

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** June 15th 2020

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WARD(S): Central

PORTFOLIO: Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and
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PART I **KEY DECISION**

SHAPING SLOUGH TOWN CENTRE: REGENERATION UPDATE

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In March 2020, Slough Borough Council (“SBC” or “the Council”) commenced work on the production of a Regeneration Framework Masterplan for the Centre of Slough. The purpose of the framework is principally to set out a clear vision and spatial plan for the development and regeneration of Slough town centre and by doing so confirm the opportunities for growth and transformation on a site specific and town centre wide basis.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the progress of key town centre projects and seek approval for the vision, objectives and principles of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan, which will then underpin the spatial plan for the town centre.

2 Recommendations

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That the Regeneration Framework Masterplan vision, objectives and principles as set out in section, 5.2 and the confidential Appendix one be agreed;
- (b) That the timetable and progress of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan, and proposed next steps, as set out in sections 5.4-5.9 of the report be noted;
- (c) That the background and proposed next steps for the Slough Central scheme in confidential Appendix two be noted.

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

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

Relevant Priorities

Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities – The Regeneration Framework Masterplan will enable the creation of better quality and more connected public spaces in the town, encourage more active lifestyles and promote the provision of high quality affordable homes, leisure facilities and places of work, increasing access for all.

Improving mental health and wellbeing –The provision of high quality open spaces and townscape will be designed with health & wellbeing in mind as a central aspiration for the regeneration of the town moving forward.

Housing- The Regeneration Framework Masterplan will rationalise the apportionment of housing across the study area and will be a tool to enable early discussions with key stakeholders on design quality expectations and the provision of affordable housing and housing typology.

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

The delivery of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan is addressing the Five-Year Plan outcomes as follows:

- **Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful**;- To ensure that the town centre provides an even stronger focus for everyone living in Slough with an enhanced leisure and cultural offer, a high quality public realm and network of open spaces and improved walking and cycling routes and public transport. These outputs will make it easier for everybody to access the centre and the natural environment on the edge of the town and deliver improved health & wellbeing;
- **Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs**;- The provision of high quality public realm and open spaces and improved access including walking and cycling routes will encourage healthy lifestyles and improved health & wellbeing;
- **Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay**; - To set out the Council's and stakeholder vision for the Centre of Slough, and set the tone for the quality of the revitalised town centre. Central to our aspirations is the delivery of a new Central Business District (CBD), good quality homes and successful daytime to evening, night time and weekend economy, aimed at making Slough a destination;
- **Our residents will live in good quality homes**;- Will assist in rationalising existing development sites, ensuring the delivery of a range of housing types and an appropriate level of affordable homes;
- **Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents**;- Central to the emerging work is the new Central Business District (CBD). Emphasis is also being placed on ensuring a new and vibrant high street, business incubation/innovation spaces, aimed at building on Slough's history of being a place that supports and grows new

business and entrepreneurship, as well as seeking to relocate and advance existing larger businesses and multinational companies.

4 **Other Implications**

a. Financial

There is no anticipated in-year financial pressure, however there is an expectation that the next update will provide Members with both, capital and revenue costs, for future financial years.

b. Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats / Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
2.1 Agree the Regeneration Framework Masterplan vision, objectives and principles as set out in section, 5.2 and Appendix 1;	Not having evidenced objectives to underpin the Regeneration Framework Masterplan, vision and outputs	Ensuring that SBC has collated technical and empirical evidence to create a series of objectives that support the holistic and positively impactful placemaking project for the Centre of Slough.	L: 2 I:3 =6	Ensure that the direction of travel of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan maintains course and pace and reflects the needs of Slough's communities.
	Fall-out from COVID-19 and its impact on the priorities and redevelopment projects in the Centre of Slough	Ensure continuous monitoring of market signals and expertise made available to SBC and its partners. Being flexible and adaptable during the upcoming months and integrating new opportunities	L:4 I:3 =12	Continue monitoring, engaging with key stakeholders and SBC staff and Members

		and initiatives that can support the work of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan i.e. joint work on meanwhile use strategy with Muse and British Land.		
2.2 Note the timetable and progress of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan, and proposed next steps, as set out in sections 5.4-5.9 of the report;	<p>Delay in progressing the Regeneration Framework Masterplan</p> <p>Delay in progressing the Slough Central work programme</p>	Ensuring effective programme management and reporting to the Town Centre Regeneration Group, LM&Ds and Cabinet	L:3 I:3 =9	<p>Review of key programme milestones</p> <p>Review of impact of COVID-19 and adapting outputs of existing work in line with changing market signals, and the Council's emerging Inclusive Growth and Corporate COVID-19 recovery strategies</p>
2.3 Note the background and proposed next steps for the Slough Central scheme in Appendix 2.	That ADIA cease investment in the planning application owing to financial uncertainty or lack of confidence in the scheme	Regular engagement is taking place with the BL team to manage project engagement and show positive intent to work constructively	L:3 I:3 =9	Continue to allocate adequate resource to managing the project and addressing the technical workstreams linked to the Regeneration Framework, Slough Central Masterplan and outline planning application

