

# SLOUGH REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

THIRD DRAFT REPORT

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**Slough**  
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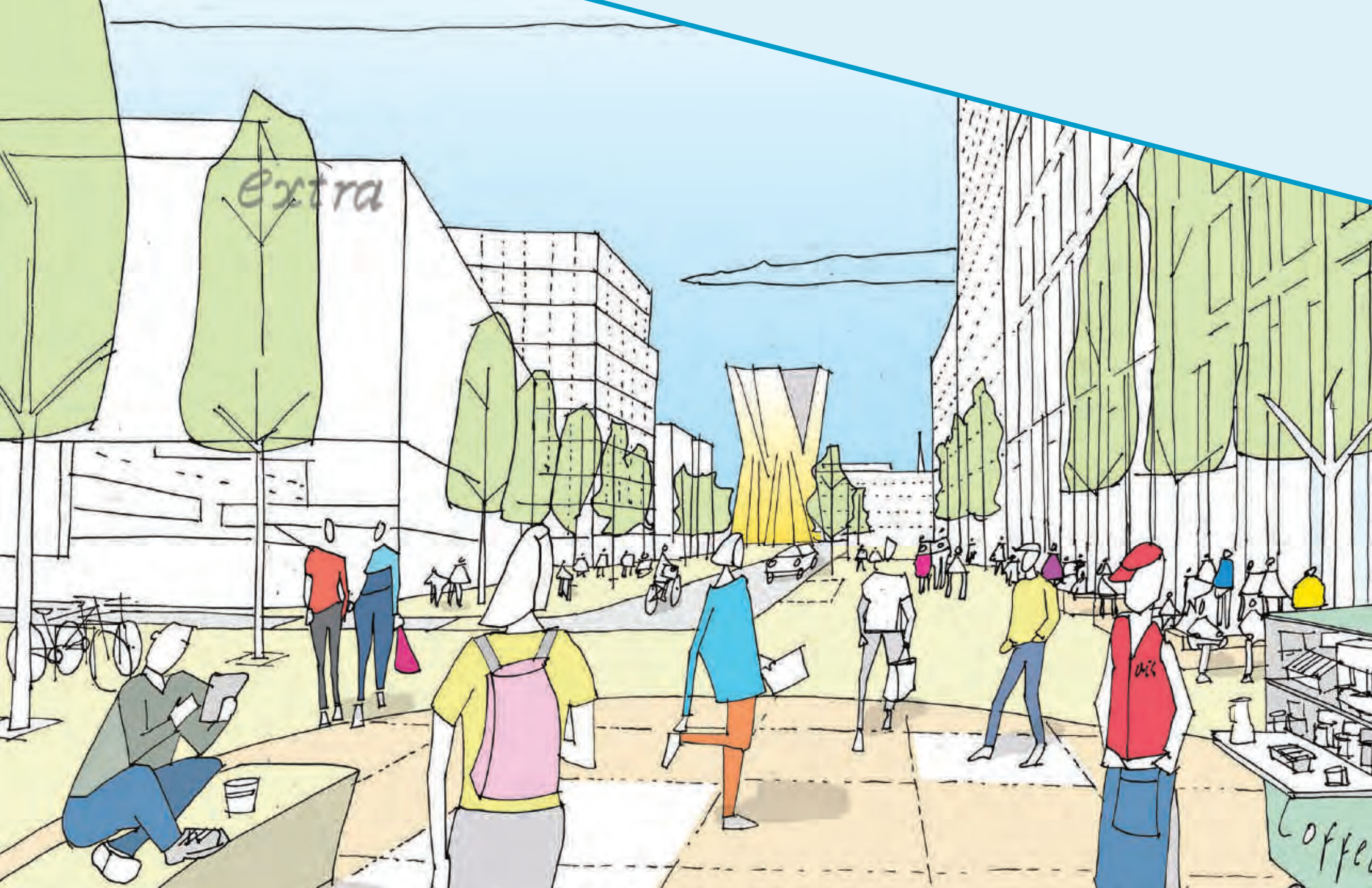
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# Executive summary



Sketch from railway station viewing northwards towards the town centre

## A STEP CHANGE FOR SLOUGH

Slough will be transformed. **A beautiful, vibrant new urban centre** with striking economic opportunity is waiting to be born out of its strong industrial past and entrepreneurial spirit. New transport infrastructure, including the Elizabeth line and a new Mass Rapid Transit, will improve access to the centre, **attracting businesses and reducing the reliance on the motor vehicle.**

Where the town is fragmented it will be reconnected. The town's under used buildings and its vacant spaces will be filled with **places to live, work, shop and enjoy life** both throughout the day and into the evening. A diverse mix of **new employment growth** will feed off the dynamism of the centre and Slough's **enterprising young community** and an expanded **Central Business District** will make Slough an even stronger economic driver for the region. These opportunities will spawn **new demand for different types of housing** and renew the existing residential communities establishing the mix of different household sizes, income and choice that are characteristic of a successful town.

**Walkable tree lined streets** fronted by attractive new buildings will replace clogged highways and link the centre with its beautiful parks and the Grand Union Canal. New public spaces will provide opportunity for the community to meet, relax, celebrate and enjoy the towns' **rich and diverse cultural offer.**

All of Slough's residents will benefit from the town's regeneration with increased 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.**

## THE CONTEXT

There can be few more accessible towns in the UK than Slough. Located at the intersection of the M4, M40 and M25 it has unrivalled access to the strategic road network; Heathrow Airport is on the town's doorstep and trains from Slough railway station take as little as 15 minutes into London Paddington.

The arrival of the Elizabeth line together with an ambitious transport vision to implement Mass Rapid Transit across the Borough will bring even greater physical connectivity to the centre and the Council's embracing of innovation and smart technologies will match this with digital connectivity.

Slough is changing and changing quickly. New flagship developments have been brought forward in the heart of the centre sweeping away outdated buildings and facilities and replacing them with state of the art cultural / community assets, offices, leisure facilities and renewed streetscape.

These include 'The Curve', Porter Building, Future Works and The Ice Arena. The Brunel roundabout, a relict of 1970s highway planning, has gone, replaced with a more human scale signal controlled crossing.

There is more to come with new homes under construction, planning consent already granted for significant proposals and developers and landowners drawing up their own plans for sites within the town.



**The Urban Building providing new office space in the town centre**

The scale of opportunity in Slough is enormous and the Council is ambitious to deliver change that will bring increased prosperity for its residents and that will renew the centre.

Change must therefore be co-ordinated and planned. This Regeneration Framework has been prepared to help to guide and steer the change. It identifies the opportunities for growth and transformation and draws them together as a vision and spatial plan.

The Regeneration Framework extends across the 'Square Mile' an area defined by Stoke Poges Lane in the west, Elliman Avenue and the Grand Union Canal Slough Arm to the north, Uxbridge Road to the east and Albert Road / Chalvey Road to the south. This is an extensive area that is varied in use and character but is all within easy walking distance of the town centre. The nature of the opportunities varies across the area and is identified within the Framework.

The Regeneration Framework has been prepared in unusual circumstances with the Covid pandemic focusing attention on how people live their lives, the value of open spaces and access to them and the future of town centres.



**Recently enhanced public realm on Wellington Street next to The Curve and Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Ethelbert**

Town centres were already changing with a shift from shopping to experience and exchange; it is likely that Covid has accelerated the change. The Regeneration Framework identifies a vision for Slough that will make it more resilient in the future and that will encourage and enable more healthy lifestyles for its people.

Slough's location has meant that it has always attracted business and this has drawn people searching for work and opportunity to settle in the town. This remains a cornerstone of the vision going forward with regeneration driven by jobs and opportunity. The Regeneration Framework sits alongside the Inclusive Growth Strategy ensuring that change benefits all of Slough's residents.

The Framework Vision also aligns with the Council's emerging Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.



## VISION FOR THE SQUARE MILE

The spatial vision for Slough's Square Mile is set out in the ten objectives:

- *Objective One: To deliver a **21st century town centre** that is accessible to everybody and enhances health and well being;*
- *Objective Two: To develop an expanded **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 Square Mile;*
- *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 Square Mile;*
- *Objective Nine: To provide the **right amount of car parking** in the right locations; and*
- *Objective Ten: To deliver **small interventions, events and early wins**.*







Illustrative Masterplan for Slough town centre



## THE SCALE OF THE OPPORTUNITY

Delivering a step change for Slough will be brought about through the economic prosperity that comes with an expanded Central Business District. New jobs will support the local population, make town centre living more desirable and invigorate the retail, leisure and cultural activity and offer in the town. New homes will contribute to this regeneration but it is the new jobs that will be the driver for change.

The Regeneration Framework promotes a volume of office development that can deliver this step change. The quantum is expressed as a range and is informed by the commercial approach taken by British Land / ADIA in relation to the Slough Central site rather than by market analysis and is in principle supported by the Council.

Creating vital and vibrant town centres means mixing uses so that there is activity at all times of the day. The traditional town centre with its shopping precinct, office quarter and residential hinterland is a thing of the past and creating a 21st century town centre means that leisure uses must be located to support the office space, and a myriad of uses from cultural spaces, schools, doctors surgeries, gyms and dentists, cafes, hairdressers and bars are needed to support the increasing number of people that will be living in the centre. A towns' shopping offer must 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 Slough's Square Mile will start to change the dynamic of the town and help to support a richer and more diverse offer.

The illustrative masterplan, which forms a spatial representation of the Regeneration Framework, demonstrates how the framework can deliver approximately:

- 115 to 280,000m<sup>2</sup> office floorspace;
- 14 - 15,500m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace;
- 6,700m<sup>2</sup> leisure / cultural floorspace;
- 5,000m<sup>2</sup> education / innovation floorspace;
- 48,000m<sup>2</sup> B8 industrial floorspace; and
- 7,400 new homes.

The new retail space indicated above does not take account of the loss of retail floorspace through redevelopment of the town's two shopping centres.

Improving connections and overcoming severance is fundamental to the vision for Slough's Square Mile. A network of new and improved routes and spaces are proposed making Slough a more pleasant and healthy place to live and work in. These include a new civic square in the heart of the town and at the meeting point of the north to south Brunel Way / Church Street axis and the east to west aligned High Street; transformation of the Wellington Street / A4 corridor and improved links from the railway station into the heart of the town and towards the North West Quadrant.

The potential height of buildings has been modelled on the opportunity sites within the Square Mile to test their impact from various locations in the town. The Regeneration Framework proposes heights that will deliver a harmonious and attractive skyline composition when viewed from vantage points around the town and that emphasises the heart of the town centre and the regeneration proposed there.



Slough's skyline viewed from Upton Court Road across Lascelles Park from the south east of the Square Mile (blue buildings are existing; yellow consented; and orange representations of the scale of development promoted through the Regeneration Framework). This establishes a harmonious skyline where greater height marks the centre of town



- 1 Slough railway station
- 2 Great Western rail line
- 3 Wellington Street
- 4 High Street
- 5 The Curve
- 6 Queensmere Shopping Centre
- 7 Observatory Shopping Centre
- 8 Slough bus station
- 9 Tesco superstore
- 10 North West Quadrant
- 11 William Street
- 12 Windsor Road
- 13 Salt Hill Park
- 14 Bath Road
- 15 The Adelphi
- 16 Windsor & Eton branchline
- 17 Former Horlicks factory
- 18 Stoke Poges Lane
- 19 Stoke Road
- 20 Petersfield Avenue
- 21 Wexham Road
- 22 Grand Union Canal Slough Arm
- 23 Akzo Nobel
- 24 Gas works
- 25 Uxbridge Road
- 26 Sainsbury superstore
- 27 Lascelles Park
- 28 Upton Court
- 29 Upton Hospital
- 30 St. Mary's Church
- 31 Herschel Park
- 32 M4 motorway
- 33 Slough Ice Arena
- 34 Slough Trading Estate





# 1. Introduction



Figure 1.1: Aerial image of Slough Square Mile and its wider context

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

In March 2020 Slough Borough Council commissioned Urban Initiatives Studio (UIS) to prepare a Regeneration Framework for Slough's Square Mile. This sets a vision and spatial framework for development in the town over the next 15 years.

UIS have been supported in the study by Urban Movement who have provided transport, movement and public realm advice and by Montagu Evans who have provided property and delivery input.

Slough is an exceptionally well-connected Borough, it is home to globally-important companies and has been voted the best place to work in the UK three years running (Glassdoor). Slough is also one of the UK's most multicultural places with its communities representing 80 different countries and speaking 150 languages and is the UK town with the youngest population. Slough is a hotbed of talent and entrepreneurship.

The town has recently seen significant investment with new office buildings built close to the railway station, a new Cultural Hub 'The Curve' opening immediately to the south and significant investment in the public realm and street network in the heart of the town.

A number of residential developments are currently under construction within the Square Mile both to the north and south of the railway line and significant planning consents have been granted including on the former Horlicks factory site.

The Square Mile is on the cusp of positive transformational change that will renew the centre for generations to come. The arrival of the Elizabeth line together with an ambitious transport vision to implement Mass Rapid Transit across the Borough will bring even greater physical connectivity to the centre and the Council's embracing of innovation and smart technologies will match this with digital connectivity.

Town centres are changing with a shifting focus from shopping to experience and exchange. Slough is well placed to embrace these changes with significant sites in the centre that are ripe for development. A number of major schemes have already been brought forward and these have already changed the landscape of the centre, its image and external perception; others are about to start.

Major office and residential developments are being promoted that could deliver a comprehensive regeneration in the town and huge benefits to its economy, future prosperity and to the lives of all residents in the Borough.

This regeneration must respond to other issues that are shaping our towns and cities. In May 2019 the UK Parliament declared a Climate Emergency; the Council is responding by preparing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to manage its carbon emissions. The way people move around, and to the Borough, will need to change with a shift to more sustainable transport modes and a move away from the private car.

The ongoing Covid pandemic has shone a stronger light on peoples' health and well-being; the value of access to open space and other amenities has been clearly highlighted. There are significant health inequalities in the Borough and addressing these is a priority for the Council as expressed through both the Inclusive Growth Strategy and the Council's Five Year Plan.



Consented scheme on the former Horlicks Factory site



The Curve - a new community building for the town



## 1.2 ROLE OF THE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

Whilst there is a lot of development activity taking place within the Square Mile it is critical that this activity is co-ordinated and that it collectively delivers a coherent place. Development needs to be guided so that uses are in the right place, proposals respond to the character, identity and history of the town and buildings are brought forward at the right scale to create a place that people will continue to be proud to call home and that will attract further investment.

Critically it is the space between buildings, the streets and spaces, that can make or break a place. The Covid pandemic has demonstrated how important public space and the external environment are to health and well-being. The Regeneration Framework must promote a positive and people driven vision for Slough's Square Mile that aids recovery and delivers future resilience.

The Regeneration Framework has a number of roles and purposes:

- It sets out a clear and overarching vision and spatial plan for the Square Mile that can guide development and regeneration;
- It identifies the opportunities for growth and transformation at a broader Square Mile scale and then on a site specific basis;
- It identifies linkages and opportunities for improved movement and access for people travelling by all modes and encourages and facilitates a shift to more movement by foot, bicycle and public transport;

- It establishes design principles and development parameters for the Square Mile and at a site-specific scale and identifies the potential development quantum that could be delivered. This will feed into the emerging Local Plan;
- It identifies the potential for the meanwhile use of sites pending more permanent development; and
- It provides a strategic delivery plan setting out how projects might be phased and identifying priorities and delivery approaches,

The Regeneration Framework is aligned with a number of other Council strategies. These include the Transport Vision adopted in 2019; the Inclusive Growth Strategy; the Climate Change Strategy and the Council's Five Year Plan. A cultural strategy and a meanwhile use strategy are also being progressed by the Council.

The Regeneration Framework also forms a precursor to the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy for the Square Mile. The public realm concepts set out in this document will form the starting point for this more comprehensive Public Realm Strategy which will provide further detail and assign priority to proposals.

## 1.3 PREPARING THE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

The Regeneration Framework has been prepared through a collaborative process working closely with, and reporting to the Town Centre Regeneration Group. Major landowners and developers have also been engaged in the process and have shared their proposals and aspirations for sites. Covid has placed some restrictions on the masterplan process with the wider stakeholder workshops that were originally envisaged not possible.

The ten spatial objectives that define the vision for the Square Mile and that are set out in Section 3 of the Regeneration Framework were endorsed by the Council lead members and by the Council Cabinet in June 2020.

Site options were prepared for many of the sites within the Square Mile and refined following an assessment of viability and deliverability.



