

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee **DATE** 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

## **DRAFT CENTRE OF SLOUGH REGENERATION FRAMEWORK**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Members about the draft Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework that has been produced for the Council by Urban Initiatives.

### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to resolve that:
- a) The content of the draft Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework be noted.
  - b) The Framework be adopted as an evidence document for the Slough Local Plan.

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

#### **3a Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Setting clear aspirations that encourage the redevelopment of Slough will make a significant contribution to the joint priorities in the Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025.

#### **3b Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Ensuring that needs are met within the local area will make a positive contribution to the following SJWS priorities:

- *Economy and Skills*
- *Regeneration and Environment*
- *Housing*

#### **3c Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The proposed Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan will contribute to the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- **Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.** The Preferred Spatial Strategy will seek to protect and enhance the local environment.
- **Outcomes 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes.** The Preferred Spatial Strategy will seek to ensure that we have a balanced housing market that can meet the range of housing needs in Slough.
- **Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investments to provide opportunities for our residents.** The Preferred Spatial Strategy will promote areas for employment growth in Slough.

#### 4 Other Implications

##### (a) Financial

There are no financial implications.

##### (b) Risk Management

| <i>Recommendation</i>                           | <i>Risk/Threat/Opportunity</i>  | <i>Mitigation(s)</i>       |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| That the Committee approves the recommendation. | Failure to agree the proposed content of the Preferred Spatial Strategy will affect the Council's ability to bring forward the Local Plan and plan for development in the most sustainable way. | Agree the recommendations. |

##### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications as a result of this report.

#### 5 Supporting Information

##### Background

- 5.1 The Council has commissioned a Regeneration Framework for the Centre of Slough. The vision, objectives and principles of the Framework were agreed by the Cabinet in June 2020. .
- 5.2 The Framework and its Master Plan are intended to set out the Council's corporate vision and spatial aspirations for development in the centre of the town over the next 15 years.
- 5.3 The Framework embraces and builds on the priorities of the Council's Five Year Plan 2020-2025, Interim Planning Framework, Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-2025 and the Transport Vision 2019. It will inform the Local Plan Spatial Strategy and will be a major component of the emerging 2040 Plan.

## **Objectives and Principles of the Slough Regeneration Framework**

5.4 The Framework aims to deliver the following objectives:

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Objective 1</b>  | To deliver a 21 <sup>st</sup> century town centre that is accessible to everybody and enhances health and well-being, |
| <b>Objective 2</b>  | To develop a New Central Business District to the south of the railway station,                                       |
| <b>Objective 3</b>  | To revitalise the shopping and leisure offer in the town centre,  |
| <b>Objective 4</b>  | To deliver a range of new homes in the town centre,   |
| <b>Objective 5</b>  | To strengthen Slough's cultural offer,  |
| <b>Objective 6</b>  | To create a people focused public realm,  |
| <b>Objective 7</b>  | To improve connections between the town centre and Slough's neighbourhoods and the wider area,                        |
| <b>Objective 8</b>  | To deliver a step change in the quality of design and architecture in the town centre,                                |
| <b>Objective 9</b>  | To provide the right amount of car parking in the right locations; and  |
| <b>Objective 10</b> | To deliver small interventions, events and early wins.  |

## **Role of the Slough Regeneration Framework**

5.5 The Framework has a number of roles and purposes. It:

- sets a clear and overarching vision and spatial plan for the town centre that can guide development and regeneration in the centre of Slough,
- identifies the opportunities for growth and transformation at a town wide scale and then on a specific basis,
- identifies linkages and opportunities for improved movement, transport and access for people travelling by all modes but facilitates and encourages a shift to more movement by foot, bicycle and public transport,
- establishes design principles, development parameters and the potential amount of development that could be delivered on the sites shown in Image 1 below,
- identifies the potential meanwhile uses of sites pending more permanent development; and
- provides a strategic delivery plan setting out how projects might be phased, identifying priorities and delivery approaches.