(a) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Under Section 13 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council must keep under review the matters, which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development.

These matters include the principal physical, economic social and environmental characteristics of the area, the principal purposes for which land is used in the area, the size, composition and distribution of the population of the area, the communications, transport system and traffic of the area, and any other considerations, which may be expected to affect those matters. The matters also include any changes which the Council think may occur in relation to any other matter and the effect any such changes are likely to have on the development of the Council' s area or on the planning of such development.

The Council must also keep under review and examine the above matters in relation to any neighbouring area to the extent that those matters may be expected to affect local planning authority for the neighbouring area in question.

(b) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no current Equalities Impact Assessment undertaken. The Regeneration Framework Masterplan is a non-statutory document, which will be subject to a separate EQIA as part of its delivery.

(e) Workforce

There are no immediate implications on SBC's workforce. Resources needed to support the delivery of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan and Slough Central workstreams are being monitored and reviewed by the Service Lead Regeneration Development.

(f) Property

See section 5 below.

5 Supporting Information

Background

5.1 The Council commenced work in early 2020 to develop the Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework Masterplan ("RFM"), supported by expert external consultants. Scheduled for approval by Cabinet in September 2020, the output will be a single corporate document, supported by masterplanning, which will establish a regeneration vision for key sites included in the "Square Mile" area approved by Cabinet in November 2019.

5.2 The RFM aims to deliver the following objectives:

Objective One	To deliver a 21 st century town centre that is accessible to everybody and enhances health and well being
Objective Two	To develop a New Central Business District to the south of the railway station
Objective Three	To revitalise the shopping and leisure offer in the town centre

Objective Four	To deliver a range of new homes in the town centre;
Objective Five	To strengthen Slough's cultural offer;
Objective Six	To create a people focused public realm
Objective Seven	To improve connections between the town centre and Slough's neighbourhoods and the wider area;
Objective Eight	To deliver a step change in the quality of design and architecture in the town centre;
Objective Nine	To provide the right amount of car parking in the right locations
Objective Ten	To deliver small interventions, events and early wins

- 5.3 The full scope of the Regeneration Framework Masterplan vision, objectives and principles, which Cabinet are being recommended to support are set out in Appendix 1. The vision, objectives and principles will guide the preparation of the site proposals and over-arching spatial plan.
- 5.4 Once adopted, the RFM will act as a guide for the scale and quantum of development expected in the town centre. It will also guide the location and number of car parks and align and inform, at a strategic level the Transport Strategy. In addition the RFM will also establish the high level principles and design examples for streetscape, public realm and open space within the study area. Furthermore the work will show how the pedestrian environment can be improved, including new pedestrian linkages and high level design solutions for improving permeability and connectivity between key sites. Currently movement through and in the town is primarily east-west (High Street, Wellington Street and the GWR line are orientated in this direction with the Queensmere / Observatory reinforcing this). The RFM will be looking to improve north - south connectivity as part of new development and to enhance the existing north-south routes in the centre.
- 5.5 It is anticipated that a detailed Public Realm Strategy for the Centre of Slough will be delivered following the adoption of the RFM. This work will be led by Regeneration Development in conjunction and consultation with the DSO and input from other Services, across the Council.
- 5.6 The RFM in linking with the Council's wider aspirations around Health & Wellbeing and SMART cities will outline high level principles and interventions that support and enable these objectives. The implementation of the Council's emerging Transport strategy, including the provision of an MRT service, will be mirrored in the final RFM study, bolstering the Council's sustainable travel and modal shift aspirations for the town and commitment to improving air quality and the town's environment for users.