Future Works in the heart of the town centre





## 2. Understanding Slough

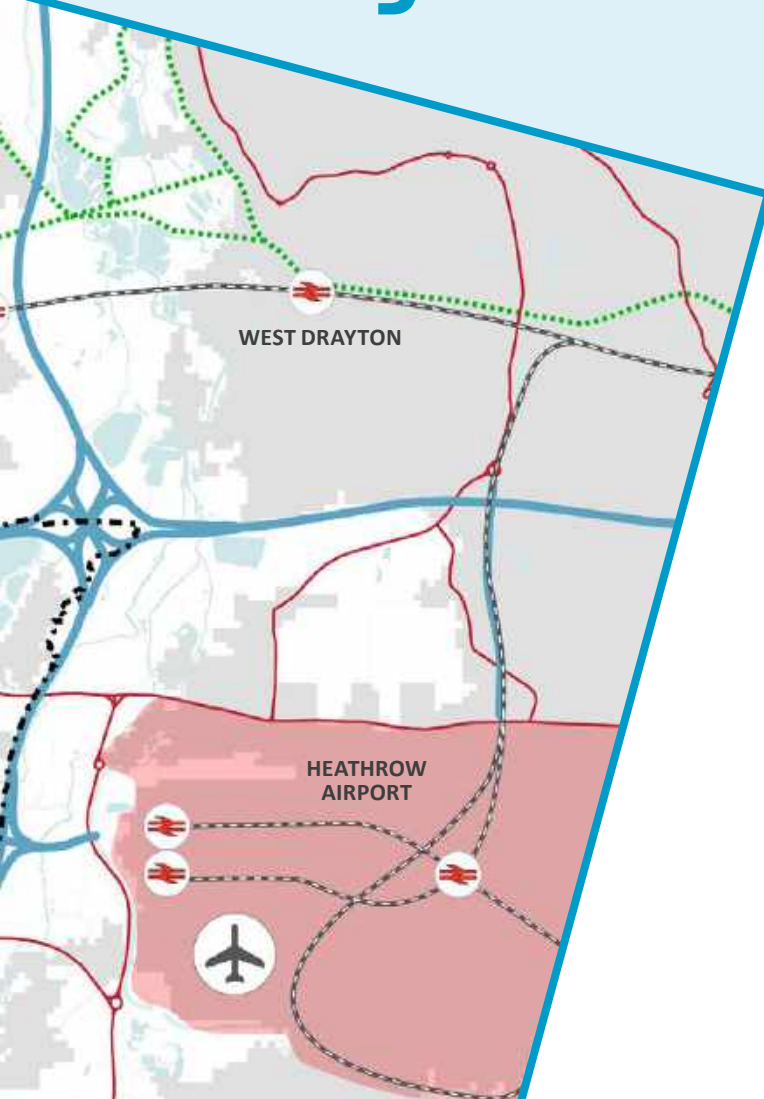


Figure 2.1: Slough strategic context

### 2.1 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

There can be few more accessible towns in the UK than Slough. Located at the intersection of the M4, M40 and M25 it has unrivalled access to the strategic road network; Heathrow Airport is on the town's doorstep and trains from Slough railway station take as little as 15 minutes into London Paddington. The opening of the Elizabeth line will improve journey times further and transform access to central London and elsewhere.

Slough's location has meant that it has always attracted business and this has drawn people searching for work and opportunity to settle in the town.

Slough is located on level ground within the Thames Valley to the north of the river Thames. Windsor is just two miles to the south across the River Thames and whilst Windsor Castle is not visible from the streets in the town it can be viewed from many of the town's taller buildings.

Slough extends east to west along the A4 Great West Road / Bath Road and whilst land to either side of this route has been extensively developed the town benefits from easy access to attractive countryside and historic parkland to both the north and south.

## 2.2 HISTORY

### ORIGINS

The oldest buildings in Slough, Upton Court and the parish church of St Laurence located to the south east of what is now Slough town centre date from medieval times. For many years the parish consisted of no more than scattered farmsteads and cottages.

Slough grew as a result of its location along the mail-coach route from London to Bath. It became an important staging post on the route and coaching inns grew up along the road as a result.

### VICTORIAN GROWTH

By 1801 the population of the town was just over a thousand. By 1841 it had doubled, but it was the arrival of the Great Western railway in 1838, and the subsequent opening of Slough station (initially opposed by Eton College) in 1840 that accelerated this growth. A branch line connecting Slough with Windsor, for the convenience of Queen Victoria, was opened in 1849.

The middle classes and successful businessmen were attracted to Slough with the promise of a country location, views of Windsor Castle and easy access to London.

By 1881 the population had swelled to over seven thousand and historic plans from that period show a gridded network of streets extending to the north and south of the High Street. Upton Park was the place to live with 29 Villas structured around this Victorian park. Upton Park is now known as Herschel Park after William Herschel (astronomer Royal to George III) who lived in Slough from 1786 to 1822. Much of the land around the town in 1881 is shown as nurseries.



Figure 2.2: Historic Plan (1881)

In 1882 the Grand Union Canal Slough Arm was constructed to the north of the town. This brought large-scale brickmaking to the area and shifted the population growth to the north of the town. The Horlicks Factory opened immediately to the north of the railway line in 1906 and the iconic factory building and its chimney are highly visible both from the railway tracks and from many other locations in the town.



High Street (circa 1908)





Figure 2.3: Historic Plan (1947)



Aerial view of Slough town centre from the south east (circa 1930) © Britain from the Air



Aerial view of Slough town centre from the south west (circa 1930) © Britain from the Air

## SLOUGH TRADING ESTATE

During the first world-war a large area of agricultural land to the west of Slough was developed as an army motor repair depot. Following the war the Slough Trading Company Act was passed and the land became a trading estate. Early occupiers included Citroen, Mars, Johnson and Johnson and Gillette.

New homes were built at Stoke Poges Lane, Manor Park and Cippenham to house people working on the trading estate.

Around the same time the Naylor Brothers set up a factory on a 30 acre former brickfield north of the town centre from where they manufactured paint under the brand name 'Dulux'. The Dulux brand is now owned by Akzo Nobel following the acquisition of ICI in 2008.

The trading estate has been enormously successful attracting businesses and workers from many parts of the UK and abroad with its proximity to Heathrow Airport and good motorway connections being attractive. It is one of the largest industrial estates in single private ownership in Europe with over 17,000 jobs in 400 businesses.

In the last 20 or so years, there has been a major shift from a manufacturing to an information-based economy in Slough. Factories (some of which had been in Slough for many decades) have been closed and replaced by office buildings. Slough has the highest concentration of UK HQs of global companies outside London. These are located either on the trading estate or on Bath Road but with relatively few in the town centre.



## TOWN CENTRE RENEWAL

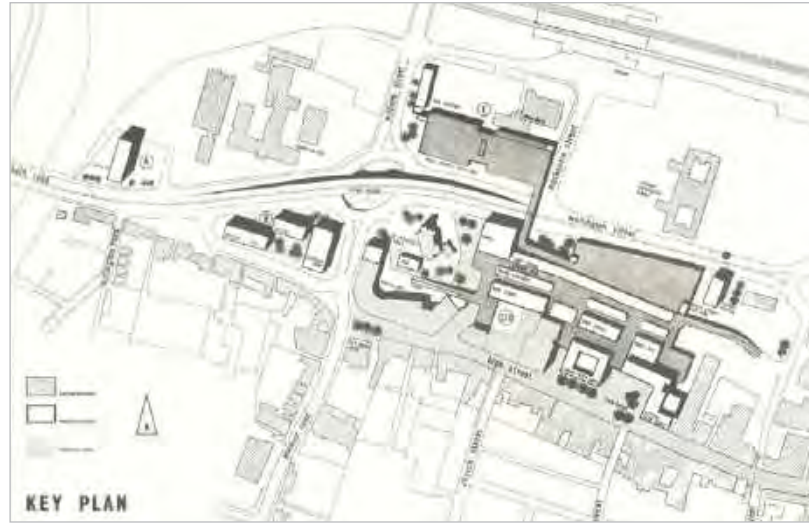
Through the post-war years' car ownership and the number of vehicles on Britain's roads increased dramatically. The M4 was opened to the south of Slough in the 1960s however an increasing volume of traffic streamed through Slough town centre on the High Street (the A4 / Great West Road) and noise and vehicle emissions impacted on the quality of the environment for shoppers and visitors.

In response the Council promoted 'An approach to renewal' in the town centre. Following the thinking at the time the proposals aimed to separate traffic and people, with the Council stating that it would:

*'...rebuild an area in an entirely new manner, suitable for the latter decades of the twentieth century. The most important feature will be creation of a traffic-free shopping area between High Street and Wellington Street where everyone can shop under cover.'*

Traffic on the High Street was diverted onto Wellington Street and the Queensmere Shopping Centre was opened in 1970. The centre was extended in 1986 and again in 1996. A second shopping centre, the Observatory was built between 1989 and 1991. The centres were built with substantial multi-storey car parks allowing shoppers to visit the town, shop and leave without ever stepping outside.

Whilst vehicles were removed from High Street, creating a pedestrian friendly environment on Slough's main street, the significant highways that now cut through the town created an hostile and intimidating environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The new buildings turned their backs to the highways exacerbating the issue.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: **Town centre renewal in 1970 - Plan; Sketch of the new Queensmere described as 'A shoppers' paradise, robs housewives and salesmen of a few grumbles. The weather holds no worries; there are no motor fumes, no road hazards and little noise' and the prospectus prepared by the Council at that time**



High Street in the 1960s



The Brunel bus station and roundabout prior to the recent regeneration

## HEART OF SLOUGH

Significant change has taken place in Slough town centre over the last decade guided by the Heart of Slough masterplan prepared in 2008.

Recent developments include:

- A new bus station on Brunel Way;
- Two new office developments on Brunel Way – The Porter Building and Future Works;
- The Curve – a community building providing a library, community learning rooms, registrar services, a café, a 280-seater performance space and a garden area; and
- Removal of Brunel roundabout and replacement with a signal controlled crossroads and improvements to the environment and pedestrian crossings on Wellington Street.

The town centre is poised for further change with the Elizabeth line bringing improved access, significant planning consents in place on a number of town centre sites including the former Horlicks Factory site, and developer interest and appetite to deliver change.



## 2.3 HERITAGE

Slough's history leaves a legacy of heritage assets within the centre. There are two designated Conservation Areas immediately adjacent to the Square Mile:

- Upton Park / Upton Village; and
- Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Areas.

The Upton Park / Upton Village Conservation Area is located to the south of the town centre and includes the Grade I listed St Laurence Church which dates from Norman times and the Grade II\* 14th century former manor house Upton Court.

The Conservation Area also encompasses Herschel Park and the Victorian villas that were built around it. Herschel Park is also a Grade II Registered Park.

Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area is located at the eastern end of the High Street and encompasses many of Slough's finer Victorian houses.

Other listed buildings within Slough town centre include:

- St. Mary's Church (Grade II\*);
- Slough railway station (Grade II);
- Upton Hospital (the former workhouse) (Grade II);
- Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St Ethelbert on Wellington Street (Grade II); and
- The Red Cow Public House on St Laurence Way (Grade II).

Any new development should be sensitive to the context and setting of these listed buildings.

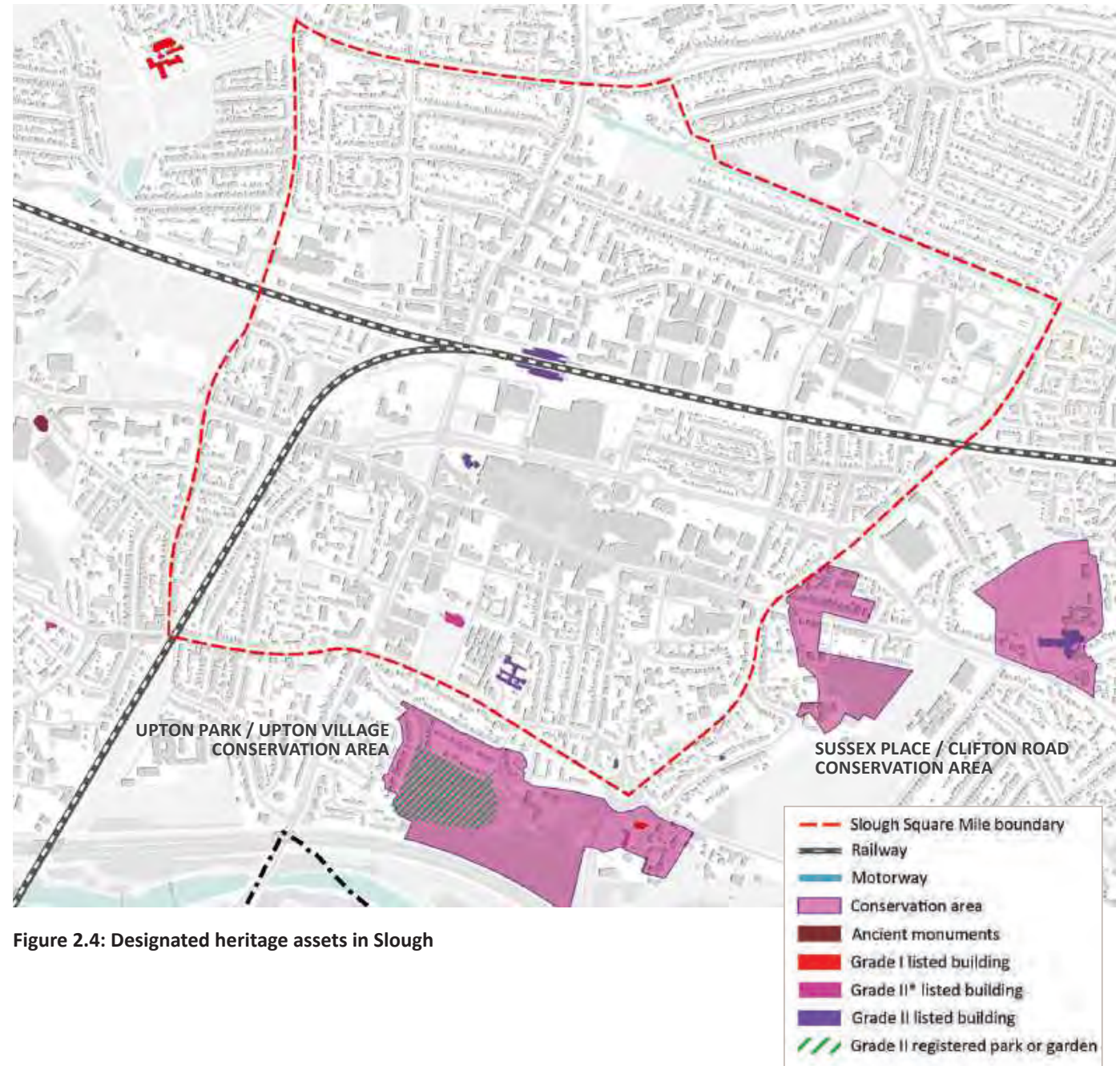


Figure 2.4: Designated heritage assets in Slough

## 2.4 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

### DIVERSITY, OPPORTUNITY, GROWTH

Slough is also one of the most ethnically diverse boroughs in the country, with a large proportion of its citizens born outside of the UK and with its communities representing 80 different countries and speaking 150 languages. According to the 2011 Census 39% of Slough's population were non-UK born. One third of the 149,100 population comes from BAME communities. 50% of pupils in Slough schools do not have English as a first language.

This diversity is a reflection of the economic opportunity and attraction the town presents to migrant communities looking for a place to settle and a place to build a better future for themselves.

Slough has always welcomed incomers right back to its stagecoach days. During the economic downturn of the 1930s thousands of people came to Slough seeking work, mostly from Wales, parts of Scotland and the North of England.

After the Second World War, Poles and Ukrainians moved to Slough to work and in the 1950's workers from the West Indies, India and Pakistan also settled in the area. The high number of Polish people settling in the town after Poland entered the European Union in 2004 is linked to the established Polish community in the town including a thriving Polish church and a school.

The population of Slough has increased by 48% through the period from 1981 to 2018, significantly higher growth than London (31% rise over the same period), and Great Britain, (18% rise over the same period).

### YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Slough is the UK town with the youngest population, with an average age of 33.9 and only one in 10 people aged 65 and over. Slough's young population mainly derives from the town having the highest birth rates of all UK cities - 16.6 births for every 1,000 residents, compared to the British average of 11.8 - and from the young migrant populations (NOMIS report 2018).

Slough benefits from the presence of a youthful and dynamic population. This cohort will be key to the Borough's future prospects and have a pivotal role in activating and delivering the ambitions set out within this strategy.

Slough's primary and secondary school students outperform the England average however Slough's population presents low levels of qualifications. This probably derives in part from the lack of university level education offered in the town and the cost of higher education.

### HEALTH AND DEPRIVATION

The Borough falls within the top 25% most deprived local authorities in England, scoring highly in Crime, Income Deprivation and Barriers to Housing and Services. Slough has a number of entrenched deprivation hot spots where life opportunities are poor. Chalvey, to the immediate south-west of the town centre, is one of the most deprived areas in the Borough.

Slough is presented with challenging healthcare outcomes and has a very different healthy life expectancy in comparison to its neighbours – people in Slough live fewer years in good health than those in surrounding towns.

- Slough residents have a lower life expectancy at birth than comparative authorities;
- Slough's residents are less active than the national and regional averages (55.8% physically active compared to 69.8% in the south east); and
- 66.8% of Slough residents are classified as overweight or obese (compared to 60.3% in the south east).

There is a growing body of evidence (Bennett Institute for Public Policy. Townscapes: England's health inequalities) that suggest environmental factors underpin these inequalities. Poor quality housing, lack of open space or an abundance of unhealthy outlets (e.g. fast food or vape shops) contribute to poor health outcomes. The spaces people use and places they occupy encourage positive attributes for their physical, mental and emotional health.



The Regeneration Framework presents an opportunity to improve the life chances for everyone across Slough and not just those that live and use the town centre on a daily basis. It can promote connectivity between neighbourhoods and encourage active transport and movement across the town centre. This will support the Council's strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhood's programme and ensure inequalities are not exacerbated by any new development which may seem daunting or inaccessible to some of Slough's population.

