

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 16th September 2019

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WARD(S): Central

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Rob Anderson – Cabinet Member for Transport and Environmental Services

PART I KEY DECISION

STOKE ROAD CORRIDOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT WORKS, INCLUDING SLOUGH TRAIN STATION NORTHERN FORECOURT PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek:

- Cabinet's approval to progress implementation of Stoke Road Corridor Highway improvement works to provide an enhanced highway transport infrastructure to support the planned regeneration projects to take place.
- Cabinet's approval to progress implementation of the associated public realm improvement works at Northern Forecourt of Slough Train Station;
- Cabinet's approval to progress implementation of associated junction improvements at A4 Wellington St / Wexham Rd;
- Cabinet's approval to progress implementation of the quiet cycle route between Slough Station and the Canal Wharf development, including the potential new canal footbridge.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- a) That the offer of the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) to provide **£7.65 Million** from the **Local Growth Fund Stream 3** funding towards the cost of the proposed improvement schemes be welcomed;
- b) That the design of the scheme as outlined in paras Section 4, be agreed in principle subject to the development of the designs through the detailed design process;
- c) That Officers proceed to secure the land agreements required to receive the new footbridge span over the Grand Union Canal as indicated on the supporting

information in Section 5; to be carried out in agreement with Canal River Trust and Slough Urban Regeneration (SUR);

- d) That the results of the consultation exercise completed on Friday 1st February 2019 are accepted and the installation of the scheme be approved.
- e) That Officers investigate further opportunities, made possible by implementation of the scheme, to work towards the aims of the recently released Transport Vision document; in particular to reduce congestion, improve air quality by promoting public transport and reducing the dominance of the car as a mode of travel.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Protecting vulnerable children:

- 1.1. The combination of a reduction in vehicle speeds, high quality resurfacing and the installation of traffic signals provided by the schemes will provide a higher level of road safety for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 1.2. The scheme will implement new controlled pedestrian crossings at the junction of Wellington Street / Wexham Rd and the junction of Stoke Rd / Elliman Ave / Shaggy Calf Lane, promoting safer ways to cross major roads.

Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities:

- 1.3. Access to Slough station from the north for non-car modes will be improved, allowing residents of the new developments to take advantage of new rail connections such as Crossrail to central and east London and the Western Rail Link to Heathrow Airport, and also allow them to interchange onto bus services to Slough Trading Estate and Heathrow.

Improving mental health and wellbeing:

- 1.4. The scheme will promote a more sustainable alternative to the private car for travelling to and from major employment areas, the town centre and residential communities, by promoting public transport while also improving cycle facilities.
- 1.5. The scheme is in line with Slough Borough Council's Low Emission Strategy (LES) 14 which forms part of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The LES aims to reduce emissions from road transport, and to improve the borough's air quality, by amongst other measures, promoting modal shift away from cars, and promoting the use of electric vehicles through the use of electric buses and provision of electric vehicle charging points at the proposed Park and Ride site.
- 1.6. Provision of high quality public transport will give people opportunities to reduce their reliance on car use and promote positive behavioural change in personal health through walking to and from rapid transit stops.

- 1.7. A high-quality cycle route between Stoke Wharf (canal basin) south to Slough Station and the town centre will support travel by active modes, especially for short commuter trips in the peak hours and in doing so will limit traffic growth and congestion along this corridor.
- 1.8. The scheme is a continuation of improvements being made by the Council to increase the level of accessibility to, from and around the town for residents, employees and visitors. These will support the regeneration of six major brownfield sites at Stoke Road and improved interchange and parking at Slough station. It will mitigate existing and forecast levels of congestion and make a significant contribution to enabling the creation of new jobs in Slough, which in turn will have a positive effect on the lives of those workers and their families.

Housing:

- 1.9. The scheme links with the SJWS priority of developing a mix of housing to meet existing and future needs and providing more choice for home-seekers. The scheme will help unlock four key developments of over 4000 new housing units in the town centre.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs:

- 1.10. The installation of traffic signals and controlled pedestrian crossings provided by the scheme will provide a higher level of road safety for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 1.11. Improving public transport services will enable children and young people in Slough to access facilities and organisations that could contribute towards positive life chances. Provision of high quality public transport will encourage more people to manage their own health through reducing their reliance on cars;

Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay:

- 1.12. By improving access to the northern forecourt of Slough train Station and by carrying out public realm improvements in this region, the scheme will complement the station upgrade undertaken in 2012. This will provide enhanced access to Crossrail, Great Western and Western Rail Link to Heathrow services. The redevelopment of the Thames Valley University (TVU) site will include provision for improved links to the station and additional car parking for rail users.
- 1.13. Improving access to the centre of Slough for leisure and shopping as well as work will ensure it remains vibrant, living, and that the cultural facilities are well used.
- 1.14. The scheme will also provide a better alternative to car travel thereby reducing the volume of traffic in Slough and improving the sense of place.