Strategic Links to Response, Recovery and Renewal

- 5.7 As the Council moves out of the response stage from the Covid 19 pandemic, the RFM will, along with other key documents, such as the emerging Inclusive Growth Strategy and Transport Strategy, serve as a guide to investors and stakeholders. The presence of an agreed Framework will provide confidence to developers and investors of the wider vision and proposals for Slough, with a clear understanding of how they will be delivered and by when. The Council's emerging Inclusive Growth Strategy is central as a piece of evidence to the delivery of the RFM. Key considerations are being given to the output of the economic strategy around, growth industries and office typology to be delivered to support key sectors. In addition the emerging Inclusive Growth Strategy has identified a series of weaknesses in Slough,

which the RFM will consider in detail and assist in providing solutions for i.e. lack of green infrastructure and green links, promoting connectivity and the regeneration of adjacent areas, which have high and entrenched deprivation. On the latter point, the RFM work is also interfacing with the Council’s emerging Stronger Neighbourhoods initiatives to ensure that where necessary the appropriate links, opportunities and benefits to areas adjacent to the centre of Slough are fully explored.

RFM progress update

5.8 Since March 2020 the project team with steer from, the officer-led Town Centre Regeneration Group (“TCRG”) have:

- Explored town centre and development site opportunities;
- Reviewed emerging development proposals and mapped/ modelled the proposals;
- Met with developers and their architects regarding the North West Quadrant and Slough Central schemes;
- Had ongoing dialogue with British Land and their design team;
- Reviewed transport and car parking strategies and had a series of meetings with SBC’s transport team;
- Reviewed the outline business case for a educational/business/cultural quarter/uses on the North West Quadrant site and held initial meetings with stakeholders;
- Established base mapping and carried out initial analysis of townscape, land uses, height and massing of buildings, open spaces, heritage, movement network and car parking;
- Reviewed the property market and socio-economic picture of the town;
- Prepared an initial spatial plan for the town centre and design options for a number of the key development sites within the town centre.

5.9 The key messages arising from this initial stage can be summarised as follows:

Economic	<p>Slough’s population has grown faster than the sub region and the UK – it set to grown by 5% over next 10 years.</p> <p>Slough’s has proportionately higher levels of productivity</p> <p>Relatively strong education performance, although not in Higher Education.</p> <p>A large catchment area and it draws on a wide skill base</p>
Socio Economic	<p>Slough scores well across a number of quality of life measures. It is also considered a ‘hot spot’ for social mobility. However, severe deprivation does exist and the quality of the local environment is low and the town centre is underperforming</p>
Property Market Drivers	<p>Slough is extremely well located in terms of access to strategic infrastructure: set at the intersection of the M4, M40 and M25 motorways; frequent and fast train services into London Paddington and will soon benefit from</p>

	<p>Crossrail; close proximity to Heathrow. These are important and very positive drivers of the local property market. The strength of the corporate and SME business base combined with the strategic location provide a robust position to attract investment to underpin revitalising the town centre.</p>
<p>Retail and Leisure</p>	<p>The retail market is undergoing substantial structural change. This is resulting in consolidation and contraction of retail space in almost all of the UK's towns. Aligned with this UK-wide trend, contraction of Slough's retail offer is also anticipated.</p> <p>Some sectors doing better than others: those which are more resilient to competition from the online sales. This has led many town town centres moving down a path of being more service led.</p> <p>The quality of the retail 'experience' and sense of place have become important factors in helping ensure centres remain as attractive as possible.</p> <p>A good and varied convenience offer will also be important in sustaining a healthy Slough town centre, focussed on meeting more day to day and local needs.</p> <p>A shift toward more service led retail and leisure uses is likely to be a more resilient and sustainable approach for Slough town centre. This combined with investment in the "look and feel" of the town centre environment can achieve a change in perception of the town centres offer and experience to residents, employees and visitors in the town.</p>
<p>Culture and Leisure</p>	<p>There is a significant need and opportunity to grow our evening and weekend economy. The town's cultural and leisure offer can have the ability to match other regional offers, and help reverse leakage of expenditure. The mixed-use town centre developments offer an opportunity to rebalance the leisure and activity led provision in scale and quality.</p> <p>The addition of leisure based activities, would serve to increase visitors and interest in Slough. In particular, we would expect Slough to offer at least one cinema, and potentially to attract additional commercial, health and leisure oriented uses as redevelopment of the centre occurs. Food and beverage uses could feed off these leisure uses.</p> <p>The Council's emerging Arts & Cultural Strategy has defined that future regeneration efforts for Slough should be underpinned by an increased cultural and arts offer and the creation of cultural quarters. Aligned to this, the opportunity for enhancing the cultural offer and activity</p>