There are over thirty health and wellbeing facilities of various kinds within a fifteen minute walk of the town centre. These include care homes, dentists, general practices, gyms, opticians and pharmacies. Upton Hospital is also located in the town centre although this site has for some time been considered as a regeneration opportunity and is identified for change in the masterplan.

Technological and digital advancements are changing how healthcare and wellbeing services are provided. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this pace of change and "video conference consultations" are a growing medium for accessing healthcare advice. This has an impact on the amount of space required for healthcare and wellbeing services across Slough as well as other customer contact centres. However before determining the space impact it will be important to understand what proportion of Slough's population have access to the right technology to support this.

The increasing demand on health and social care services is well documented including the prevention, management and treatment of long term conditions and an ageing population.

There are a significant number of stakeholders across the Slough healthcare economy and planning for new or improved healthcare capacity can still be reactive. The latest NHS Long Term Plan, makes a decisive move towards prevention and empowering people to take responsibility for their own health outcomes (Preventing illness and tackling health inequalities). This will require the NHS to collaborate with Council's, private and voluntary sectors to tackle the most significant causes of ill health including new action to help people stop smoking, overcome drinking problems and avoid Type 2 diabetes, with a particular focus on the communities and groups of people most affected by these problems.

The Regeneration Framework focuses on the spatial changes that can be made in the town centre and must promote an environment that favours walking and cycling and that enhances the public realm and access to public spaces to support inclusivity and encourage healthy lifestyles. Reductions in vehicle emissions by accelerating the uptake of cleaner vehicles and technologies will also be required to tackle the air quality issues that also impact on the health and well being of Slough's residents.

## INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY

The strategic vision set out in the Inclusive Growth Strategy is that:

*'Slough will be an economy which is defined by its inclusiveness, diversity and resilience – where small businesses flourish, large employers invest, and residents have the opportunity to aspire and prosper.'*

The strategy focuses on the factors that will deliver a more equitable share in Slough's prosperity for its residents. Its priorities include the creation of secure and productive jobs, a skills system that works for all, and regeneration that can deliver the infrastructure to unlock growth.

The Regeneration Framework shows how this growth may be delivered spatially across Slough's Square Mile.



## 2.5 CHANGING ROLE OF TOWN CENTRES

### SHIFTING RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years there has been a substantial change in the retail environment across the country with a significant growth in online shopping and a reduction in people visiting local high streets. This has had a profound impact on town and city centres nationwide with well-known high street retailers disappearing and many town centres experiencing high levels of vacancy and decline. Covid is likely to accelerate this change.

Towns and cities that provide a more diverse or distinctive town centre offer have proven to be more resilient to these changes.

### Character, amenity and sense of place

Whilst the role of town centres as a place to shop may be in decline their importance as social meeting places has become increasingly important. Cafes have sprung up within town centres and the new 'coffee culture' has brought with it a new location for work, socialising and convenience. Restaurants have extended this offer into the evening often offering an 'Al Fresco' dining experience that used to be reserved for holidays overseas.

Provision of parks, children's play, markets, street entertainment and other leisure attractions has brought families into town centres for much more than just shopping.

The quality of the environment as well as the offer is critical. The most successful urban places are those that deliver an attractive environment with pedestrian-friendly streets and public spaces as well as the range of uses and facilities.

### A location for Business

Town centres increasingly promote themselves as business locations. Employers of all scales from multi-national firms through to the self-employed can gain advantage from being located in the town centre. Employees often prefer the vibrancy of urban centres with access to facilities and amenities to the sterile environment of the 'out of town' business park or the isolated experience of working from home. It also offers the most sustainable location, accessible by public transport.

Providing small business hubs and incubator spaces can often tap into an unmet local demand and attract businesses into a town centre. This can support local regeneration by clustering entrepreneurial capacity and enriching social networks, generating footfall for local shops and facilities and increasing the level of local spending, while supporting local economic development and job creation.

Slough's highly accessible location has meant that it has always attracted businesses to the town. This together with the availability of land in the town centre offers a unique opportunity for a business led regeneration of the town centre.

### A place for local residents

Town centres benefit from their resident catchment. Having more people living in a centre or close by, helps to provide activity, animate the town centre streets and spaces during the day and evening and supports local businesses and shops. Making town centres easy to access through safe and convenient walking and cycling routes can increase this resident catchment further.

People of all ages are increasingly interested in living in attractive and lively urban areas that are close to public transport and offer the convenience of local shops, leisure and health facilities nearby. Increasing residential density in the heart of a town centre makes the best use of land in the most accessible locations however the recent Covid experience has also reminded us that good access to outdoor space and amenities is important to people's health and well being and must be planned for when intensifying development.

### Do nothing is not an option

Town centres compete for custom both locally and further afield. The decision to visit, live or locate your business in a town centre will depend on a range of factors including its location, accessibility and the quality of experience and offer that it provides.

Places that are attractive and offer an enjoyable, interesting and varied experience, while providing the usual range of town centre uses, will be preferred. Places that fail to respond to the shifting role of town centres will not prosper, risk losing footfall and are likely to decline.

Slough has already seen a decline in its retail performance with significant vacancy in the Queensmere shopping centre in particular. This vacancy however presents a significant opportunity for transformative change; the chance to redevelop the centre and transform the heart of the town and at the same time to deliver a more coherent and attractive place. Doing nothing is not an option.



## WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL TOWN CENTRE?

The success of a town centre is dependant on many interrelated factors. Successful town centres provide an environment where people want to be; providing an offer and experience that delivers much more than the functional opportunity to carry out day-to-day tasks. Figure 2.5 illustrates ten criteria for a successful town centre. This is not an exhaustive list but deliver against these criteria in Slough and the centre will be better placed to thrive in the future.

- **Strong character and identity** – preserve and enhance the features, history and townscape elements that deliver character and can provide a distinctive identity;
- **Accessible** – ensure the town centre is easily accessible by foot, cycle and public transport and reduce the need for private car journeys;
- **Quality public transport interchange** - provide an attractive, convenient and accessible public transport hub that delivers a quality interchange experience and supports town centre vitality;
- **A range of shops** – provide a range of shops that serve everyday and specialist needs;
- **A place to work** – provide work space to provide for a range of businesses, creative enterprises and start ups;
- **A place to live** – encourage urban living with a mix of homes (tenure and unit types), space for families and supporting health and education infrastructure;

- **Opportunities to eat out** – provide a variety of eating out options as part of the daytime and evening economy and to animate the town;
- **A rich culture and leisure offer** - draw people into the town centre with a mix of performance, events, festivals and creative activities as well as year-round health and leisure provision;
- **Quality public open spaces** – provide a range of high quality open spaces within an easy walk for residents and visitors to the town centre; and
- **A clean, safe and well-managed environment** – reduce crime and littering and engender community pride through a positive town image.

Figure 2.6 illustrates a qualitative assessment of Slough against each of these categories.

Whilst there have been some significant enhancements to Slough town centre in recent years the centre under-performs against many of the ten criteria for a successful town. The Elizabeth line will bring enhanced accessibility to the town centre when it opens however there is significant opportunity to enhance the town's offer and the quality of the environment within the town centre.



Figure 2.5: Criteria for a successful town centre

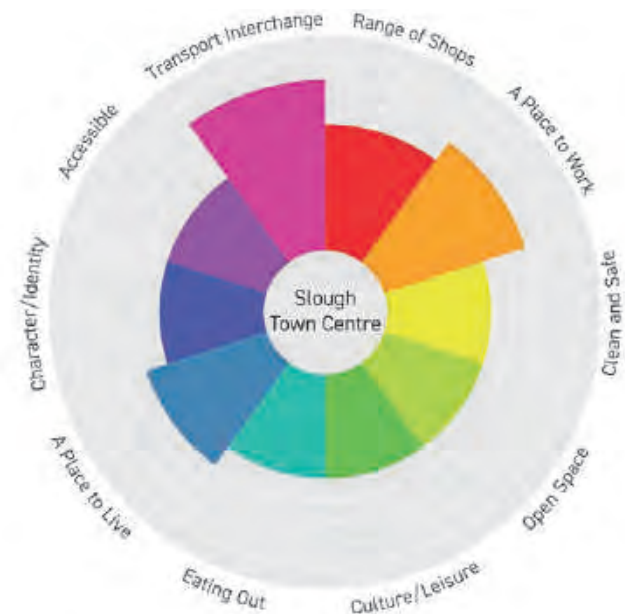


Figure 2.6: How Slough town centre scores against the criteria

## 2.6 STRUCTURE OF THE TOWN CENTRE



Windsor Road - Slough's main north - south street



Slough's elegant railway station



Queensmere multi-storey car park and Tesco superstore on Wellington Street

Slough town centre grew as a staging post on the Great West Road – the historic route from London to Bath. Originally following the High Street this route was diverted onto Wellington Street (one block northwards) in the 1970s. The Great Western railway, Grand Union Canal Slough Arm, and M4 motorway all follow a similar east to west alignment.

This series of east to west connections, and in particular Wellington Street and the Great Western railway, create a significant barrier to north - south movement in the town.

Development in Slough has responded to these barriers. To the north of the railway line a mix of employment uses established, including the former Uxbridge Road Gas Works, the Akzo Nobel (former ICI paint works) and the iconic Horlicks factory. Within the town centre itself the Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centres open out onto the High Street but present their service yards and car parks to Wellington Street reinforcing the north - south barrier.

The main north - south route through the town centre is Windsor Road / Stoke Road. This historic route extends from Windsor and Eton in the south through the town centre towards Stoke Poges and Gerrard Cross to the north. Until recently the route intersected with Wellington Street at Brunel roundabout but this has now been replaced by a signal-controlled junction. The junction lacks definition and enclosure from buildings with land to the north (the former Thames Valley College and Brunel bus station sites), either vacant or occupied by temporary uses.

Stokes Poges Lane, Wexham Road and Uxbridge Road are the only other north to south routes crossing the Great Western railway corridor.

With its origins as a linear settlement, and with no history as a market town, Slough has evolved without any significant public spaces in the heart of the town centre. The redevelopment in the 1970s delivered two small spaces on the High Street at the entrances to the Queensmere Shopping Centre but these are modest in scale. Salt Hill Park, Herschel Park and Upton Park provide attractive green spaces on the edge of the centre but the largest space within the Square Mile is the St Mary's Churchyard on Church Street.

In many towns residential neighbourhoods rub up against the town centre. In Slough the catchment is restricted by road and rail infrastructure and by light industrial uses. So whilst Slough is strategically well connected, for many of it's residents, walking into the town centre is not an attractive proposition.



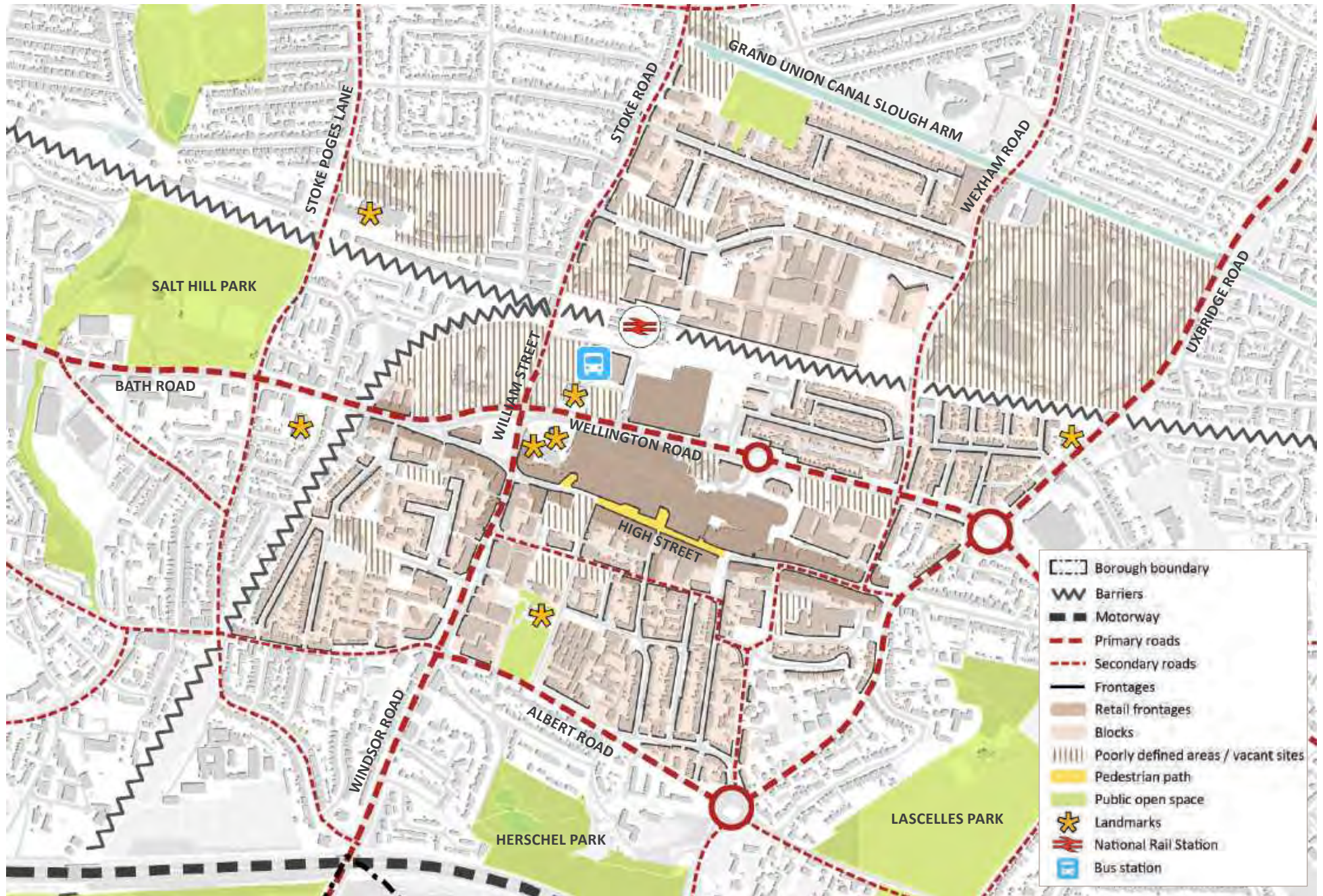


Figure 2.7: Structure of the town centre



## 2.7 LAND USE

The pattern of land uses in Slough's Square Mile is indicated in Figure 2.8. This plan demonstrates the linear character of the town centre with retail uses, including the town's food a drink offer, stretching along the High Street.

### Retail

Larger retail units and are located centrally either on the High Street or within the shopping centres. Mainstream multiples are located within this area although the town centre has suffered from the closure of several anchor stores in recent years including BHS in 2016, Marks and Spencer in 2017 and Debenhams earlier this year and the Queensmere Shopping Centre in particular has a high level of vacancy (refer to Section 2.12 Property Market).

A higher proportion of independent shops, cafes and bars are located in the smaller units towards the eastern and western end of the street. The offer in the eastern High Street in particular is more diverse and reflective of the multi-cultural nature of Slough's community with a high proportion of ethnic foodstores, cafes and restaurants.

### Office

As referenced in section 2.2 much of Slough's employment is located outside of the Square Mile on the Slough Trading Estate however there are a number of significant headquarters buildings on Bath Road and several new office developments have been delivered in the heart of the town in recent years. These include the Porter Building and Future Works buildings on Brunel Way (next to the railway station), the new Council offices (Observatory House) on Windsor Road and the Urban Building on Albert Road.



### Light industrial

The area to the north of the railway line has also helped to drive Slough's economy however the shift from manufacturing to an information-based economy means that many of the industrial sites within this area are now vacant.

### Culture and leisure

In recent years a number of significant new cultural / leisure resources have been developed in Slough including The Curve on William Street and The Ice Arena on Bath Road. The town also has a ten-screen cinema within the Queensmere Centre. The former Adelphi cinema on Bath Road is now used as a bingo hall.

240 new hotel bedspaces are under construction on the former library site on William Street and these will add to the existing hotel offer in the town.