Our residents will live in good quality homes:

- 1.15. The scheme will help facilitate the sustainable development of over 4000 new dwellings supporting regeneration in the town centre.

1.16. Homeowners in areas benefiting from improved air quality and reduced congestion will see an improvement to the quality of their homes.

Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents:

1.17. The council will be in a position to attract and retain more commercial units to support the growth in the town and in so doing increase business rates and job opportunities.

1.18. New interchange facilities, along with new bus stops and bus waiting facilities will also improve access by rail and bus to employment and training opportunities in Slough and the wider TVB sub region.

1.19. The scheme will help maximise accessibility to key employment areas/services by all modes and encourage continued development and investment in Slough. All of these elements will allow Slough to continue to attract investment for future and further growth, and to fund further, much-needed improvements in the transport network and development sites.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

The total scheme outturn cost, on which the business case for funding is based, is now estimated as £10.9m, including inflation and risk. The Stoke Road scheme has been through the Capital Strategy Board and is included in the capital programme for the next two years.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal:		
Risk of challenge to land acquisitions.	Council to follow due process and secure full support where required.	
Delay/ failure in achieving Planning Consent.	Public consultation and close working with Ward Members, NAGs, Parish Councils and partners, bearing in mind that the affected land lies within the approved Bath Road Widening Line. On-going dialogue with planning officers to address likely concerns.	
Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders required for elements of the scheme modifying the use of the highway.	Early discussion with stakeholders to resolve issues.	

Property:	No implication	
Human Rights	See below.	
Health and Safety: Road safety hazards during construction	No significant risks, outside of what would normally be expected for a construction scheme of this nature, identified at this stage. Traffic management measures to be utilised to minimise road hazards.	
Employment Issues	No risks identified.	Scheme is expected to generate job opportunities.
Equalities Issues: Compliance with Equality Act 2010	The scheme proposals are an integral part of Slough's LTP3 which was subject to an EIA in 2010.	Greater frequency of bus services will widen accessibility opportunities.
Community Support: Unfavourable response to wider public consultation.	Programme allows for detailed design to be modified where necessary to meet specific objections.	Public consultation offers the opportunity to sell the scheme to residents of the borough.
Communications: Public unaware of proposals	Appropriate consultation to be carried out before the works implemented if necessary. Keep public updated on progress of scheme via Council website.	

Community Safety	No risks identified	
<p>Financial:</p> <p>The capital costs of the scheme increase as a result of factors uncovered at preparatory survey and design stages or unexpectedly high tender prices.</p> <p>Statutory Undertaker diversions cost underestimated</p> <p>Damage to statutory utility apparatus</p>	<p>As detailed site survey information is obtained, there will be further cost reviews as part of the design process. A Comprehensive QRA process will be undertaken as part of the detailed design work. Value engineering to be employed where necessary.</p> <p>Continual liaison with Statutory Undertakers. Value engineering of planned diversions at preliminary design stage.</p> <p>Ensure latest statutory undertakers plans are obtained; undertake trial holes; scan ground prior to excavation. Undertake hand digging where required, in line with NJUG guidelines.</p>	
<p>Project Capacity:</p> <p>Delays during planning stage.</p> <p>Delays in procurement process.</p> <p>Lack of resource within Slough DSO.</p> <p>Delays during construction</p>	<p>Ensure robust scheme and orders presented at planning application and publication. Employ experienced consultant and in house teams to prepare and complete the statutory process, where needed.</p> <p>Programme to allow adequate time for procurement.</p> <p>Discussions underway to install a dedicated DSO team with the relevant skillset to deliver the project</p> <p>Continually review programme to ensure sufficient time allowance made to address potential delays. Constant dialogue with Slough DSO during scheme build. Seek early advice from SBC DSO on buildability issues. Liaison with external bodies to assist in development and acceptance of scheme design.</p>	<p>Dedicated DSO team assembled to deliver this project will be able to deliver future projects in Slough.</p>
<p>Other:</p> <p>Impact on local residents, businesses and the general public in the immediate</p>	<p>Construction Management Plan will be developed to protect their interests by minimising impacts, such as noise, vibration and traffic, during the period of construction</p>	

<p>vicinity of the construction works.</p> <p>Traffic congestion resulting from construction phase.</p> <p>SUR and Town Centre Developments.</p>	<p>Coordinate construction works with other planned highway schemes. Plan construction elements which have most impact on traffic to coincide with school holidays.</p> <p>Ongoing negotiations with SUR and other town centre developers to reduce the further risk of construction programming and other conflict of interest.</p>	<p>Canal Basin Development works to firm up the footbridge location.</p>
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(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Legal agreements (BAPA) need to be entered with Network Rail under their GRIP process and with Canal River Trust for the new footbridge over the Grand Union Canal.