	<p>led uses will be explored as part of the options reviewed for the Slough Central, North West Quadrant schemes and the re-purposing of the Adelphi theatre, in a comprehensive and complimentary fashion.</p>
<p>Offices</p>	<p>Demand will be driven by Slough's excellent accessibility characteristics, which will be augmented by Crossrail,</p> <p>Office development in Slough is expected to form a significant source of investment, ranging from corporate occupiers from within the town seeking to modernise accommodation and attract inward investment from companies within the Thames Valley and potentially decentralisation from London. Equally the strength of the SME business base can generate growth from within the region. The strength of Slough as a seed-bed for new businesses and entrepreneurs, with a need for peer support and flexible working space is also informing the nature of new commercial offer and office space.</p> <p>Office development targeted at corporate occupiers will likely be mixed with flexible and managed workspace, This could include an innovation hub to nurture start-ups and links to the education sector and inherent opportunities that arise.</p>
<p>Residential</p>	<p>There is already strong interest in the area for this use. Residential development will also help support other uses in the town.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will continue to be strong demand for housing in the borough, coupled with an overall enhancement of the town centre.</p> <p>Residential development will be a key component and a driver for change in redeveloping Slough town centre.</p> <p>To meet high housing delivery targets, residential product differentiation will be important, both in terms of tenures and typologies.</p> <p>In many locations higher density, flatted development will clearly be appropriate, given the town centre location.</p> <p>Private Rental Sector (PRS) development could form part of the housing mix in Slough town centre, especially due to the excellent accessibility characteristics.</p> <p>There is significant interest in the senior living / retirement home sector as a result of the ageing population. Improvement to Slough's general environment would increase appetite for this form of development within the town.</p>

Hotels	New hotel development is already occurring in Slough. Yet, with future office growth and Slough's excellent locational aspects this could drive further demand in the mid to longer term, in locations across the Borough for a range of hospitality offer developments.
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Update on Slough Central (Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centres)

5.10 Due to its strategic significance and location, the redevelopment of the Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centre is one of the key sites within the RFM. Confidential Appendix Two provides an update report, which can be summarised as follows:

- Given the structural change taking place through the UK's high streets, it is evident the existing shopping centres are not fit for purpose to meet the changing needs of the town centre. Furthermore if Slough is to achieve a transformational change to the town centre, an ambitious plan to achieve comprehensive development is required. The report outlines the shopping centre owners' emerging plans for the phased redevelopment, based on the vision of a new central business district, including re-provision of retail and leisure facilities, with residential accommodation.
- The owner's project team have engaged with the council's officers and RFM team to discuss the proposals that are now the subject of public consultation on the centre owner's vision.
- The report outlines the progress to date on establishing initial masterplan principles that align with the RFM vision.

Approval Timescales

5.11 The timetable for the delivery of the RFM is as follows:

- Refinement of design option and agreement on a preferred spatial plan for the town centre (May / June 2020);
- Presentation of emerging masterplan and findings to LM&Ds (June 2020);
- Preparation of draft Regeneration Framework and Delivery Strategy (July 2020);
- Preparation of Final Regeneration Framework and Delivery Strategy Presentation to LM&Ds (August 2020) **and**
- Presentation for approval by Cabinet (September 2020).

6 Comments of Other Committees

No comments

7 Conclusion

7.1 Work has been progressing at pace on the Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework and Slough Central projects. A decision was made by the TCRG in March 2020 to expedite the Framework Masterplan timetable to ensure a more aligned delivery of the workstream with major redevelopment projects in the area, namely the NWQ and Slough Central. Work particularly around the Council's Transport Strategy, car parking and interventions on Brunel Way have picked up

pace, which will deliver the pre-requisite infrastructure needed to enable the coherent and successful delivery of major redevelopment projects in the centre of Slough.

- 7.2 The work being completed as part of the Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework Masterplan has been cognisant of key existing and emerging Corporate Strategies, including the Inclusive Growth Strategy, COVID-19 Recovery strategy, emerging Arts & Cultural Strategy, emerging meanwhile use strategy, and key stakeholders' analysis and findings, ensuring that the output of the Masterplan has taken into account evidence and intelligence as appropriate.
- 7.3 It is anticipated that the next update to LM&Ds will be in August 2020, with a Cabinet report on the Draft Regeneration Framework Masterplan in September 2020.

8. **Appendices**

Confidential Appendix One – RFM Vision, Objectives and Principles
Confidential Appendix Two – Queensmere and Observatory Update

(Both appendices contain exempt information and are included in Part II of the agenda)

9. **Background Papers**

None