### Residential

The town centre is surrounded by a number of residential neighbourhoods. Whilst walking into the town centre from the south is relatively easy access from the north is restricted by the Great Western Rail line and made less attractive by the fragmented nature of the environment to the north of the rail line.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The Prudential building presents an elegant facade on the junction of Windsor Road and High Street; the historic Horlicks Factory with its iconic chimney; Slough's new cultural building 'The Curve' and The Future Works - a new office building on Wellington Street



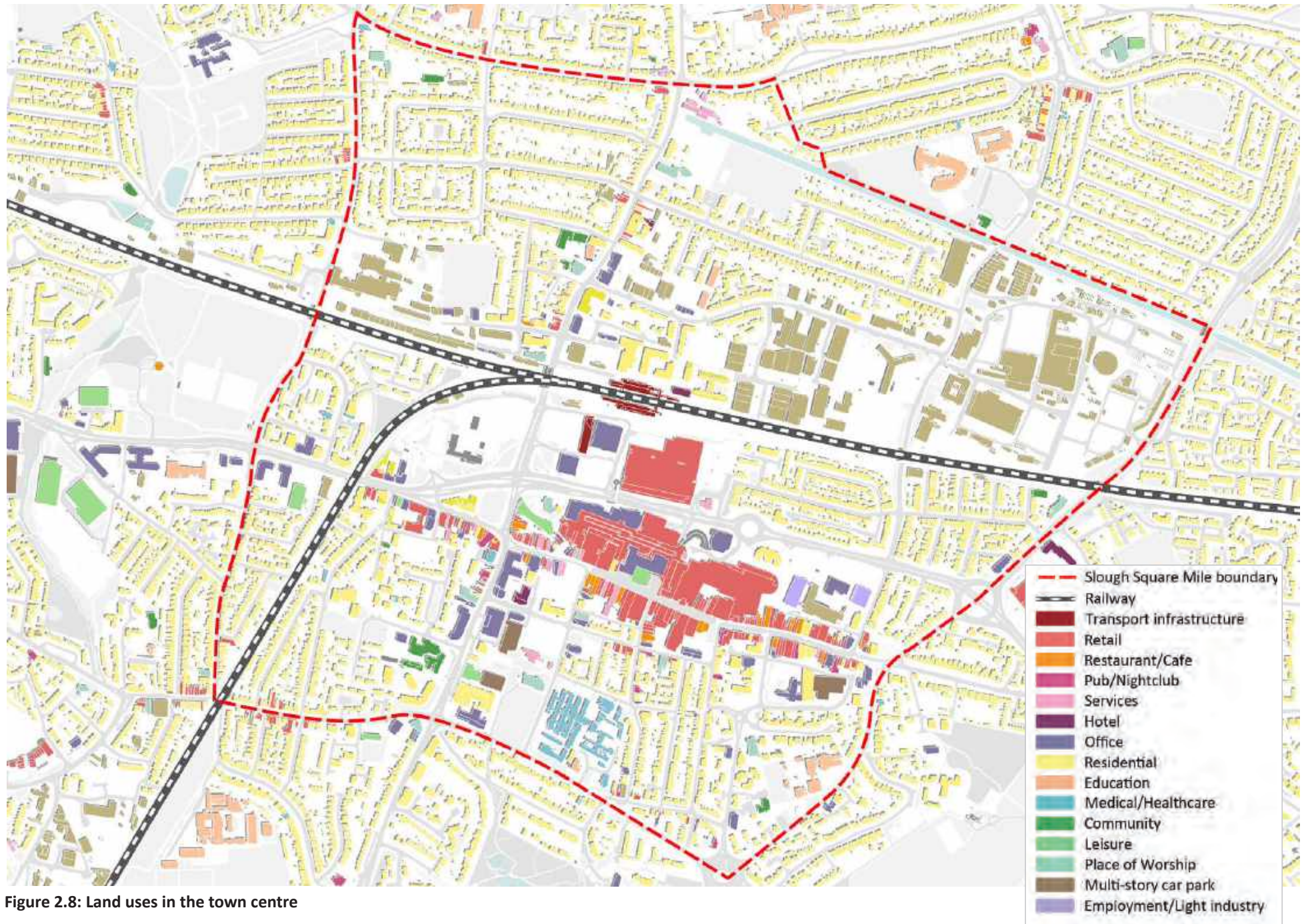


Figure 2.8: Land uses in the town centre



## 2.8 CHARACTER AND TOWNSCAPE

### CHARACTER TYPOLOGIES

Slough's townscape is shaped by its historic development and evolution. Located on flat land to the north of the Thames Valley the towns growth was not constrained by natural features but instead shaped by the linear movement infrastructure – the Great West Road and Great Western railway line.

The main routes that pass through the town, High Street, Windsor Road, Stoke Road, Uxbridge Road Wexham Road and Calvey Road all follow the routes of historic lanes. The built form that lines these streets, and the development that sits behind them, is shaped by activities and events throughout the last two centuries.

Parts of the town have strong and coherent character which is derived by a consistency in the built form, the way in which buildings line streets, in their height and massing and materiality. Other parts of the centre are more fragmented, composed of buildings of different styles, form, massing and uses and in some cases including vacant and underutilised sites. These areas offer greater opportunity for change.

Figure 2.9 sub-divides the Square Mile into a series of character typologies. A description of each is provided below with details of the characteristic features that make the area distinctive and that any new development should respond to and the potential for change.



Fine grain buildings on the south side of High Street

#### The High Street / Fine grain retail

Extending east west through the centre High Street is composed of an almost continuous terrace of buildings that front directly onto the street space. The age of the buildings varies with many smaller premises redeveloped to deliver larger stores. Buildings are typically three or four storeys in height with upper storeys used either as storage, as offices or providing residential accommodation.

Outside of the centre local retail parades are also present on Chalvey Road, Wexham Road and Stoke Poges Lane.

#### Important characteristics

- Continuous active ground floor frontage
- Modest scale (three to four storeys) particularly to the south side of the street to prevent over shadowing of the street space

#### Potential for change

- Incremental change to deliver updated accommodation
- Consolidate gap sites with development
- Conversion of upper floors to provide additional residential accommodation in the centre



Queensmere Shopping Centre

#### Shopping Centres

The Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centres extend along the northern side of High Street. These large floorplate internalised shopping environments are inflexible structures that front onto the High Street but back onto Wellington Street presenting an uninviting face to this main street. The structures also impede north - south movement from the High Street towards the station to the north. Two multi-storey car parks are integrated with the structure of the shopping centres with access ramps to the rear.

The changing nature of town centre retail has impacted on the success of these centres with high levels of vacancy in the Queensmere Centre.

#### Potential for change

- Requires a comprehensive approach to deliver change



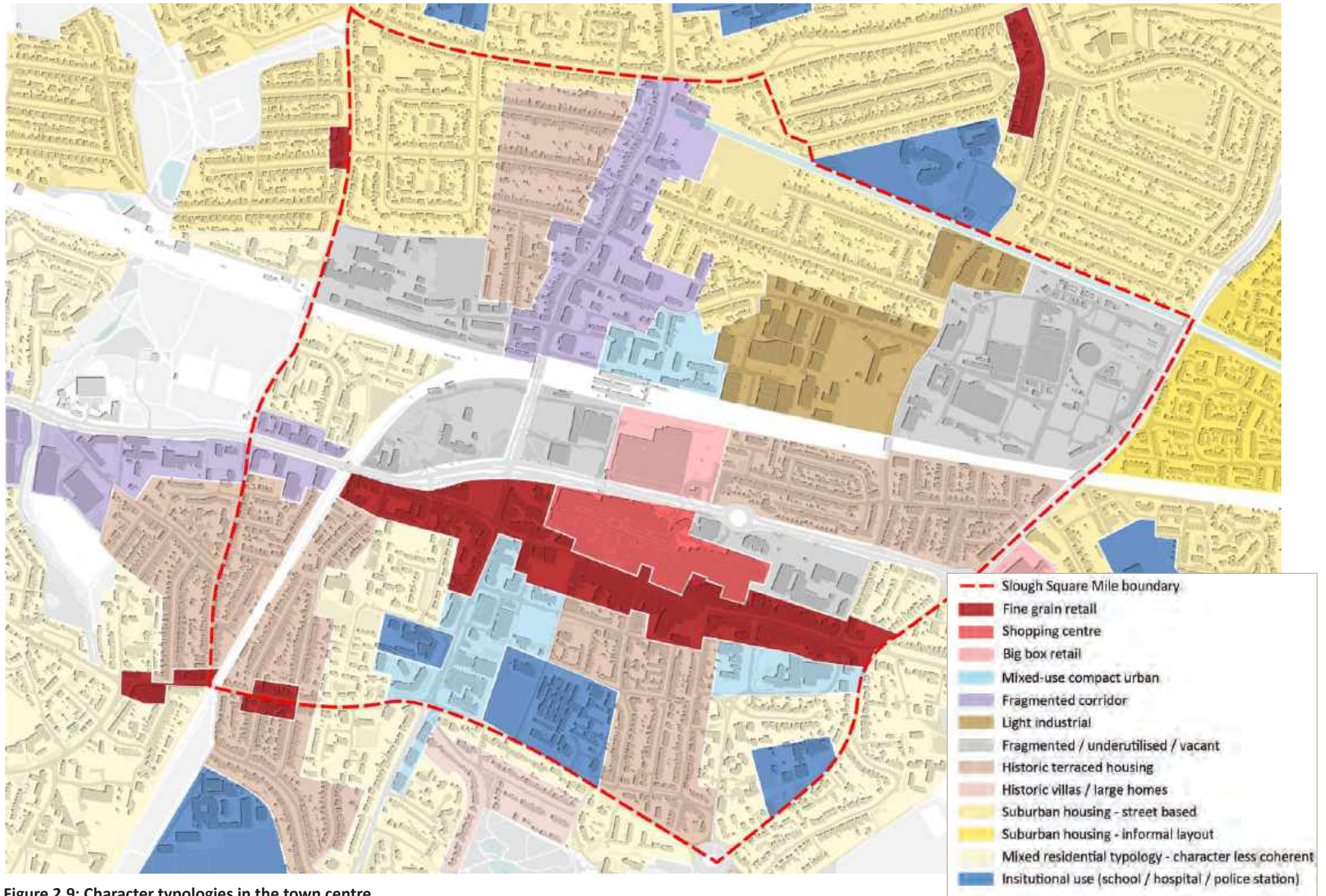


Figure 2.9: Character typologies in the town centre





Tesco foodstore

### Big Box retail

Two large-floorplate foodstores are located within or close to Slough's Square Mile – a Tesco superstore on Wellington Street and a Sainsbury's store on the Wellington Street / Uxbridge Road roundabout to the east. These stores provide an important function in the centre but the large buildings provide little animation and long blank frontages to street spaces. The large-scale structures also reduce pedestrian permeability which would be desirable on the Tesco site given its proximity to the railway station.

### Potential for change

- Change is unlikely in the short term
- There is long-term potential to redevelop the Tesco store to provide a more permeable development pattern close to the station however continuity of trade is important to food retailers and so this is only likely to happen if Tesco relocate to an alternative town centre site or their business model changes



A mix of office and residential buildings on Windsor Road

### Mixed-use compact urban

Approaching Slough from the south, Windsor Road rises into the town centre and this broad street is defined by a number of substantial office and residential buildings including the Council Offices (Observatory House). This mixed-use area has a compact urban form with buildings typically four to six storeys but up to ten storeys. Windsor Road views northwards to the curved façade of the 1930's Prudential House at its junction with High Street.

A mixed-use compact urban area has also recently been developed to the north of the railway station. The scale here is typically five to eight storeys but with Lexington Apartments (seventeen storeys) and the Holiday Inn (ten storeys) at a greater scale and serving to mark the station.

A third mixed use area is located immediately south of the eastern High Street. Whilst this area has greater scale than the area to the south, surface car parks make it feel fragmented.

### Important characteristics

- Continuous consistent frontage line and scale providing sense of enclosure to Windsor Road

### Potential for change

- Consolidate gap sites with development



Stoke Road presents an incoherent and fragmented appearance

### Fragmented corridor

The main approaches into the town on Stoke Road and Bath Road are lined by a range of buildings of varied form and function. Stoke Road is a tighter urban street and here two storey terraced homes and shopping terraces are interspersed with community buildings and larger scale office and apartment buildings (typically four to six storey).

Bath Road is home to many office headquarters buildings but these are mixed with apartment blocks and a number of destination uses including the Slough Ice Arena and the former Adelphi Cinema now a bingo hall. Buildings are generally of substantial scale but there is no consistency to the building frontage line or interface with the street reducing the coherence of the street corridor.

Both corridors lack a consistent character and feel fragmented. This is exacerbated by an inconsistent approach to public realm.

### Important characteristics

- Approaches into the town defined by building frontages

### Potential for change

- Potential for intensification where sites under utilised
- Consolidate gap sites with development
- Establish a more consistent approach to both development and public realm





Industrial buildings north of the railway line on the former Akzo Nobel works site

### Fragmented / underutilised / vacant

A number of sites within the town have either become available for development through change of use or closure of their former businesses or appear to be under-utilised. Significant sites in the Square Mile include:

- The former Thames Valley College site west of William Street (now known as the North West Quadrant);
- The former Octagon office site and Brunel bus station site (east of William Street);
- The former Horlicks Factory site; and
- The former Akzo Nobel and Uxbridge Gas Works on an extensive underutilised site between Wexham Road and Uxbridge Road.

The BT Exchange and Royal Mail Parcel depot also appears underutilised with a large surface car park adjacent to Wellington Street but is unlikely to be available for development in the short to medium term.

In their current condition these sites undermine the character and image of the centre.

### Potential for change

- These sites offer opportunity for comprehensive change and can help to transform the environment and image of the town

### Light industrial

Whilst many of the former industrial sites to the north of Slough town centre are no longer active a substantial area is still occupied by a variety of light industrial uses north of the railway station and extending eastwards to Wexham Road. These sites including the Akzo Nobel offices provide valued jobs and contribution to the local economy.

### Potential for change

- There is potential for incremental change from employment to residential use on the smaller sites to the north of Petersfield Avenue but development on the more substantial site to the south would require a comprehensive approach to deliver a place that integrates with the wider area. This is considered to be a longer-term opportunity and piecemeal development must be avoided.



Upton Hospital on Albert Street

### Institutional use (school / hospital / police station)

Within the Square Mile there are a number of sites within public ownership. These include schools, hospitals and the town's police station and magistrates court.

These uses provide stand-alone buildings and many are of a scale and form that contrasts with their surrounding context. The sites often include open green space that adds to the character of their surroundings.

### Important characteristics

- Provide an important community function and need to be easily accessible
- Sometimes include important historic building – e.g. Upton Hospital

### Potential for change

- Considered on a site by site basis – Upton Hospital has been identified as an opportunity

### Historic terraced housing

Many of the historic housing areas developed in the Victorian period still remain within the Square Mile. A rectilinear grid of streets was established south of the High Street and northwards as far as the railway line. Terraces of modest homes were developed on these streets and these provide an attractive residential environment close to the centre.

Further areas of historic terraced homes are located to the north of Wellington Street and to the west of the town centre in Chalvey.

#### Important characteristics

- A fine grain of modest scale brick built properties (typically two storey) laid out to a consistent frontage line and with buildings enclosing the street space
- Connected network of streets
- Distinctive buildings or shops on street corners

#### Potential for change

- Incremental change at a scale and grain that responds to the existing context

### Historic villas / large homes

The oldest properties in the town are located in Upton to the south of the centre. St Laurence church, and Upton Manor form part of a cluster of historic properties set in landscape to the south east of the Red Cow roundabout. West of this substantial Victorian villas overlook Herschel Park.

#### Important characteristics

- Historic properties provide a coherent high quality environment set within a mature landscape

#### Potential for change

- Protected by Conservation Area designations and offer limited opportunity for change



Victorian terraces south of the High Street

### Suburban housing

As Slough grew through the 20th century new planned housing areas were developed to the north and east of the centre. Many of these provide semi-detached suburban homes on a connected network of streets. Much of the housing built in post-war years was more experimental and moved away from street based layouts with homes laid out in a less regular pattern. Housing areas of this kind can be found to the east of Uxbridge Road.

#### Important characteristics

- Consistent and coherent streets of family housing with character reinforced by repetitive housing types

#### Potential for change

- Limited to household extensions and adaptations



Streets to the north of Wellington Street are cut off from the centre by the busy road

### Mixed residential typology – character less coherent

Whilst the housing areas described above are consistent in form and typology much of the residential development to the south of the Square Mile is more mixed in character with different residential types inter-mixed. The character is less coherent and these mixed residential areas therefore offer greater potential for intensification or change.

#### Potential for change

- Potential for intensification but dependent on a plot by plot / building by building evaluation



## FRONTAGE CONDITION

Lively and safe streets require a ready supply of people, an active building frontage and an inviting public realm. Many of Slough's streets don't lack people but the frontage condition is very mixed.

The High Street and the connected network of streets to the south of the centre are lined by buildings that overlook the streets. However in many parts of the centre poorly defined service yards, vacant sites and surface car parks present an environment that feels uncared for and abandoned and that neither feels safe or comfortable to walk in.

Wellington Street was designed as a highway that actively separates vehicular and pedestrian movement. Buildings along this route were designed to turn their back on the corridor creating a place that is both unattractive and inhospitable for pedestrians.

Whilst the recent public realm enhancements have delivered positive change Wellington Street will only feel like a street when the existing shopping centres and multi storey car parks are replaced with new buildings that positively address the street space.

Figure 2.10 indicates where buildings provide positive frontage to streets, where existing buildings either back onto the street space or provide no activity at ground floor level and where streets lack street frontage altogether.

Delivering better frontage to Slough's streets will be critical to making Slough's Square Mile a more attractive place to walk in and walk to.