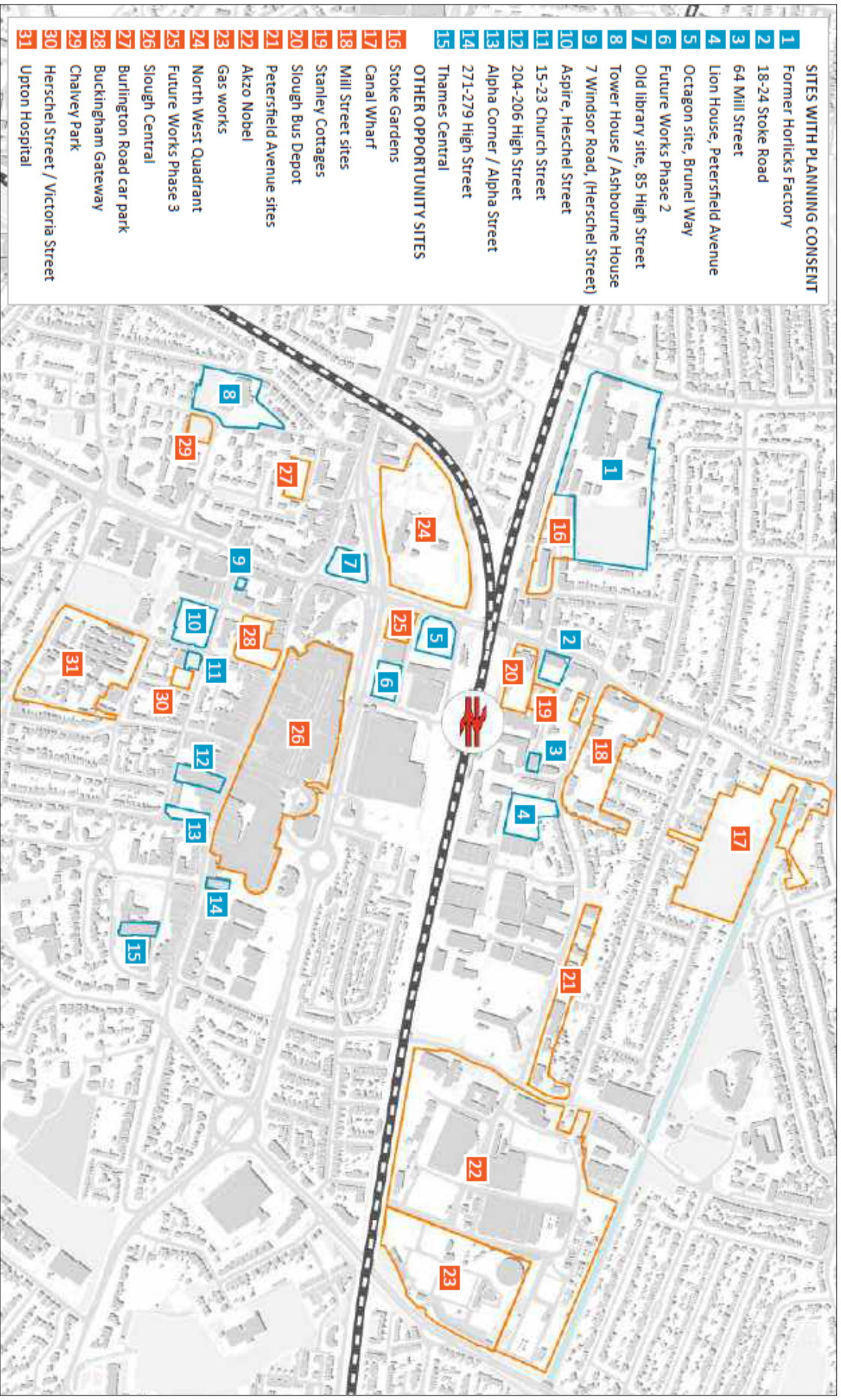


Image 1: Town Centre Sites

### **Step Change for Slough**

- 5.6 The Framework aims to transform the Centre of Slough into an attractive and vibrant urban centre, with economic opportunity and new transport infrastructure attracting business and reducing reliance on the motor vehicle.
- 5.7 Spatial fragmentations will be reconnected, underutilised and vacant buildings and spaces will be filled with places to live, work, shop and enjoy life both throughout the day and into the evening.
- 5.8 New diverse employment growth within a new Central Business District supported by Slough's enterprising young community will make Slough an even stronger economic driver for the region. New economic opportunities will support demand for a range of housing across a spectrum of types and tenures that provides for a successful town.
- 5.9 Walkable streets with good quality public realm and greenery, fronted by attractive new buildings will replace clogged highways linking the centre with its parks, canal and Jubilee River. New public spaces will provide opportunity for the community to meet, relax celebrate and enjoy the town's rich and diverse cultural offer.
- 5.10 All of Slough's residents will benefit from the towns regeneration with increase access to jobs, new educational opportunities and skills training and enhanced digital connectivity: the restored health of the centre will flow across the entire borough enriching the lives and well-being of Slough's people.

