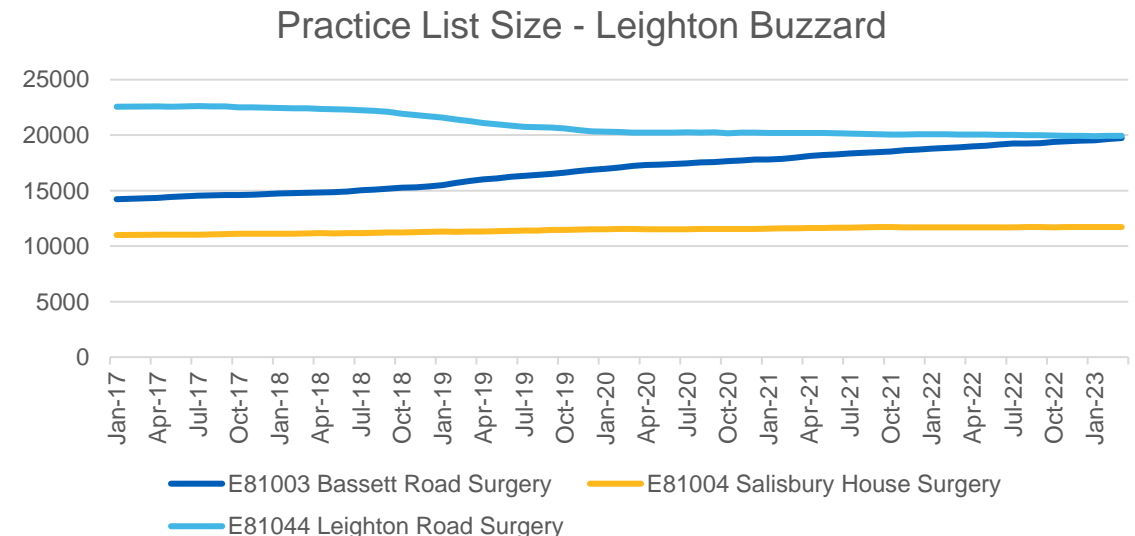
What is needed in the future?

There are a number of large housing development sites within Leighton Buzzard, which are expected to increase demand for health and care services. This growth along with broader changes to the population may change the profile of need in the town over time.

The total site allocations in Central Bedfordshire’s current Local Plan (until 2035) allow for a further 2,448 houses to be built out in the town, with an average of 2.4 residents per new home. This could increase the population of the town by a further 5,900 residents in the next ten years. There is limited data available about how the new houses have changed the demographics of the town so far, and so it is difficult to predict who will buy the additional new houses (e.g. likely to include some existing residents of the town), and therefore how this will affect health and care needs.

As well as growing in number, the shape of the population is changing. For Central Bedfordshire as a whole, we expect there to be a significant increase in the number of people over 65, and the number of those over 75 is forecast to increase by 71% between 2021-2041. This change in age profile is, in part, due to an increase in life expectancy. The changing demographic profile has an impact on the level of needs within the population, with an upward trend in conditions and illness linked to ageing, e.g. Cancer and long term conditions such as Diabetes, COPD, Cardiovascular Disease.

Number of dwellings built on site since 1st April 2015	Total identified supply remaining (2015-2035 Local Plan period)
1,187	2,448



What service areas are considered?

Primary care services are expanding in Leighton Buzzard, and there are now more clinicians working with the three practices in the town (the Primary Care Network). The ICB has helped to recruit 2 Clinical Pharmacists, 2 Care Co-ordinators, 4 Health and Wellbeing Coaches, an Advanced Practitioner Paramedic, a Physiotherapist and a Digital and Transformation Lead, creating a multi-professional team to support GPs and help more people to access an appointment. We want to see the workforce in Leighton Buzzard continue to grow.

The Network has ambitions to further expand their team to improve the care offered to people with longer-term and more complex health needs, and to provide greater focus on prevention. The ICB is keen to support a growing primary care estate to accommodate a growing workforce, subject to planning and affordability considerations.

Although some non-complex diagnostics are already available locally, we anticipate this capacity will need to increase. Flexible clinical space is likely to be required to support this. Facilities to enable mobile diagnostic provision in the future could be valuable.

The ICB is preparing for a re-procurement of urgent primary care services in 2024 and is currently in the process of revising its Urgent Care Strategy to prepare for this. The GP Practices in Leighton Buzzard will be supported to continue to improve their “same-day” services, which may include the development of some shared services across the Primary Care Network. These services are likely to require additional space. Any potential future provision of out of hours services in the town would be likely to need access to flexible clinical space.