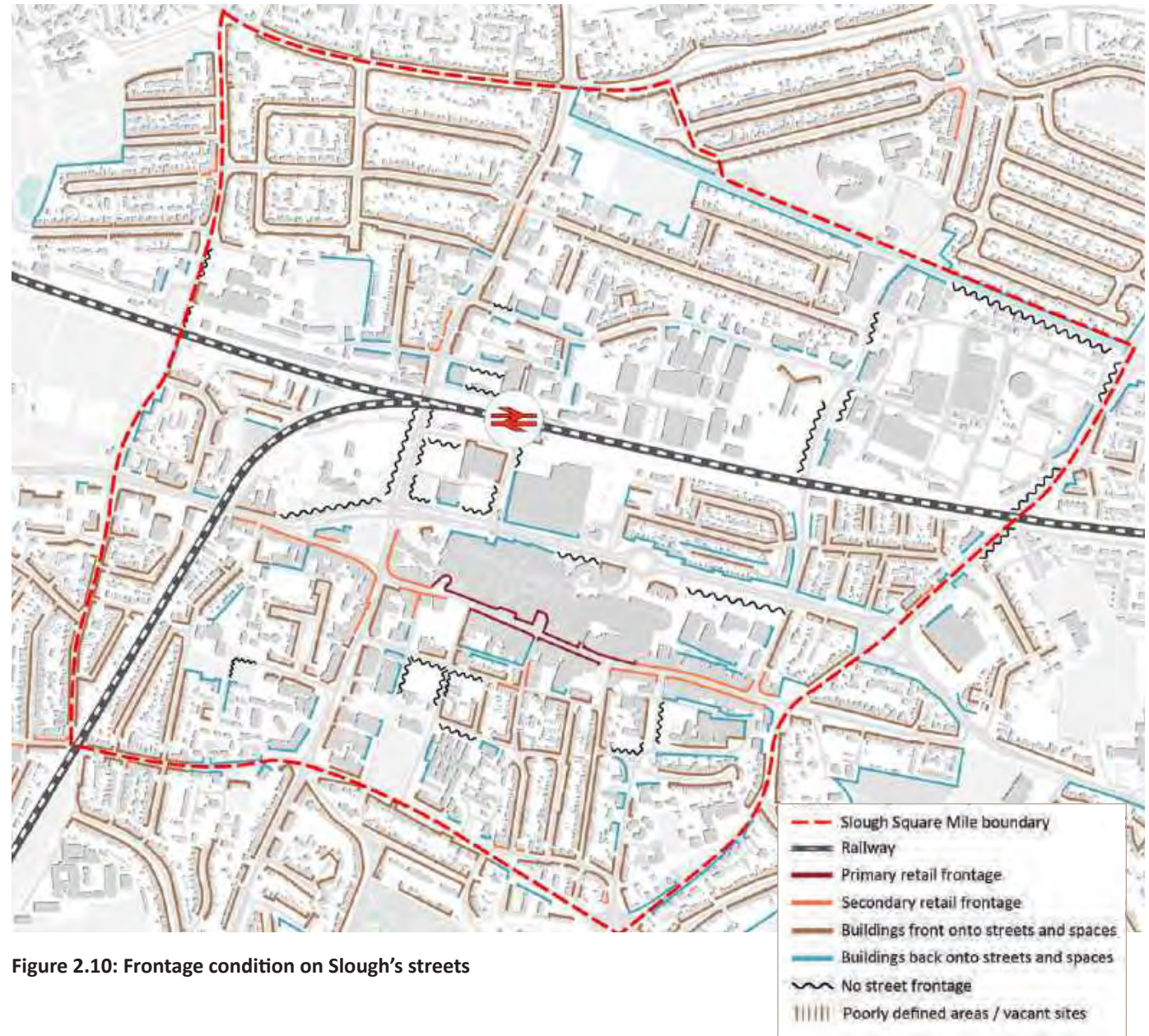


Figure 2.10: Frontage condition on Slough's streets



## 2.9 BUILDING HEIGHT

Slough Square Mile is set within a hinterland of two storey housing. Historic properties on the High Street were built at a slightly greater scale (typically three or four storey). St. Mary's Church, must have been very prominent when its elegant tower was added to the original building in 1913. It is still one of the tallest buildings in the Square Mile but large scale buildings to the north and west have started to reduce its visibility.

Buildings of greater height have been developed on the strategic approaches to the town centre on Bath Road and Windsor Road. Here the greater scale, typically four to six storeys helps to provide a sense of enclosure to these broader streets.

A number of taller office buildings (ten storey) have also been developed to the east of the town on Hatfield Road and more recently in the heart of the centre. The most distinctive is the Future Works building with its distinctive angled roof form. This building is particularly prominent on the western approach into the town centre on Wellington / Bath Road. A cluster of taller buildings has also emerged north of the railway station and includes the tallest building in the town, the seventeen storey Lexington Apartments.



Slough's taller buildings are highly visible from a number of locations both in and within the setting of the town centre. Open views towards the town centre can be experienced from open spaces both close to the town (Salt Hill Park and Lascelles Park) and also further afield including from Windsor Great Park to the south. The taller buildings help to define the image and skyline of the town and can aid understanding and orientation. However located in the wrong place or poorly designed either in respect of their massing and form or materiality tall buildings can also undermine this image. Their design location and height must therefore be carefully considered and planned.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: View towards Slough town centre across Lascelles Park; Lexington apartments to the north of the railway station; and St Mary's Church



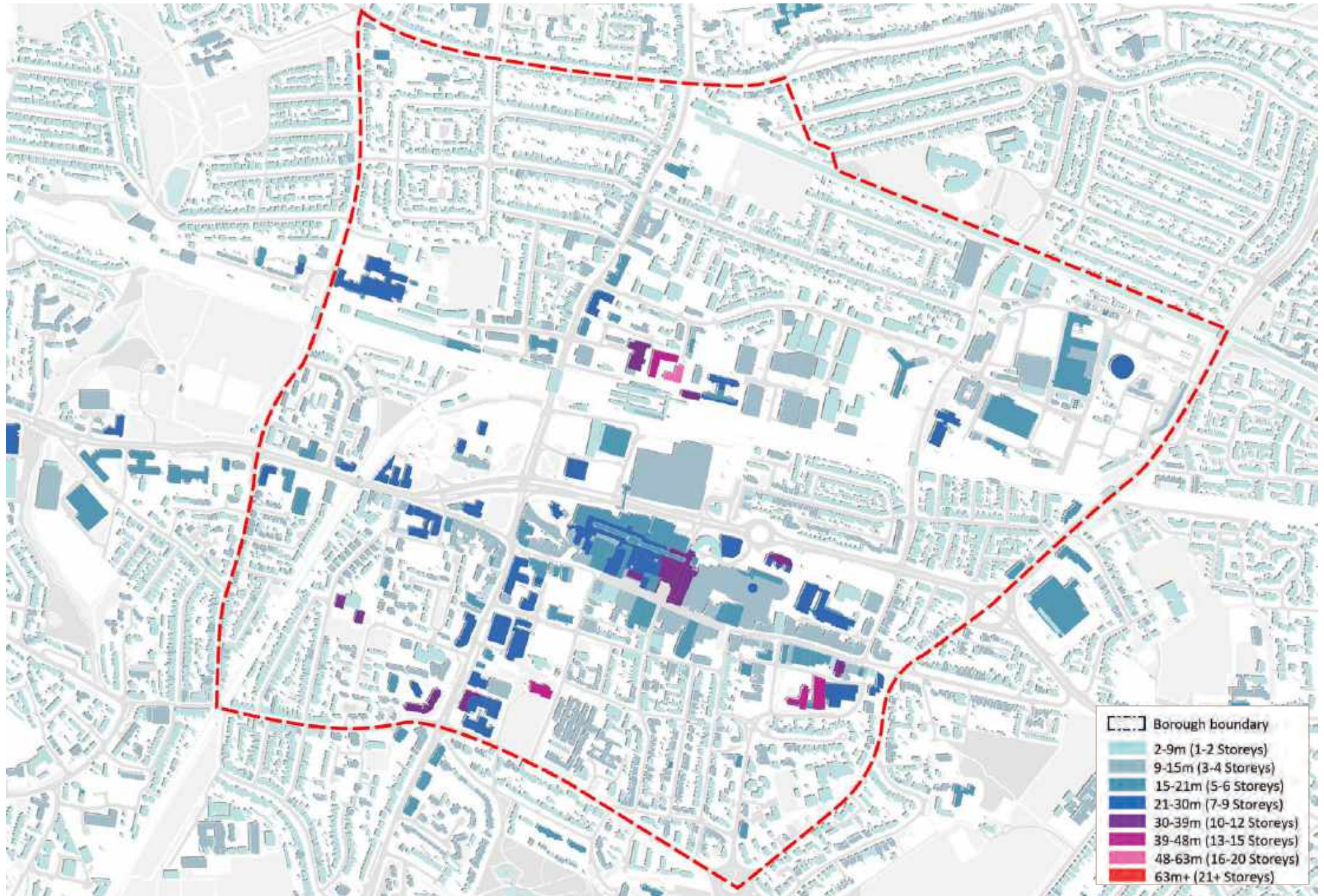


Figure 2.11: Building height



## 2.10 MOVEMENT NETWORK

### STREETS

The reasons behind Slough's continued success as an attractive place to live and to work, as well as for companies to have office space, are varied, but many of them relate to its wider connections with Central London, Heathrow Airport and, more generally, the motorway and railway networks. The ongoing upgrades to the M4 motorway between junctions 3 and 12 (Slough can be accessed via junctions 5, 6 and 7) to 'smart motorway' standard will help to improve capacity, resilience and safety. In turn, this should help to relieve pressure on the A4 running through the heart of the town centre, which is currently the official diversionary route for the adjacent motorway when incident occur.

The Court of Appeal ruling in February 2020 that the construction of a third runway at Heathrow Airport would be illegal due to a lack of consideration of the UK's climate change commitments, has, at the very least, delayed the airport's expansion. However the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) still has clear benefits for the wider area and is not predicated on a third runway. The Court of Appeal decision will temper air quality issues affecting Slough (please see the section on Air Quality, below).

Whilst Slough's strategic connections have, on-balance, been a vital ingredient in the town's success, helping to make it the most productive town in the UK, this has sometimes been to the detriment of local movement, particularly for those who may choose to walk or cycle. Major highway infrastructure running through the centre of Slough can be uninviting to these modes of travel.

The A4, a four-lane dual-carriageway that flares to eight lanes at its junction with Stoke Road, that runs east-west immediately to the north of the town centre, is a significant barrier to local movement, both along it and across it. It is currently the only, continuous east-west vehicular route through the centre of Slough and, notably, divides the town centre from the train station. As such it is probably the most significant orientating feature in Slough.

North-south streets are more numerous, particularly to the north of the A4, but these must cross the Great Western Mainline via road bridges that can be particularly hostile to those walking and cycling. Slough High Street, which once formed part of the A4, now includes a 300m long pedestrianised section. At either end of this section are a network of one-way streets that discourage through-traffic.

The proportion of people living in Slough choosing to drive to work (62.9%, 2011 Census) is comparable with nearby towns such as Guildford (62.2%) and Woking (61.7%). Equally, there appears to be little quantitative evidence to suggest that a disproportionately high number of people drive into or out of Slough for work, again relative to comparable town centres such as Guildford and Woking.



Wellington Street - a major barrier for pedestrians in the centre

Where Slough appears to particularly struggle is in the high proportion of people who choose to drive for short commutes. The total proportion of people living in Slough who travel 2km or less to get to work (17.6%) is broadly the same for Guildford (15.2%) and Woking (14.1%). However, far more people complete these short commutes by car in Slough (46.6%) than they do in Guildford (32.3%) or Woking (40.5%), despite Slough's more urban makeup. The result is relatively high levels of traffic congestion, particularly in relation to commuting.

Combined with a current over-supply of cheap car parking in the town centre (approximately 80 spaces per 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of retail compared with just 47 in Guildford and 34 in Kingston-upon-Thames), the car has become the dominant mode of travel, making alternatives unattractive. This is despite 23.4% of all households in Slough having no access to a car.



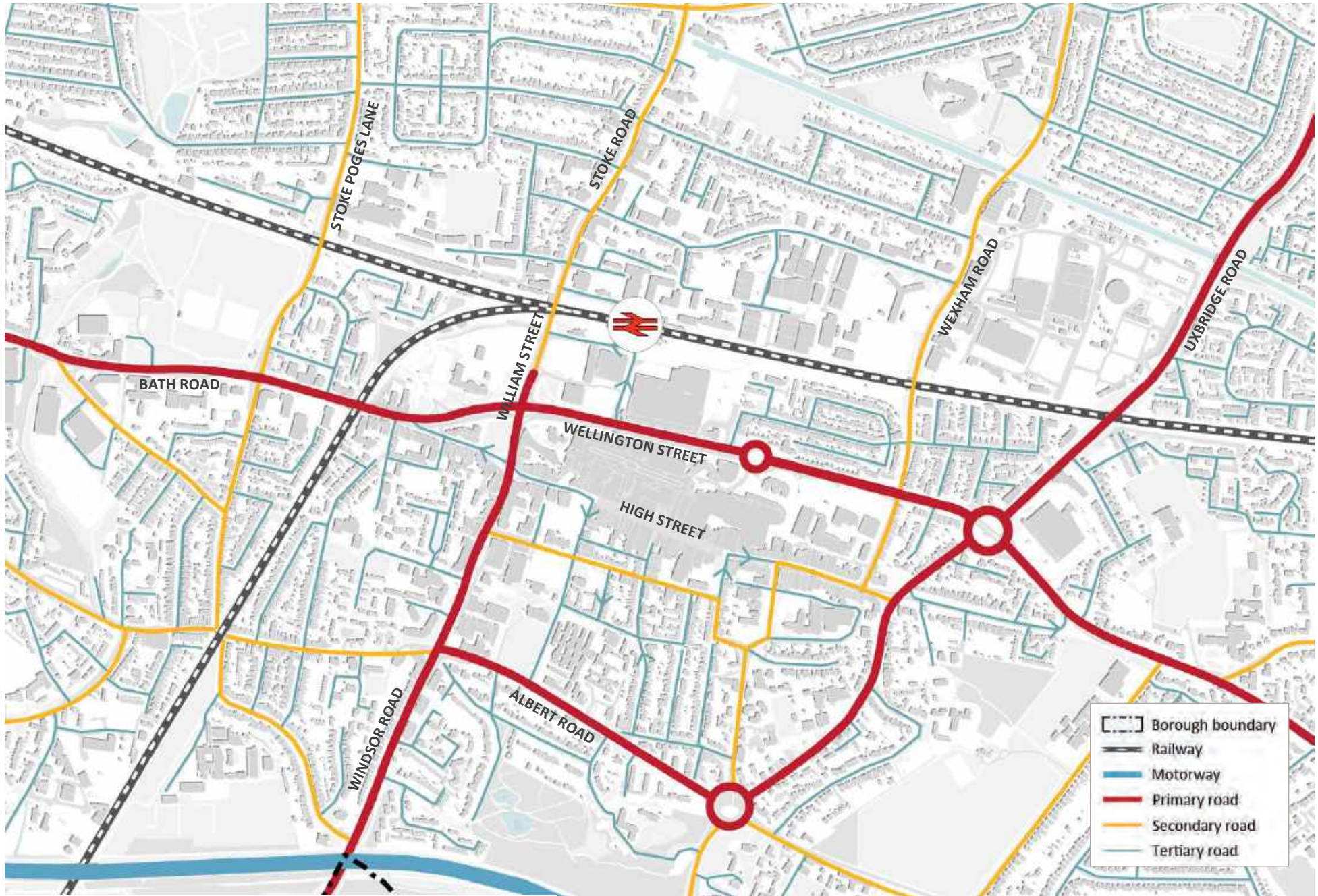


Figure 2.12: Vehicular movement network





A bus on Wellington Street with the station to the rear



Slough railway station



Slough's dynamic new bus station

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The majority of bus services in Slough are run on a commercial basis (i.e. without subsidy) by First Berkshire & Thames Valley Buses Ltd. There are also third parties that procure and fund local bus services. These include BAA Heathrow, SEGRO and Transport for London.

The Slough Trading Estate Hoppa bus service operates up to four times an hour between the trading estate and Slough town centre, as well as Slough and Burnham rail stations and neighbouring residential areas. Bus services provide connections with most larger settlements nearby, including Langley, Windsor, Staines, Maidenhead, Hounslow and Uxbridge.

There are approximately 14,000 concessionary bus passes for residents aged over the female retirement age, plus there is a pass that offers students aged 16-19 half-price fares on First Berkshire bus services or Great Western train services (but not both).

The primary bus interchange point within the town centre is Slough bus station, located immediately to the south of Slough railway station.

Slough railway station is located on the Great Western Mainline that runs between London Paddington and locations in the west of England and Wales. At peak times there are approximately six trains per hour between Slough and London Paddington, with fast trains completing the journey in 14 minutes. The station also has a branch line to Windsor & Eton Central. The station accommodates approximately 5.5 million entries and exits each year plus a further 1.6 million interchanges (predominantly people interchanging between the mainline and the branch line).

The station has level access from the adjacent highway to both sides of the station giving step free access. Lifts are available to cross platforms. The station has ticket barriers but sits outside of the Oyster network. It is covered by CCTV, and has toilets, baby change facilities and waiting rooms. There is storage for 144 bicycles and a taxi rank in the main station forecourt.

Slough railway station has a ticket office that is open Monday to Friday from 06:00 to 21:30, Saturdays from 06:60 to 21:30 and Sundays from 07:00 to 21:30. Staff assistance is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The arrival of the Elizabeth line, with services from Slough expected to commence by mid-2022, will result in journey times to Bond Street and Canary Wharf of 31 minutes and 46 minutes respectively. Slough railway station is receiving an improved ticket hall for the south entrance, new customer information screens and signage and improvements to the area around the station.

The arrival of the Elizabeth line is likely to result in both an increase in the number of people who work in Central London choosing to live in Slough as well as an increase in the number of businesses (re)locating to Slough. This is evidenced by the significant interest from landowners and developers in the Square Mile.