### **Masterplan**

- 5.11 The illustrative masterplan which forms a spatial representation of the Slough Regeneration Framework (see Image 2 below) demonstrates how the centre of Slough can deliver the following amount of new floorspace:
  - 115 to 280,000 sq.m. of office floorspace,
  - 14 to 15,500 sq.m. of retail floorspace,
  - 6,700 sq.m. of leisure/ cultural floorspace,
  - 5,000 sq.m. of education/ innovation floorspace,
  - 48,000 sq.m. of industrial floorspace; and
  - 7,400 new homes.
- 5.12 The masterplan shows where this new development could take place. In addition to indicating where new buildings would go, it identifies areas for new and improved public realm and linkages between sites in order to make the area better connected. It also shows where there is the opportunity for new public spaces.
- 5.13 It should be noted that the floorspace figures are for the amount of



development that will be provided in new buildings. They do not take account of what will be lost. It is envisaged that there will be a significant loss of retail floorspace as a result of the redevelopment of the shopping centres. At the same time there will be other, less strategic, development not shown on the masterplan.

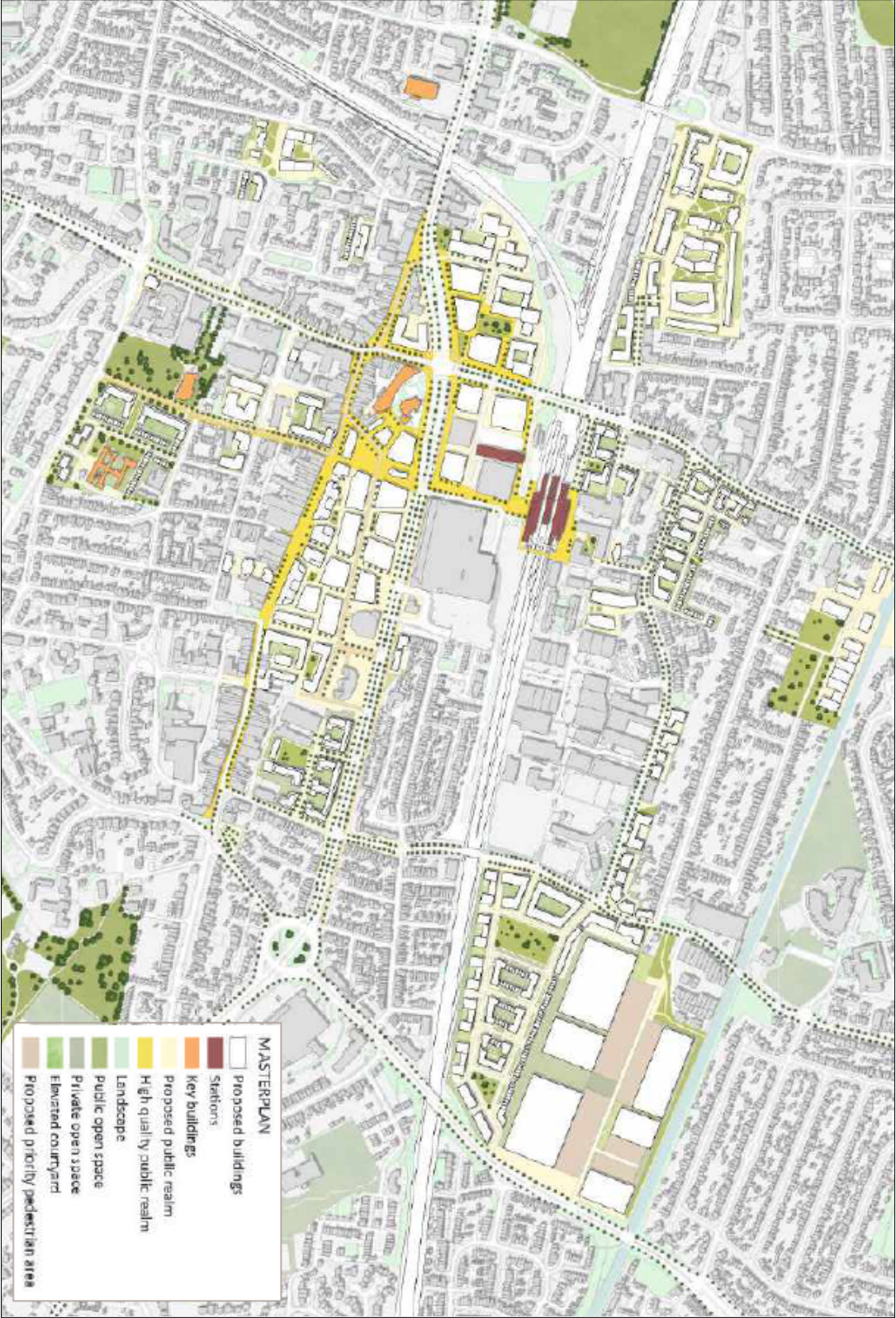


Image 2: Illustrative Masterplan for the Centre of Slough



5.14 All of the sites have been modelled and so the scale of development can be seen in the “Birdseye” view below.

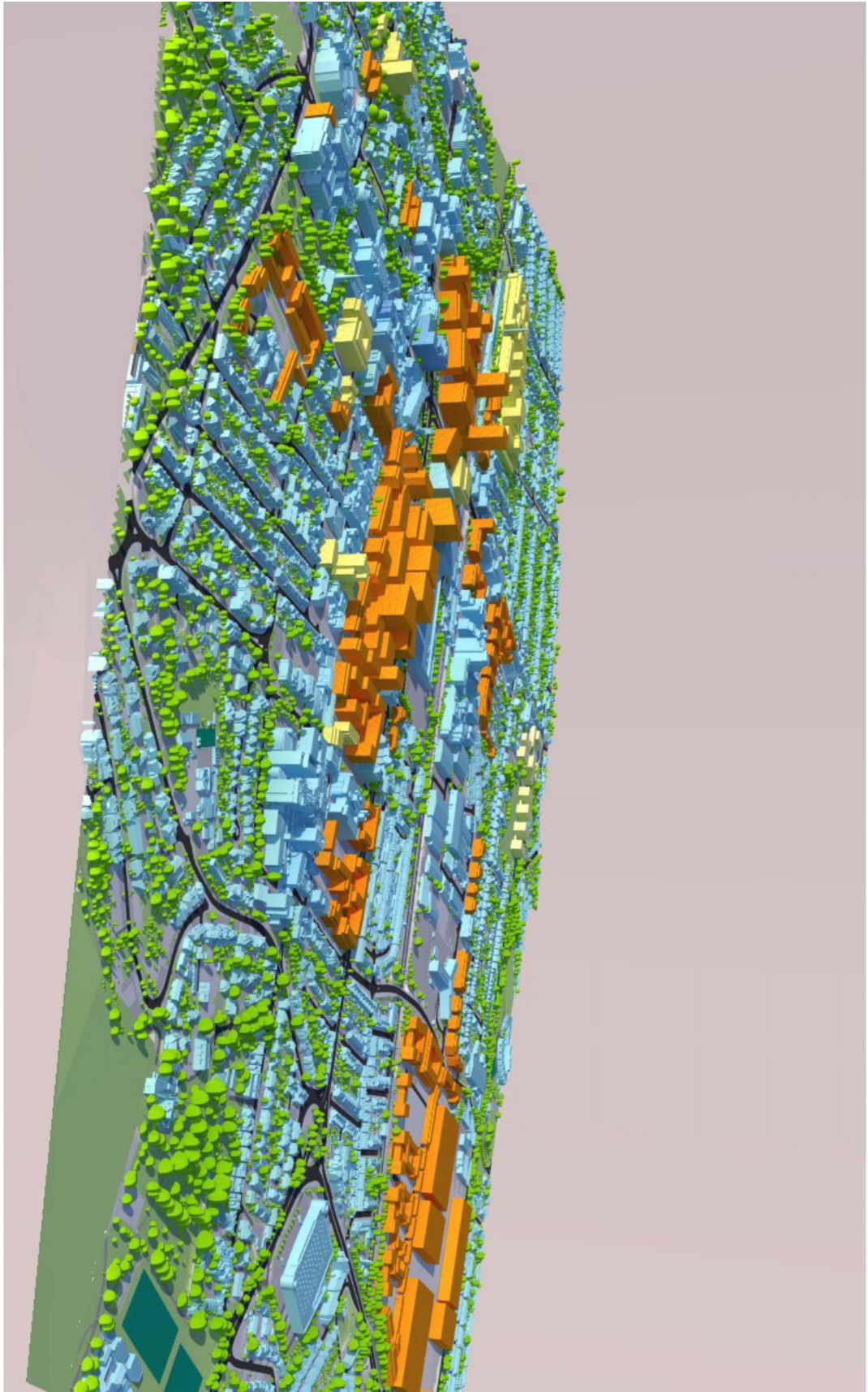


Image 3: Birdseye View of Illustrative Master Plan for the Centre of Slough. View from south east.

- 5.15 The proposed mix of uses in the masterplan are based upon the assumption that a step change in the Centre of Slough will not be delivered by building new homes alone. As a result a Central Business District is proposed. In addition to creating economic prosperity, the new jobs will support the local population, make town centre living more desirable and invigorate the retail, leisure and cultural activity in the town through increased weekday spending.