Potential Service Options

The priorities at this stage is to consider additional primary care capacity - space which can be used flexibly to accommodate service developments over time. Significant further detail would need to be worked through as part of the development of an Outline Business Case for a new facility, including workforce and delivery plans for these services, and the affordability of service revenue implications. Close engagement with partners – and with residents – would be essential.

Option	Additional Primary Care Space (GP Practice)	Additional Shared Primary Care Space (PCN)	Bookable Clinical Rooms, Meeting Rooms, Space for Mobile Diagnostics/ Screening (Sliding Scale)	Reprovision of Mental Health Services	Expansion Space
Option A	√*		√		√
Option B	√	√	√		√
Option C	√	√	√	√	

*Core Primary Care OR Primary Care Network Space

What are the accommodation and revenue requirements?

Service Option	Option A	Option B	Option C
Initial Build Area (m ²)	488	727	1,443 (assume 2-storey, 722 footprint)
Expansion Area (m ²)	200	350	0
External Area (m ²)	1,700	2,500	3,000
Gross Land Area Required (m ²)	2,388 (0.24 Hectares)	3,577 (0.36 Hectares)	3,722 (0.37 Hectares)

Service Option	Indicative Running Costs (Service Charges & Facilities Management)
Option A	£73,200 per annum
Option B	£109,050 p.a.
Option C	£216,450 p.a

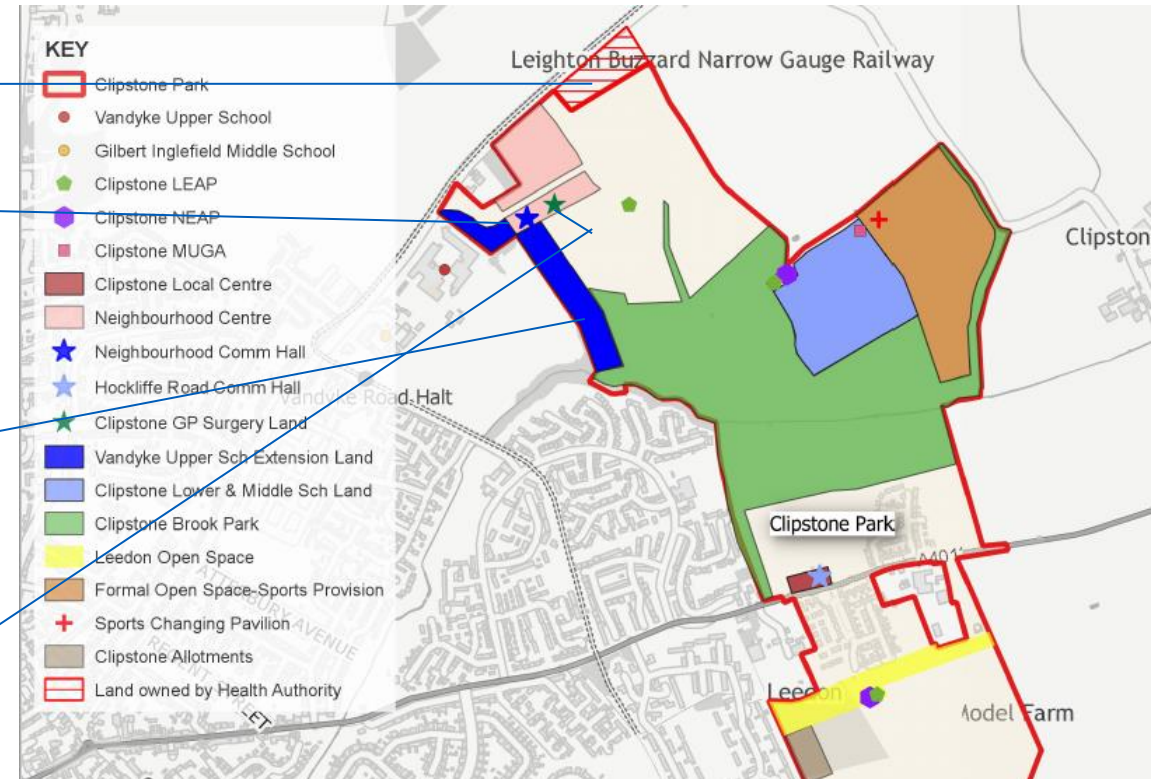
What sites have we reviewed?