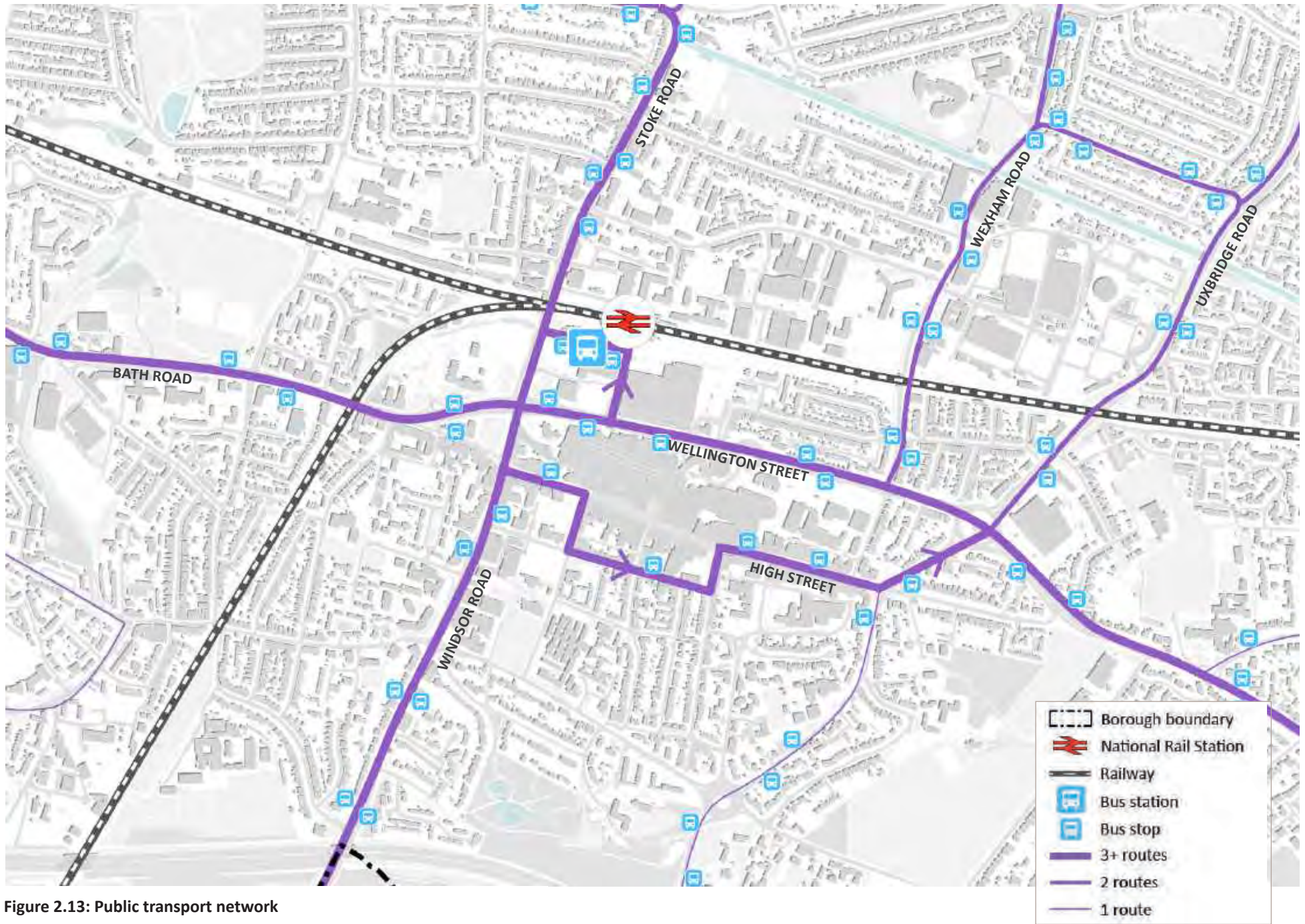


Figure 2.13: Public transport network





Crossing the railway line at Stoke Road

## WALKING AND CYCLING

Slough is a relatively compact and flat town making it an ideal area for walking and cycling. At approximately seven miles east-west and three miles north-south, an average cyclist should only take 45 minutes to cross the Borough at its widest point. Perhaps more usefully, someone living in Colnbrook is less than a 30-minute bicycle ride from the town centre.

However, there are a number of issues that suppress the use of these modes. Firstly, the railway lines that cut across Slough can only be crossed at a number of bridges and tunnels that are often relatively hostile environments for those walking and cycling, with limited space and facilities, and this undermines an otherwise relatively compact town. Equally, many key walking and cycling routes are characterised by poor quality building frontage that can make these routes feel bleak and monotonous.



Inhospitable walking environment at the entrance to the Queensmere Centre on Wellington Street

The limited number of continuous east-west routes through Slough mean that those walking and cycling often have little choice but to share these corridors with relatively high volumes of motor traffic.

This is compounded by walking and cycling infrastructure that lacks adequate consistency, priority and segregation from this motor traffic in certain locations. For example, pedestrians are often expected to cross junctions in multiple stages some cycle lanes are sub-standard whilst off-carriageway cycle tracks tend to stop and start, switch sides and lack dedicated priority at junctions.

The result is that the cycle network is quite fragmented in certain locations as well as intimidating for all but the most experienced of cyclists.



Cycle route at the eastern end of High Street



Slough has a cycle hire scheme



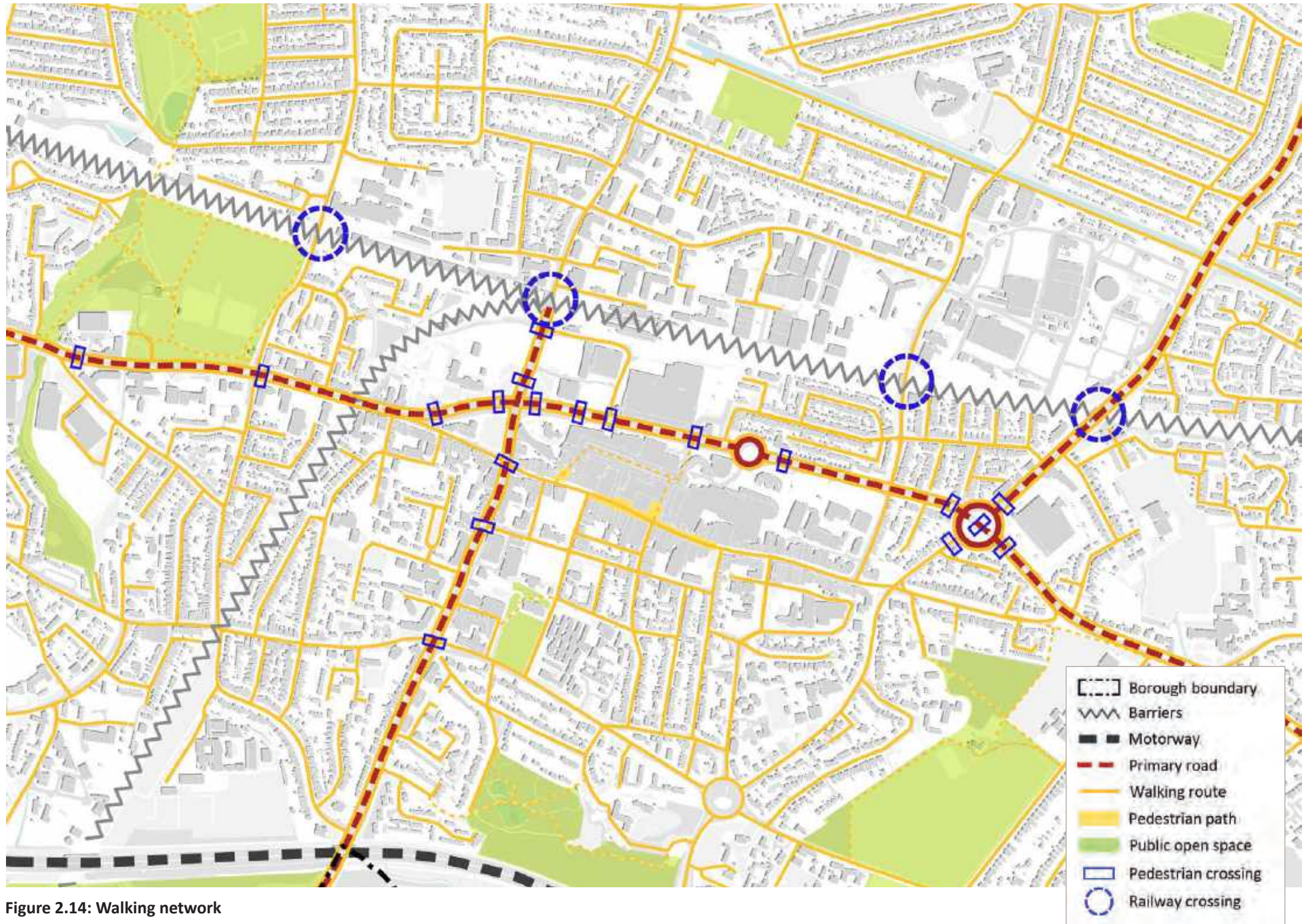


Figure 2.14: Walking network



## CAR PARKING

Within Slough's Square Mile there are approximately 3,970 short/medium off-street car parking spaces that, notionally, are available to the public. This includes the car park associated with the Tesco supermarket, but excludes the long-stay car parks that serve Slough railway station.

This parking supply is spread across a number of multi-storey and surface car parks in both Council and private ownership, with approximately 550 spaces located on temporary surface car parks, situated on potential development sites.

In the short-to-medium term the Square Mile is likely to lose the temporary car parks on the former Octagon site and North West Quadrant site (totalling 376 publicly accessible spaces) as well as the Burlington car park. Additionally, although there is currently no active planning application, the Buckingham Gateway car park (120 spaces) may also be redeveloped.

On weekdays approximately 2,000 off-street car parking spaces are currently leased for use by rail commuters, nearby office occupiers, gym members and as airport parking. Therefore, in practical terms, the Square Mile currently has far fewer off-street short/medium stay parking spaces that are truly available to the public. Equally, a number of the car parks are less popular with shoppers due to their distance from the retail core (such as The Grove or Victoria Street car parks) and / or the quality of the car parks themselves (such as the Queensmere car park).

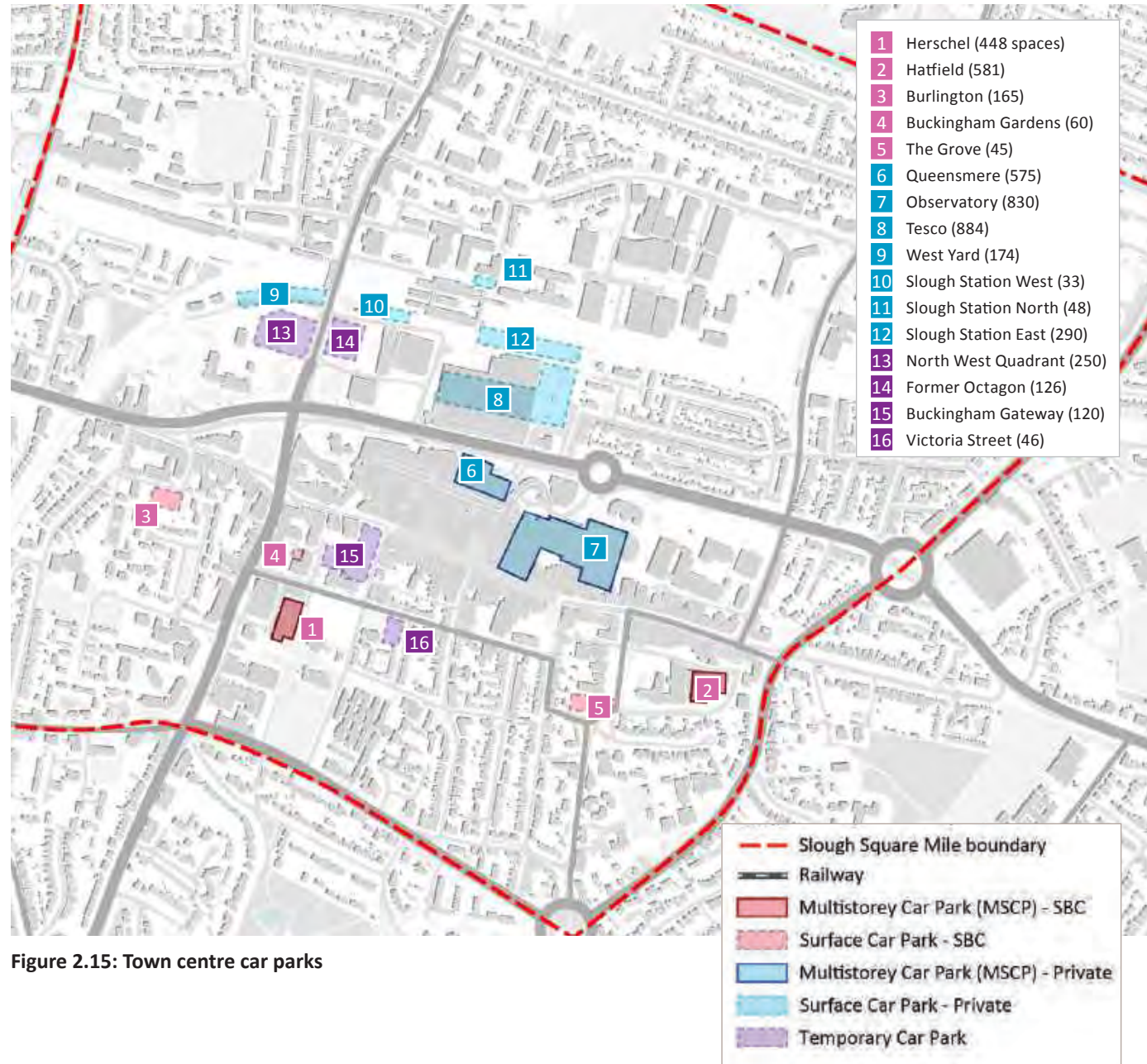


Figure 2.15: Town centre car parks





**Hatfield car park has been recently refurbished**

Information on the current usage of car parks is relatively limited, but current best estimates suggest that on weekdays approximately 1,000 short/medium stay parking spaces are occupied in addition to 2,000 contract spaces. This equates to approximately 22% spare capacity. On Saturdays approximately 2,210 short/medium stay parking spaces are occupied in addition to 180 contract spaces. This equates to approximately 40% spare capacity.

The refurbishment of the Council's Hatfield car park (581 spaces) has given the structure a lifespan of up to another 20 years. Plus, the recent decision to carry out a similar refurbishment to the Council's Herschel car park (448 spaces) will also see the life span of this structure extended to at least 2040. Therefore, given the spare capacity on both weekdays and Saturdays within Slough's car parks, even if the temporary car parks were to be redeveloped, Slough's Square Mile currently has sufficient car parking provision in the short to medium term.

## AIR QUALITY

Slough has five designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (four original areas plus an extension) as a result of elevated NO<sub>2</sub> levels that breach National Air Quality Objectives. These areas are located around the M4, Tuns Lane, Bath Road, the Town Centre / A4 and Brands Hill A4, covering nearly 2,000 residential properties.

In August 2018, Slough Council produced the Slough Low Emission Strategy (LES) 2018 -2025 Technical Report. This document sets-out the Council's approach to targeting reductions in vehicle emissions by accelerating the uptake of cleaner vehicles and technologies.

Slough has the second highest rate of deaths to air pollution in the South East region with 6.5 per cent of deaths in Slough attributable to particulate air pollution. Only Portsmouth has a higher rate (6.7%) compared with an average for the region of 5.6% (Public Health England - Public Health Profiles <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/>).

## WIDER IMPLICATIONS

The current transport situation, described above, plays a significant role in contributing towards Slough's high rates of preventable ill health amongst children including obesity and higher levels of hospital admissions for some long-term conditions such as asthma.

Worryingly, 41.6% of children in Year 6 are overweight or obese in Slough compared to 34.2% in England and 30.6% in the South East (Slough Council's Five-Year Plan 2019-2024). Equally, levels of physical activity are poor among adults with Slough having particular challenges around cardiovascular health, obesity, diabetes and other preventable diseases, which cause both ill health and shorter lives. Slough is the 10th least active council area in England with 37.6% of adults classed as inactive (defined as having less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week over a 28 day period).

In addition to the ramifications of a car-dominated town centre in relation to public health, there are also significant economic implications for the high street. Numerous studies have now demonstrated the importance of pedestrians to the success of our High Streets (The Pedestrian Pound by Living Streets, Place Value Wiki by Matthew Carmona, Walking and Cycling Economic Benefits by Transport for London, Economic Benefits of Sustainable Streets by New York City Department for Transportation).

In essence, those who walk have consistently been shown to spend more on their high street over the course of a week than those who drive. Essentially, if making it easier for one person to drive to their High Street also discourages one person from walking then the net economic affect is likely to be negative. Therefore, it is not insignificant that many decisions in Slough have prioritised the motorist at the expense of those who walk.

## 2.11 PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES

### OVERVIEW

The design of the 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.

Trees and landscape incorporated into the public realm have multiple benefits, providing both physical and visual amenity, improving biodiversity and enhancing sense of place. They can provide shelter when its raining, shade when it is sunny and have a valuable role to play in reducing the impacts of the urban heat island effect in our increasingly warm summers. Trees and landscape also assist in enhancing air quality, soften the impact of buildings and structures, and indicate the passage of the seasons through their growth and change through the year. Numerous studies have demonstrated the significant benefits to health and well being that access to nature and green space can have for people.

Covid has shed new light on the value of open 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.



Figure 2.16: Open space network



## SLOUGH'S STREETS AND SPACES

There are few significant public spaces within the Square Mile and this means that Slough's streets have an even more important role to play in providing the setting for social interaction and public activities.