- 5.16 The towns' shopping offer will be rationalised and reduced by nearly a half whilst ensuring what remains meet the needs of both the immediate resident catchment population as well as those people who are drawn to the centre from further afield. The increase in people living and working in the Centre of Slough will start to change the dynamic of the town and help to support a richer and more diverse offer.

### **Delivery Plan**

- 5.17 The Slough Regeneration Framework contains a series of development projects. It sets out the sites that have scope for transformation and will shape the town centre for the next 15 years. The delivery plan describes each of the key sites on an individual, site by site basis.

### **COVID19 Public Realm and recovery**

- 5.18 Covid19 has shed new light on the value of open space and amenity space in peoples' lives with the benefits of access to open spaces, gardens and even balconies increasingly recognised and the inequalities for people who lack this fundamental human need sharply defined.
- 5.19 The design of public realm (the streets and spaces around buildings) is as important as the design of buildings. The public realm, together with landscape, can have a huge impact on the quality and experience of a place. It forms the backdrop to public activities and engagement and when designed well can encourage social interaction, act as meeting points for communities, add value to surrounding properties and generally add to the character of a town centre.
- 5.20 Trees and landscape incorporated into the public realm have multiple benefits: providing both physical and visual amenity, improving biodiversity, enhancing sense of place, assisting in enhancing air quality, softening the impact of buildings and structures; whilst indicating the passage of the seasons.
- 5.21 The emerging Public Realm Strategy will address and give further detail on public realm solutions, which will support, recovery, high quality design and material use, and people focused place making centred on modal shifts and public spaces which promote health & wellbeing.