Site 1: Land held by Secretary of State for Health (Department for Health & Social Care - DHSC)

Site 2: Co-location with community facilities to be delivered by Central Bedfordshire Council in Clipstone Park

Site 3: Land set aside for expansion of Van Dyke school

Site 4: Land set aside by developers for provision of a GP surgery in Clipstone Park

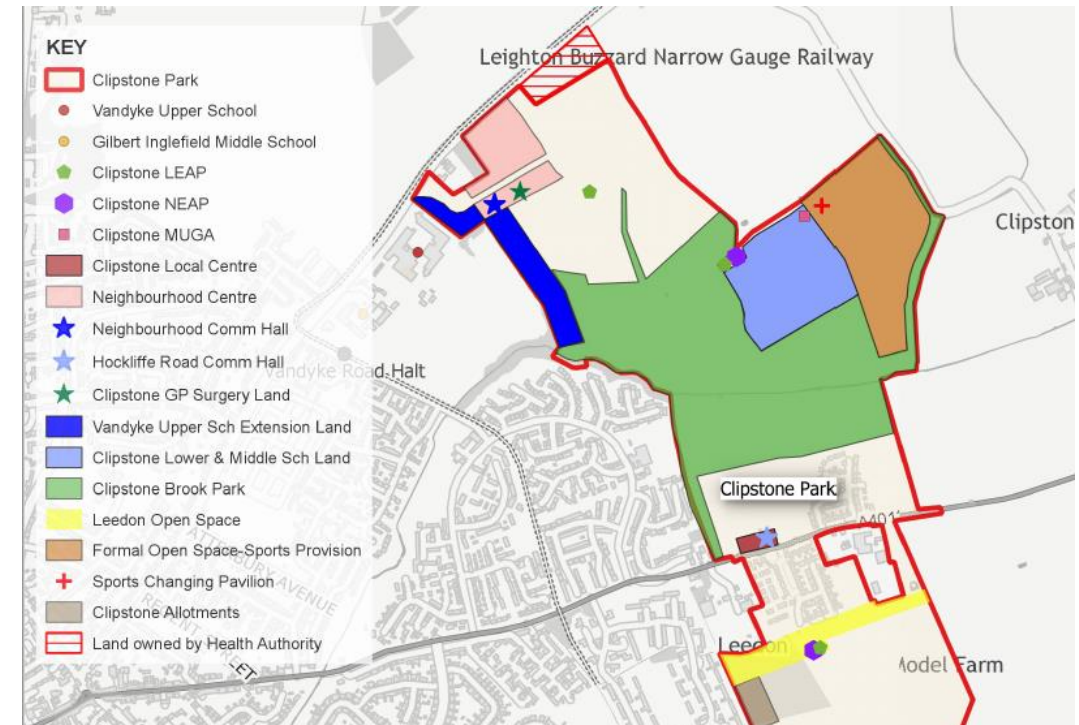


A more detailed options appraisal at a future Outline Business Case stage would need to include consideration of how the existing assets in the town could also help to enable delivery of the service model, including the four GP practice sites.

Potential Sites: Opportunities/Constraints

The four site options have been assessed against criteria including i) Access; ii) Ability to develop; iii) Future flexibility; iv) Connectivity; v) Stakeholder buy-in.