As reference earlier in this report many of Slough's streets lack quality frontage to provide animation and definition of the street space. Much of the public realm in the town is dominated by or heavily impacted by the movement and storage of vehicles and for many parts of the town the surface treatment of footways is inconsistent and lacking investment. There are few trees in the heart of the town centre and even fewer that are of significant size and maturity.

Whilst there are green open spaces on the edge of the town centre connections to these are not obvious and visits to these spaces are not likely to be linked to a trip to the town centre.

Spaces within or close to Slough town centre include:

- 1. High Street** - Slough's main street is pedestrianised through its central section from Church Street to Alpha Street and traffic flows are low at both the western and eastern ends. This busy linear space is animated by shops to either side and has been resurfaced in recent years. The space expands at the two entrances to the Queensmere Shopping Centre;
- 2. Wellington Street / The Curve** - The environment to either side of Wellington Street has been significantly enhanced from Brunel Way to the heart of Slough junction at Windsor Road. Here a co-ordinated public realm treatment has been introduced and includes a small open space at either end of 'The Curve'.



**Salt Hill Park offers a range of landscape and leisure amenities**

- 3. Yew Tree Road Rest Garden** - A small space with raised beds and seating at the eastern end of the High Street
- 4. St Mary's Churchyard** - This space provides visual rather than physical amenity as the churchyard is used as a graveyard. Mature trees enhance the setting.
- 5. Herschel Park** - An area of mature Victorian parkland with many mature trees and a pond located to the south of the centre. This space is a Grade II Registered Park.
- 6. Lascelles Park** - An open grassed space to the south east of the centre that provides sports pitches. The northern part of the park has a number of exotic mature evergreens.
- 7. Upton Court Park** - This extensive open space to the south of Lascelles Park provides open grassed areas and naturalistic tree planted areas. It has a car park, childrens' play area and provides a setting for events. A pedestrian bridge crosses the M4 from the park and provides a link to the Jubilee River and River Thames and onwards to Windsor.



**Recently enhanced public realm on Wellington Street next to The Curve and Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Ethelbert**

- 8. Salt Hill Park** - This park to the west of the centre was bequeathed to the town in 1907 and provides playing fields, tennis courts, multi-use games courts, childrens' play, a skateboard area, cafe and both formal and naturalistic landscape areas.
- 9. Grand Union Canal Slough Arm** - The canal extends from Stoke Road eastwards linking to the Grand Union Canal in West Drayton. The towpath provides a recreational walking route along its southern bank.
- 10. Bower Playing Fields** - This open space provides a sports pitch, multi-purpose games court and childrens' play. The space is only accessible from St. John's Road to the east.

## 2.12 PROPERTY MARKET

### INTRODUCTION

This section examines the demand and supply characteristics of the Slough Square Mile's property market to inform future development potential and uses – and over the longer term. Town centres typically include a mix of activities and uses, namely; retail, leisure, hotels, offices, residential.

### CONTEXT

Slough town centre is a metropolitan centre, some 20 miles west of central London and 17 miles north-east of Reading. Other nearby competing centres include Reading, Windsor, Basingstoke, Maidenhead and Central London. Slough benefits from excellent, strategic accessibility. The town lies in the Thames Valley area at the intersection of the M4, M40 and M25 motorways. Great Western Railway trains provide frequent train services to London Paddington in up to 15 minutes, and Slough will soon benefit from the Elizabeth line. Heathrow is a little over ten miles to the east. Even without the Elizabeth line, Slough is extremely well located to take advantage of strategic transport infrastructure.

### THE RETAIL MARKET

The challenges faced by UK high streets are well documented. Although there has been growth in retail sales in recent years this has been focussed on internet sales not high street shops.

ONS figures indicate that online sales accounted for just 6% of total UK retail sales in 2010; the figure now is around 20%. The high street occupational market remains very subdued, with few new entrants willing to take large amounts of space.

Many retailers are in the process of rationalising their portfolio, either closing stores entirely, or downsizing often alongside Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVAs). This structural change in the UK retail market is exemplified by weakening investment yields in this sector. Prime shops commanded yields of 4.5% only 12 months ago; now they stand at 5.25% with the outlook very much negative.

Where retail vacancies are occurring, there has been a gradual shift toward other uses taking their place (with this shift generally occurring faster in areas of higher demand for other uses).

This picture of structural decline in physical retail is not however entirely uniform across the UK. Where the retail offer is oriented toward meeting local catchment needs, and less vulnerable to online sales competition, these centres have fared better (or least for now).

While the prognosis for high street retail is weak, it still remains a large and very important part of the UK economy. And although there have been a deluge of retail closures, a few sub sectors have performed reasonably well: barbers, beauty Salons, vaping shops, cafés and coffee shops, nail salons, takeaways, health clubs, mobile phones, bars, chemists, tattooists. Convenience stores too are showing signs of growth again, alongside foodstore discounters – and more general discounters.

Many of these retail uses are less likely to be impacted by the growing competition of online retailing. Conversely, in decline are banks, travel agents, newsagents, estate agents and fashion shops. This trend is very apparent in Slough town centre.

Slough has around 850,000 sq. ft retail and leisure floor space. Much of this is concentrated in the Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centres and the High Street. High street chain retailers are concentrated more in the heart of the High Street and the malls - elsewhere the offer is dominated by smaller units and independent retailers. Overall, the town's retail mix is characterised by a mix of low to mid-range retailers, with an emphasis on discount oriented retailers. Slough town centre has too much retail space, some of poor quality and too many large floorplates.



The main foodstores present are Iceland, Sainsbury's and Tesco Extra along with small independents and grocers. This mix of independents and chains adds positive diversity and adds character to the centre. There may well be demand for more foodstore / convenience space. A varied and strong convenience offer is important for the vitality of the town. There is a fairly good representation of cafes and restaurants, with a considerable range of takeaways in Slough, though little by way of higher quality eateries.

In 2020 prime retail rents in Slough town stood at £45 per sq. ft. ITZA. Future rental growth is expected to be very limited in the short to mid-term. Retail yields have drifted out markedly too in the last few years, making new town centre retail development a marginal proposition: now new retail space may need cross funding from other uses such as residential and offices.

The demand from retailers for town centre pitches is very muted compared to ten years ago or so. Securing a raft of new multiple high street retailers would be challenging for Slough. Independents might show interest though, especially if their offer is shielded from the impact of internet shopping – and that again means a more service and food led proposition. Overall however contraction of retail uses in Slough is a realistic prospect, although modernising stock will be important too.

## LEISURE MARKET

The leisure sector covers a wide range of uses including cinemas, health and fitness centres, casinos, bowling alleys and children's play facilities. The leisure market is also fast moving, with different concepts often emerging quickly, such as urban golf or escape rooms. Generally, new build development for these types of uses are rarely viable in their own right and developers look to cross fund such uses, with other more profitable types of development.

Research by Barclays in 2019 highlights 'leisure' expenditure increases in the 12 months prior and gives a good view of the types of occupiers that might fill space in a rejuvenated Slough town centre.

- Hospitality & Leisure 5.4%
- Eating & Drinking 6.3%
- Restaurants 4.2%
- Bars, Pubs & Clubs 5.5%
- Takeaways and Fast Food 6.9%
- Other Food & Drink 7.0%

Alongside this, the health and fitness sector has witnessed huge growth in both number of operators and customer demand in recent years. The emerging trends in recent years has a shift to low-cost models with 24/7 access and an increase in premium luxury lifestyle offers that offer a more holistic, wellbeing experience.

Traditional operators, such as bowling, bingo, arcades and casinos have maintained presence in the UK market but have witnessed a drop in penetration rates. The challenge with this type of use, and especially within a town centre environment, is finding suitably large units / formats which meet trading needs - and at an affordable rental level.

Cinema complexes remain a leisure mainstay. Their formats are amenable to both out of town and in town schemes. Increased appetite for cinemas has also coincided with continual rental growth. Average cinema rents have now risen to over £14 per square foot. Yields are typically in the order of 6% - 7%. Cinema and other leisure uses provide much needed diversity, extend dwell times and often support the evening economy.

In the context of Slough's existing and growing population – as well as a substantial likely increase in office floorspace – there will be opportunities for additional (or reprovided) leisure uses:

- **Cinema(s):** a redevelopment of the town centre's current cinema will open the gap for a new one. Slough's population is of a size that can support a large multi screen format – and perhaps complimented by a smaller (possibly boutique) offering too, say off the back of major office and retail development;
- **Health and fitness:** by virtue of the significant ongoing growth in this sector; and
- **Other participative leisure:** although difficult to pinpoint demand, there could be uses that diversify Slough's leisure – for example, bowling.

There is a limited cultural leisure offer in the town centre; the Curve is the main entertainment venue. There is scope for promoting this sector in the town. Cultural uses tend to be less commercial enterprises, and often require public sector backing. In some cases the presence of culture is a combination of activities (and may not always need physical buildings to operate from) together with a sense of place and diverse mix of uses. Cultural activities and uses are becoming a key differentiator and diversifier of town centres.

## THE OFFICE SECTOR

As a whole, Slough offers over 5 million sq ft of office space and with over 89,000 employees. Renewed demand has allowed landlords to push top end rental values for high-quality spaces. This increased interest may well be stimulated by the arrival of the Elizabeth line. This, coupled with regeneration in the town, will be a likely key driver of future demand. Recent deals for co-working and serviced offices together with larger corporate occupiers shows that there is depth to Slough's potential occupier base, and this underpins a resilient employment market.

Prime office lettings are achieving in excess of £30 psf, with the headline rent now at £38.50psf. Refurbished stock has also seen success, demonstrating good demand for space. In 2019 prime office yields in Slough were reported at around 5.25%. The office rental tone, a fairly keen and stable yield, together with good occupier demand points toward office development in the town centre being a viable proposition.

While forecasting office take up over many years is very unpredictable, the view is that at least in the short to mid term there is likely to be healthy demand for space in Slough, and the wider Thames Valley area – and this would be expected to be spurred on by the Elizabeth line. Slough too may benefit from the impact of COVID and a potential trend and move toward less centralised office space becoming more attractive than that located within central London. To maximise this though, new office space needs to go hand in hand with modernised retail and leisure uses, and an enhanced environment, sense of place and quality. There will also be the need for Slough to differentiate itself from competing office centres and other schemes in the pipeline.

## RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

The underlying pace of housing market activity has remained broadly stable for the last few years. Solid labour market conditions and low borrowing costs appear to be offsetting the drag from the uncertain economic outlook. Mortgage rates remain close to all-time lows.

Clear evidence of longer term demand for housing is set out in the Local Housing Need Assessment for RBWM, Slough and South Bucks Local Authorities (2019). For Slough Borough this assessment points to:

- A 11.3% population growth over the period 2019 – 2039;
- Household growth of 6,679 dwellings between 2019 - 2029 or 668 dwellings per annum; and
- Significant annual need for affordable housing.

Around 25% of the private market requirements are for 1 and 2 bed units, and 50%+ for affordable homes. This would support demand for higher density, flatted development in the town centre, with the prospect of lower density, larger homes in more peripheral locations.

To meet this high annual delivery rate development will need to come forward in phases. Promoting product diversification would serve to drive up sales rates too: such as a combination of houses and flats, private sales, private rental, senior living as well as differentiated affordable housing products.

### Slough's housing market

Slough is more affordable compared to London and other commuter towns. The Elizabeth line though has already had a major impact. Over the last 10 years Slough has been one of the UK's fastest growing markets in terms of house price growth. In terms of property prices, the Elizabeth line has already had a major impact (property prices within a mile of the station have risen by 60% since 2009). Over the same period, the average UK house price has risen by around 40% (Land Registry, 2020).

Young professionals have been attracted to Slough - largely due to its excellent connectivity and relative affordability in comparison to more established commuter belt locations. Again this points to further flatted development in the town, with young professionals more inclined to take up such dwellings and smaller units. Research indicates that a value £500 per sq ft for new build homes can be achieved, and potentially higher.

### Private rented sector (PRS)

The private rental sector has grown considerably in the last ten years, with 4.9 million households now calling private rented sector properties home. This figure has more than doubled since 2001. PRS is now established as a mainstream UK property sector.

The expansion of the PRS sector demonstrates that the appetite for this product now stretches well beyond Central London. While PRS has not yet been tested in Slough, a growing population and excellent accessibility will likely yield opportunities for PRS in the future in the town.



### Retirement / senior living / care homes

There is very considerable activity in the retirement home sector, driven by the UK's ageing population. Developers and operators generally search for high quality, affluent locations with good demographics and no more than c. 1km from shops and amenities. Main road locations are also preferable, albeit not essential. On that basis Slough town centre ought to be a suitable location for this type of use: perhaps more so if improvement to Slough's environment occurred – albeit true of all property uses.

### HOTEL SECTOR

There has been significant growth in the hotel sector during the last decade, especially in the budget sector - and an increase in the average size of budget hotels. Hoteliers typically seek highly visible locations in town centre locations or next to major infrastructure. Another growing trend is aparthotels and micro hotels. Slough has already seen a spate of hotel development within vicinity of the town centre. Whilst this market is already well supplied the imminent arrival of the Elizabeth line may well create demand from visitors seeking easy access into Central London and Heathrow. There too would be expected demand from business users, driven by the delivery of more - and modern - office space.

## KEY PROPERTY MARKET MESSAGES

- The town centre retail sector continues to be very challenging, especially in terms of occupier demand;
- There are some retail growth sectors – in particular, convenience, some discount oriented offers and cafes as well as some service sector retailers. A reduction in the amount of retail space in the centre is a realistic proposition;
- A shift toward more service led retail uses is likely to be a more resilient and sustainable approach for Slough town centre;
- There is a limited number of good quality restaurants and cafes in the centre and there is an opportunity to deliver better quality eateries;
- The UK's leisure sector continues to grow and evolve. The addition of leisure based activities, would serve to increase diversity and interest in Slough town centre. Residential will be a key component and financial driver in any redevelopment of Slough town centre. There is already strong interest in the area for this use. Residential development will also help support other uses in the town, through greater use of retail, leisure and other services;
- Higher density, flatted development is clearly appropriate, given the town centre location, existing development and strong accessibility features of Slough. There is also a need to provide product diversity, including houses where appropriate;
- Private Rental Sector (PRS) development could form part of the housing mix in Slough town centre, especially due to the excellent locational and accessibility characteristics;
- There is increased interest in the retirement home sector as a result of the ageing population. Strong accessibility and improvement to Slough's general environment would increase appetite for this form of development;
- Slough town centre has the potential to be very attractive to office occupiers: both for corporates and in the form of flexible start up and managed workspace. Office development in Slough is expected to be a viable proposition; and
- Further demand from hoteliers may arise, driven by future office growth and Slough's excellent accessibility.

## 2.13 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Slough's strategic location, good and improving transport accessibility, the availability of sites and the Council and their partners' proactive approach to regeneration has meant that there is considerable development activity in the Square Mile.

A number of significant developments have been delivered in recent years including The Curve, Porter Building, the first phase of Future Works and the Urban Building as documented earlier in this report.

Planning consent has also been granted for many other significant schemes and several of these are moving forward on site; some are nearing completion. Proposals with consent are identified in the adjacent table (Figure 2.17) and identified on Figure 2.18.

In addition to these sites there is development interest on a number of other sites in the Square Mile. The two most significant are:

- **Slough Central** – a proposal being promoted by British Land in association with ADIA (Abu Dhabi Investments) to redevelop the Queensmere and Observatory Shopping Centres in the heart of the town and replace these with an office led proposal that will deliver a new Central Business District for Slough together with retail, cultural and residential uses; and
- **The North West Quadrant** – a proposal being promoted by a public private partnership between the Council and Muse Developments to deliver a mixed use high density residential led scheme on the former Thames Valley College site.

Site	Proposal	Status
Former Horlicks Factory	1300 homes (1252 apartment; 48 houses); 239m <sup>2</sup> of commercial uses	Part detailed (554 homes / part outline consent (746 homes)
18-24 Stoke Road	40 apartments	Prior approval – office to residential
64 Mill Street	27 apartments	Planning permission
Lion House, Petersfield Avenue	155 apartments	Nearing completion
Octagon site, Brunel Way	12,075m <sup>2</sup> office; 329m <sup>2</sup> ancillary retail	Planning permission
Future Works Phase 2	15,888m <sup>2</sup> office	Outline consent
Old library site, 85 High Street	244 hotel bedspaces, 64 apartments; 460m <sup>2</sup> of ancillary retail	Under construction
Tower House / Ashbourne House	197 apartments (net gain 77 apartments)	Planning permission
7 Windsor Road (Herschel Street)	24 apartments	Under construction
Aspire, Herschel Street	238 apartments	Under construction
15-23 Church Street	41 apartments	Planning permission
204-206 High Street	94 apartments	Planning permission
Alpha Corner, Alpha Street	14 apartments; 134m <sup>2</sup> retail	Under construction
Alpha Street	14 apartments	Under construction
271-279 High Street	65 apartments	Outline consent
Thames Central	146 apartments	Prior approval – office to residential – under construction

**Figure 2.17: Proposals with planning consent in the town centre and their status**

These would both be transformational projects for Slough, changing the landscape and delivering a step change in the environment within the town centre.

To the eastern edge of the Square Mile a mixed-use development is also being promoted on the former Akzo Nobel site on Wexham Road. This also presents a significant opportunity for the town offering the potential to deliver both new homes and employment on this extensive site.