Traffic Regulation Orders will be required and these will be subject to normal procedures.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The scheme's elements will support the five key priorities for the Council outlined in Slough's Third Local Transport Plan 2011- 2026 which was the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out in 2010. The aims of the scheme are to offer significant improvement to transport routes and public transport that will benefit all equality groups. The SMaRT Business Case has also assessed the specific social and distributional impacts of the scheme and the results were:

- **Severance** - The impact was found to be neutral to equality groups, due to a very small number of roads experiencing an increase and decrease in traffic flows as a result of the proposed scheme;
- **Personal Security** – The scheme is expected to have a neutral impact on security. It will improve the overall reliability of bus services and have a positive impact on personal security as people have a reduced waiting time between buses; and
- **Accessibility** - The impact on vulnerable groups was appraised as slightly beneficial because the scheme demonstrates an improved bus service frequency. Certain protected characteristics (disability, children and young people, older people and women) are more reliant on public transport than others; therefore improving access to public transport is a positive impact from the scheme. The 2011 census revealed that car ownership amongst Slough

residents is lower than the regional average; therefore enhancements to public transport also address this point.

A separate EIA will be conducted on the detailed design proposals as the scheme progresses to identify, and mitigate against, any potential adverse impacts arising during the individual work programmes.

(e) Workforce

The proposed strategy for delivery of the construction phase of the scheme is through the Council's Direct Service Organisation (DSO).

The Council's DSO are increasing their workforce and their capacity to manage designers and subcontractors, in order to deliver the schemes. There will be an increasing move away from consultants and subcontractors to the use of directly employed staff and workforce as we develop our in-house capability.

(f) Property

No Implication.

(g) Carbon Emissions and Energy Costs

An Air Quality Assessment will be undertaken as part of the scheme, with a view to implementing any potential mitigation measures that are deemed necessary.