## **Implications for the Spatial Strategy**

- 5.22 One of the key components of the Spatial Strategy is “Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment in the Centre of Slough”. As a result the Regeneration Framework will help to show how this will be delivered.
- 5.23 Master Plan has added a lot more detail to what was outlined in the Centre of Slough Interim Planning Framework. The individual site assessments have been helpful in defining what the capacity of the centre will be. The 7,400 dwellings identified on large sites in the Framework will contribute to the greater number of dwellings, possibly up to 9,000 that are likely to be built in the Centre of Slough over the Local Plan period.
- 5.24 The individual site assessments will act as a benchmark for assessing planning applications. Viability tests have been carried out on the sites which will help to show that they are deliverable.
- 5.25 For the wider centre of Slough area guidance is provided on appropriate building heights and uses. This can form the basis of future development management policies to control the scale and form of future growth. There are also proposals for environmental improvements that will inform a new public realm strategy. There are a number of proposals for new and improved linkages and enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists which will have to be assessed in the Transport Strategy.
- 5.26 Many parts of the Regeneration Strategy have therefore been taken on board in the Spatial Strategy as set out in a separate report to this Committee.

## **6 Conclusions**

- 6.1 This Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework sets out the Council’s ambitions for the future of the area. The Master Plan and proposals within the report will help to shape the town centre and its surrounding area over the next 15 years and feed into the Local Plan Spatial Strategy.

## **7 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Slough Regeneration Framework Executive Summary – August 2020

Appendix 2 – Slough Regeneration Framework – August 2020

## **8 Background Papers**

Shaping Slough Town Centre: Regeneration Update Cabinet Report – June 2020