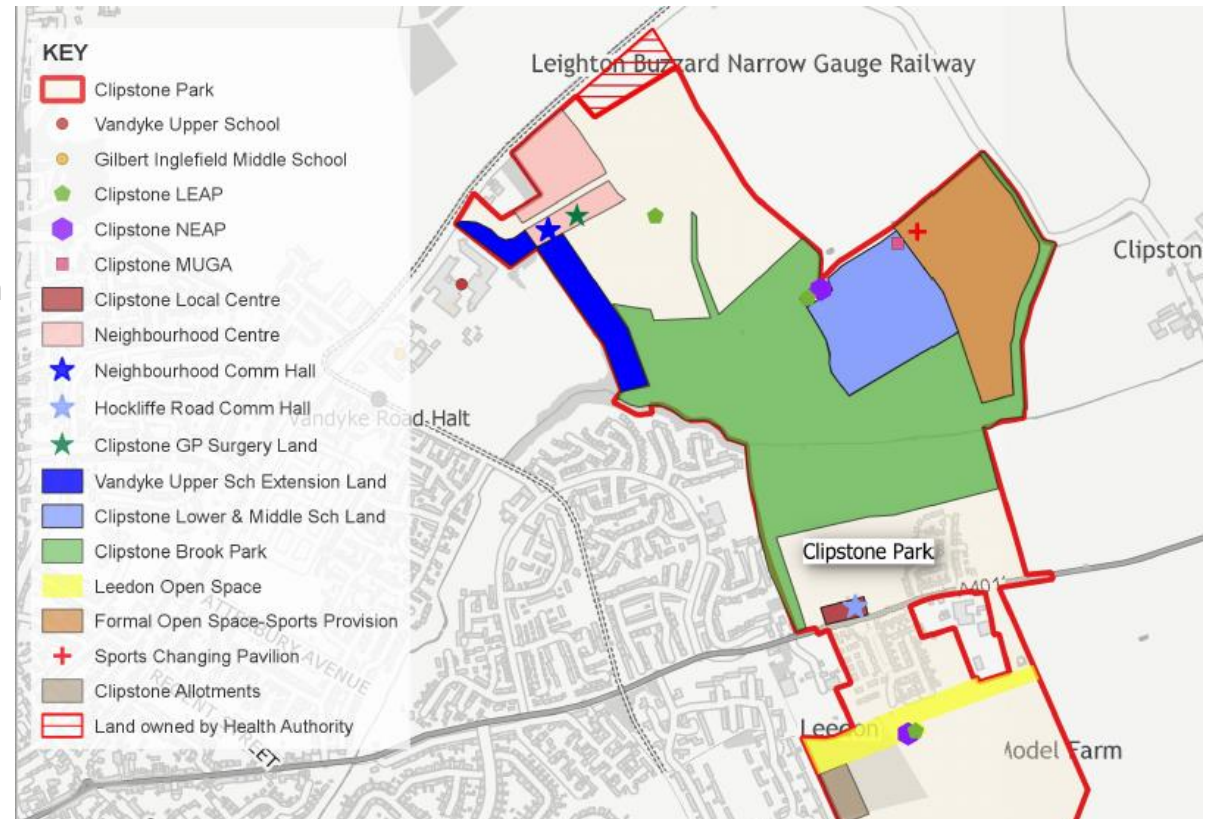
- Site 1 (DHSC land – 1.7 Ha)
 - ✓ good access
 - ✓ no significant planning issues
 - ✓ assumed to be unencumbered (subject to due diligence)
 - ✓ potential for sale of whole site or partial development and sale
- Site 2 (Clipstone Park Community Co-location – 0.37 Ha)
 - ✓ good access
 - ✓ unlikely to be any planning issues
 - ✓ excellent fit with strategy of co-location
 - ✓ potential for shared infrastructure costs
 - extensive discussion/agreement required with third parties (CBC/Land owners/Community)
 - potential issues around amending s106 agreements
 - lack of clarity around exact site area available to Health System
 - limited room for expansion



Potential Sites: Opportunities/constraints

- Site 3 (expansion space for Van Dyke Road School)
 - ✓ good access
 - ✓ unlikely to be planning issues
 - long/thin land strip making development more complex
 - site in ownership of School and development plans unknown
 - potential issues around s106 agreements

- Site 4 (Clipstone Park Standalone – 0.16 Ha)
 - ✓ good access
 - ✓ no planning issues
 - site too small for any of current options
 - no room for expansion



What are the options?

Service Options	Site 1 <i>Land held by Secretary of State for Health (Van Dyke Road)</i>	Site 2 <i>Co-location with community facilities to be delivered by Central Bedfordshire Council in Clipstone Park</i>	Site 3 <i>Land set aside for expansion of Van Dyke school</i>	Site 4 <i>Land set aside for provision of a GP surgery in Clipstone Park</i>
Option A <i>Primary Care & Flexible Space</i>	Achievable within estimated capital envelope	Achievable within estimated capital envelope	Site not available	Site too small
Option B <i>Primary Care & PCN & Flexible Space</i>	Only achievable with additional capital funding of c£1.944m*	Only achievable with additional capital funding of c£1.185m*	Site not available	Site too small
Option C <i>Primary Care & PCN & Flexible Space and Mental Health Re-provision</i>	Not affordable	Not affordable	Site not available	Site too small

* Depending on the source of additional capital funding, this may increase the revenue impact for the local system. We have assessed the likely costs associated with delivering each of the service options against the potential capital funding which could be made. Much of this information is commercially-sensitive, and therefore the full detail has not been set out in this public summary document. This assessment includes a range of assumptions which will require further analysis and due diligence (e.g. site surveys) and discussion with partners.

What are the next steps?

- We look forward to now discussing the findings of this Study with local residents and Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), and with local primary care representatives.
- We want to continue to test the core assumptions in this study to make sure they are robust and work closely with our partners to do so, including our affordability assessments and commercial analysis.
- Further discussion with local and national partners to consider options will be held in June 2023 - we'll keep residents updated on these.
- If agreed, the ICB will need to undertake the development of an Outline Business Case including due diligence on site options, development of site designs, consideration of construction methods and a detailed assessment of affordability.
- Information will be regularly posted on our website www.blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org and on our social media pages @BLMKHealthCare. You can also contact us at blmkicb.contactus@nhs.net