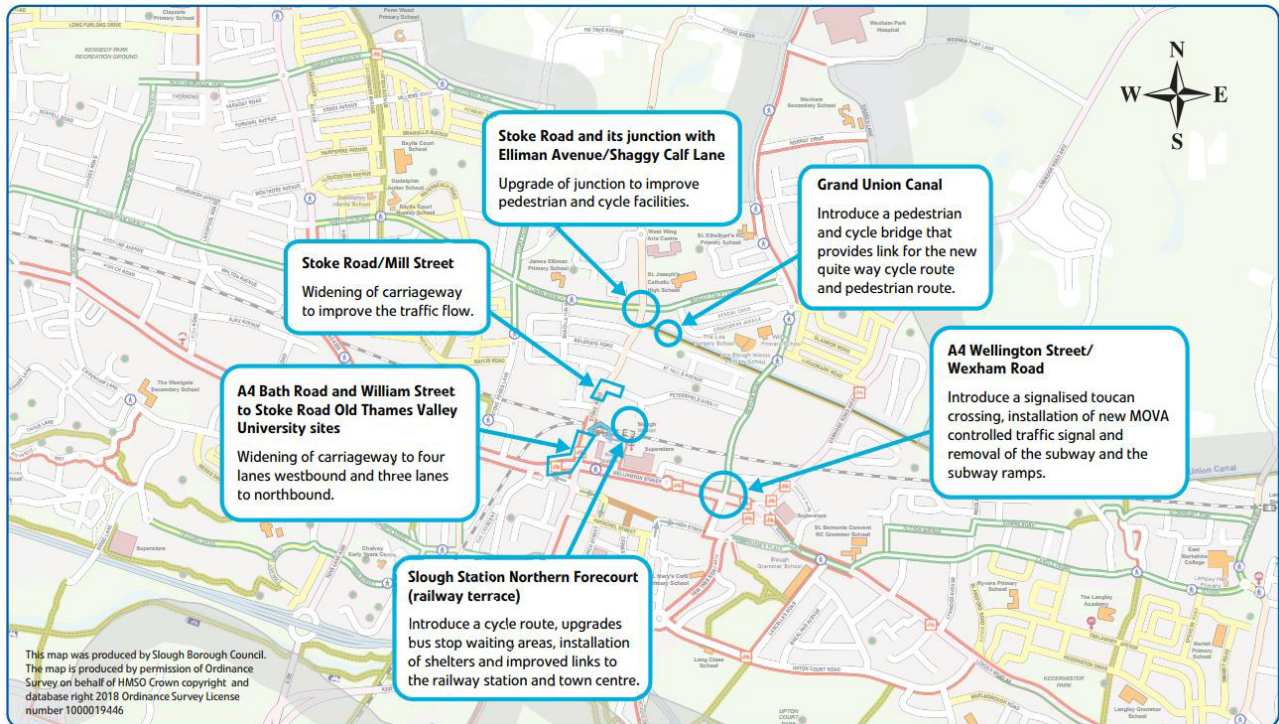
5 **Supporting Information**

5.1. The Transport Vision for the Centre of Slough presents a 20-year journey for the town and a transport-led vision to drive development and regeneration to 2040 and beyond. At the heart of the vision is the creation of a low-car environment, supported by the following ambitions:

- Create a world class town centre where people want to work, live and visit;
- Reconnect the centre of Slough with the rest of the borough with public transport-led regeneration;
- Provide a walkable high-quality urban centre with green spaces and streets;
- Attract and support more leading global businesses.
- To bring about net improvements in air quality.

The scheme's elements (as shown in figure 1), delivered together as a whole package, will seek to fulfil the ambitions by transforming the centre of Slough for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists with new routes, for motorists with improved junctions, signalling and access to development sites, businesses using improved interchange facilities and an improved local transport network.

Figure 1: Scheme Location Context



This scheme is based on:

- £3.5 million for Stoke Road Corridor – Please refer to the attached Stoke Road Corridor concept design master plan in Appendix C.
- £3.8 million for Wellington Road / TVU Site Junction - Please refer to the attached Wellington Road / TVU Site Junction in Appendix D.
- £2.1 million for Station Northern Approach - Please refer to the attached Railway Station North Forecourt Concept Design in Appendix E.
- £1.0 million for Canal Basin Footbridge - Please refer to the attached Proposed Canal Footbridge Location Plan in Appendix F.
- £0.5 million for Wexham Road and Wellington Road Junction - Please refer to the attached Wellington Street & Wexham Road Proposed New Junction Layout in Appendix G.

(More described information on the above five elements of the scheme will be provided)

This outturn figure will be subject to any increase in design or construction costs due to unforeseen circumstances.

The BLTB has agreed to fund the scheme through the Local Growth Fund Stream 3. £3.28m has been agreed for year 1 (2019/20), with an additional £4.37m agreed for year 2 (2020/2021).

The remaining funding of £3.25 million will be made available via S106 contributions & Capital borrowing.

The strategy for delivery of the preliminary and detailed design phases of the scheme is via the award of an agreement through the ESPO Consultancy Services Framework (reference 664-17).

5.2. The scheme's elements are fundamental to the delivery of key elements of the Local Plan:

- *Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment within the "Centre of Slough":*
The implementation of a successful scheme will support future regeneration plans for the centre of Slough.
- *Protecting the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs:*
The scheme seeks to reduce congestion and make net improvements to air quality. The scheme also aims to make much-needed public realm improvements to the Centre of Slough.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

None

7 **Conclusion**

7.1. There are clear and significant social and economic benefits to the scheme and it is in best interest of borough residents and society in general to proceed.

7.2. It is recommended that The BLTB offer for Stoke Road Corridor Improvements be accepted.

7.3. In addition to the key recommendations of this report, as laid out in section 2, it is recommended that officers continue, in parallel, the following activities:

- Scheme detailed design in readiness for installation by Slough DSO;
- Utility diversions, where necessary, prior to the main works;
- Continue discussions with Network Rail and Canal River Trust to secure their support and agreement for the Station Northern Forecourt Improvement Works and Construction of new footbridge over the Grand Union Canal.
- Ensure that DSO has the capacity and capability to implement various elements of the scheme.

8 **Appendices Attached**

Appendix A – Stoke Road Area Regeneration – Consultation Leaflet

Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Appendix C – Stoke Road Corridor Concept Design

Appendix D – Wellington Road – TVU Site Junction

Appendix E – Railway Station North Forecourt Concept Design

Appendix F – Proposed Canal Footbridge Location Plan

Appendix G – Wellington Street / Wexham Road Proposed New Junction Layout