Beyond these larger sites there are numerous smaller sites in the Square Mile that offer opportunity for development and change. These are identified in Figure 2.18.

The Tesco superstore occupies a large site on Wellington Street and it is not anticipated that this site will be redeveloped in the 15 year timeframe of the Regeneration Framework or indeed the emerging Local Plan. However the longer-term potential for redevelopment of this site to facilitate an additional connection across the Great Western railway line has been considered. Equally it is not anticipated that change will take place on the Royal Mail parcel site on Wellington Street however the potential for redevelopment to consolidate and enhance the streetscape on Wellington Street has also been considered. This is anticipated to be a longer-term opportunity.



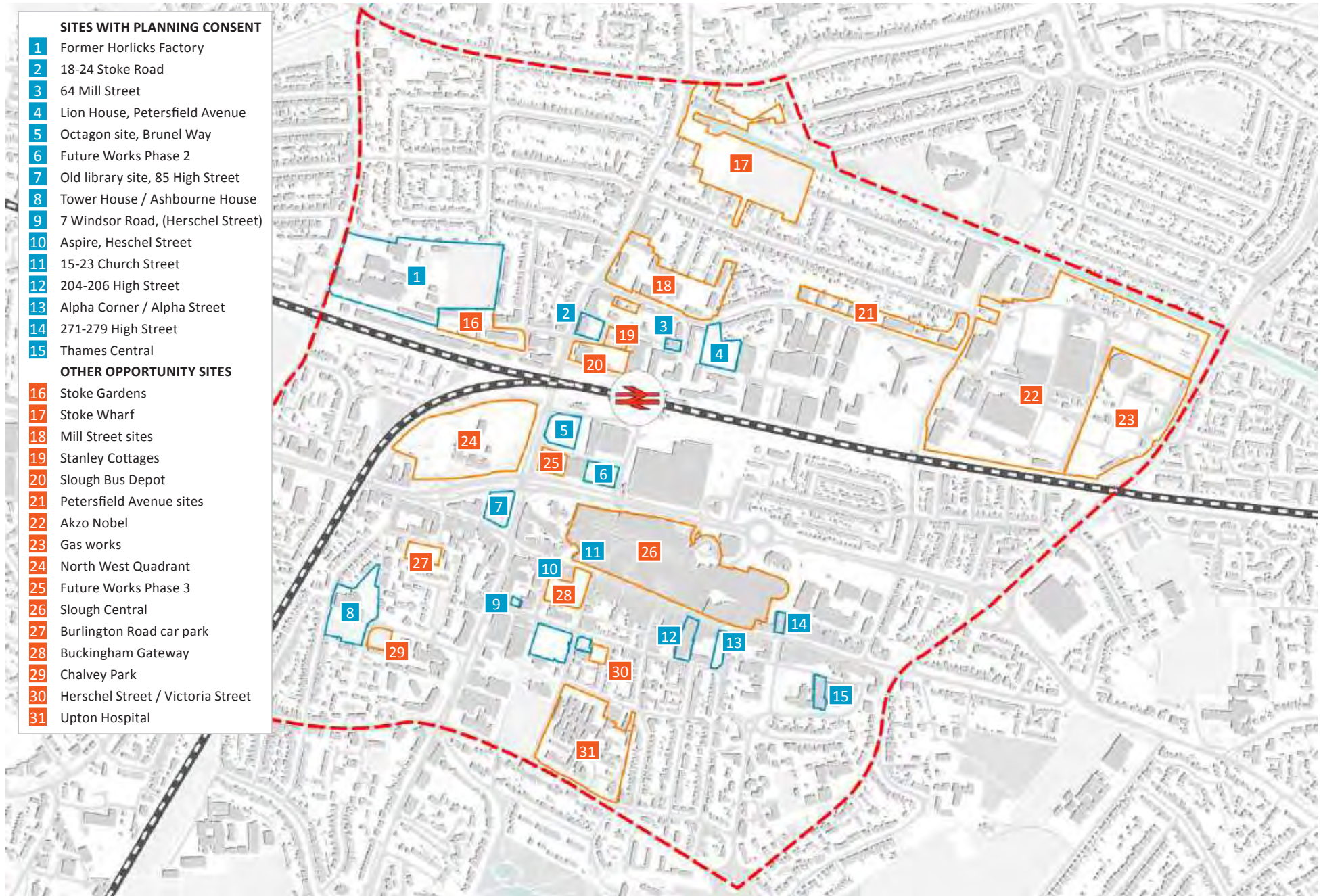
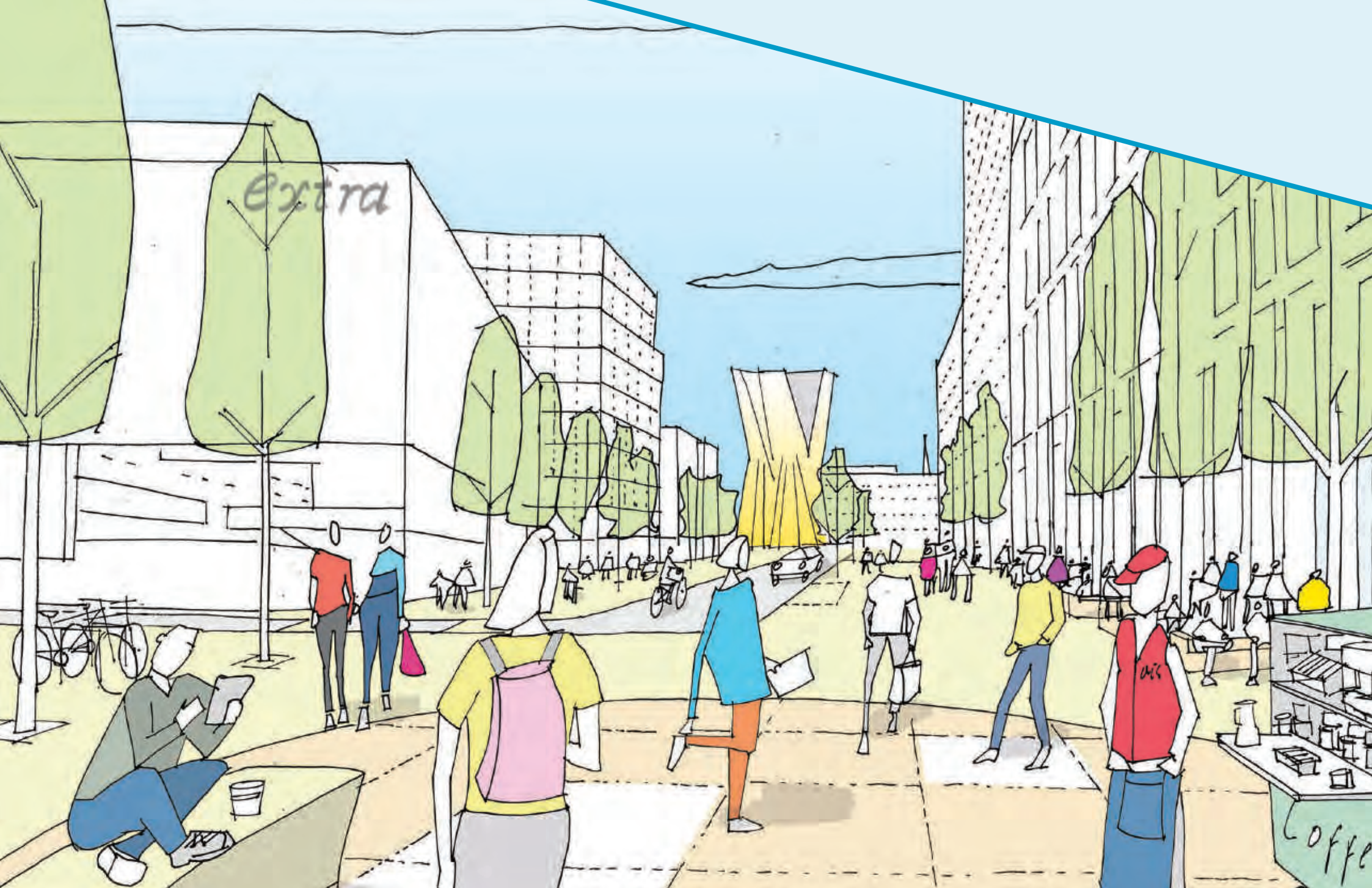


Figure 2.18: Town centre sites







# 3. Vision for Slough



## 3.1 A VISION FOR SLOUGH

Slough will be transformed. **A beautiful, vibrant new urban centre** with striking economic opportunity is waiting to be born out of its strong industrial past and entrepreneurial spirit. New transport infrastructure, including the Elizabeth line and a new Mass Rapid Transit, will improve access to the centre, **attracting businesses and reducing the reliance on the motor vehicle.**

Where the town is fragmented it will be reconnected. The town's under used buildings and its vacant spaces will be filled with **places to live, work, shop and enjoy life** both throughout the day and into the evening. A diverse mix of **new employment growth** will feed off the dynamism of the centre and Slough's **enterprising young community** and an expanded **Central Business District** will make Slough an even stronger economic driver for the region. These opportunities will spawn **new demand for different types of housing** and renew the existing residential communities establishing the mix of different household sizes, income and choice that are characteristic of a successful town.

**Walkable tree lined streets** fronted by attractive new buildings will replace clogged highways and link the centre with its beautiful parks and the Grand Union Canal. New public spaces will provide opportunity for the community to meet, relax, celebrate and enjoy the towns' **rich and diverse cultural offer.**

All of Slough's residents will benefit from the town's regeneration with increased 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.**

## SLOUGH'S FIVE YEAR PLAN

Slough's Five Year Plan (2020-25) presents the Council Leadership Team's vision for Slough. It strives to make sure the growth Slough is enjoying is inclusive and that residents are able to access opportunities and services to help them build good lives for themselves and their families. The Plan sets out a series of priorities, including those with an economic development focus:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful;
- Slough people will be healthier and manage their own care needs;
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay;
- Slough residents will live in good quality homes; and
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities

The Plan affirms the Council's commitment to the promotion of inclusive economic growth, ensuring the benefits from the regeneration and investment in Slough are shared by all residents.

The Regeneration Framework takes these priorities as a starting point for the spatial vision for Slough's Square Mile.



## 3.2 SPATIAL OBJECTIVES

The spatial vision for Slough's Square Mile is set out in the ten objectives:

- **Objective One: To deliver a 21st century town centre that is accessible to everybody and enhances health and well being;**
- **Objective Two: To develop an expanded 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 Square Mile;**
- **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 Square Mile;**
- **Objective Nine: To provide the right amount of car parking in the right locations; and**
- **Objective Ten: To deliver small interventions, events and early wins.**

These objectives are detailed further on the pages that follow.





## 1 TO DELIVER a 21st century town centre that is accessible to everybody and enhances health and well being

- Prepare a **coherent and commercially viable strategy** that recasts the centre as a focus for entrepreneurial activity, jobs, shopping and culture throughout the day and evening;
- Ensure that the town benefits from 21st century **digital infrastructure** and attracts creative and digi-tech entrepreneurs and creative 'makers' to bring a new dynamism to the town centre;
- Plan for the long term, and make the town centre an **attractive and green place to invest**, establish a business, or live a healthy and happy life;
- Encourage a **shift from motorised travel to public transport, cycling and walking** to reduce carbon emissions and address air quality issues;
- Create stronger links to the natural environment and introduce **urban greening to increase biodiversity and enhance mental health**; and
- Deliver **fantastic sustainable buildings and architecture, public spaces and streets** and a place which residents will feel proud to call home.



## 2 TO DEVELOP an expanded Central Business District to the south of the railway station

- Deliver a **vibrant new office quarter** that takes full advantage of the enhanced access brought by the Elizabeth line and offers a high quality-working environment in the heart of the town;
- Provide **accommodation for a range of businesses** from established multi-national companies to new digital start-ups; and
- Provide **a focus for jobs in the town centre**, that reflects the town's strong entrepreneurial and industrial past and builds on the towns status as 'the best place in which to work' in the UK.



### 3

#### TO REVITALISE the **shopping and leisure offer** in the town centre

- Promote redevelopment of the town’s shopping centres with these replaced with a **street based shopping environment** as part of mixed-use development;
- Focus on the quality of visitor experience with **enhanced leisure, cultural and food and drink offer**. This to include a town centre cinema and potential for street markets, events and meanwhile uses;
- Extend activity into the evening and establish a **strong evening economy** in the town; and
- Draw on the cultural diversity of Slough’s residents to offer a **distinctive independent offer**.

### 4

#### TO DELIVER a **range of new homes** in the Square Mile

- Deliver a **significant proportion of the Council’s housing need** within a highly accessible location;
- Increase the **catchment population to support a range of services** in the town centre;
- Deliver a **range of housing types and tenures** (including affordable homes), in response to the specific location and context of residential sites with higher density apartments close to the station and on central sites and more family accommodation on peripheral town centre site; and
- Ensure that appropriate **community infrastructure** is provided to meet future needs.





## 5 TO STRENGTHEN Slough's cultural offer

- Deliver **new cultural facilities and spaces** as part of a stronger cultural offer that will enhance the standing of the town and its cultural identity;
- Build on Slough's **multi-cultural and diverse community** and its grass roots arts and cultural organisations;
- Invest in **education, innovation and life long learning**;
- **Link cultural facilities** to complement the existing town centre offer including 'The Curve'; and
- Provide **affordable studios and start-up spaces** for creative industries.



## 6 TO CREATE a people focused public realm

- Enhance the attractiveness of the town centre through a **unified public realm** that seamlessly links different parts of the town centre with one another;
- Ensure that the main streets, including Wellington Street, William Street, Windsor Road and Stoke Road, are easy to cross for pedestrians;
- Deliver a **network of connected streets and spaces** that improves the town's sense of identity and legibility with new spaces providing a **focus for events and activities** within the town centre; and
- Improve linkages between the town centre and the green spaces on its edge.



# 7

## TO IMPROVE **connections** between the town centre and Slough's neighbourhoods and the wider area

- Create a network of attractive and legible routes that **link the town centre with residential neighbourhoods**, employment areas and leisure attractions including the significant open spaces that surround the town;
- Promote and deliver **transport solutions**, (including a new Mass Rapid Transit system) that **favour walking, cycling and public transport**, as a means to access the town centre over the use of motor vehicles;
- Take advantage of the excellent public transport accessibility provided by the railway station and **the Elizabeth line**; and
- Ensure that walking and cycling into the town centre, and from the centre to employment sites and leisure destinations, becomes a realistic and **healthy choice for Slough's residents**.

# 8

## TO DELIVER a **step change in the quality of design and architecture** in the Square Mile

- Establish **clear principles for the layout, scale and massing of development** across the town that reinforces the proposed network of routes and spaces in the town;
- Respect and **celebrate the town's history and heritage**, and consider views to and from the town when determining the form, layout and scale of new development;
- Promote new **buildings that positively respond to streets and spaces** whilst concealing servicing, parking and other non-active street frontages wherever possible;
- Minimise Co<sub>2</sub> emissions through sustainable building design;
- Locate buildings of civic importance in prominent locations and celebrate these through their architecture in order to aid legibility; and
- Utilise the **roofscape to deliver urban greening** and to take advantage of views to the wider countryside and to Windsor Castle.





## 9 TO PROVIDE the right amount of car parking in the right locations

- Deliver an appropriate level of car parking to meet the needs of the town whilst also recognising the need to reduce car borne trips;
- Locate **public parking at convenient locations** on the approaches into the centre so that visitors do not need to drive through the centre to access car parks;
- Ensure that the car **parking strategy is flexible and can embrace future changes** in mode share and allow conversion of surplus car parking in the future;
- Encourage a switch to electric vehicles and promote car club schemes; and
- In the longer term use **park and ride** to reduce private vehicular trips into the centre.



## 10 TO DELIVER small interventions, events and early wins

- Identify a programme of small interventions that **complement the larger scale development opportunities** but that are quicker and easier to implement in the short term;
- Interventions might include changes to parking management, temporary uses, public realm or shop-front improvements or arts installations;
- Celebrate the town's culture and community through events and activities that **bring life to the town centre**; and
- Encourage **community initiatives and activities** that bring greater pride and ownership in the town.

**The principles combine in the Spatial Plan for Slough set out in the next chapter.**

## 3.3 SPATIAL CONCEPTS

### CHARACTER AREAS

Two concept plans indicate how the ten objectives will be delivered spatially in Slough's Square Mile and these in turn inform the masterplan and the indicative proposals for each site. As new development comes forward the character of the town will change; and an important role of the Regeneration Framework is to guide this change so that each part of the Square Mile has a clear role and defined character.

Section 2.8 of this study indicated how the Square Mile is currently composed of a number of character typologies shaped by the historic development and evolution of the town. Parts of the town have strong and coherent character; others are fragmented and offer significant opportunity for change.

Figure 3.1 identifies the character areas within the Square Mile and a brief description of each is provided below.

#### Urban Core

This will be the heart of the town, a dynamic urban centre that provides a mix of uses that both drive the economy of the town, attract visitors and form a focus for the residents of Slough. This part of the town is likely to change the most with an expanded Central Business District delivered both around the station and on what is currently the Queensmere Shopping Centre.

The CBD will drive the towns' economy and provide a range of jobs both for Slough's residents and also for commuters making use of the new Elizabeth line station. The area will also become home to people attracted to the easy access to work, shopping and the new cultural and leisure facilities that will be established in the area.

In turn this influx of workers and residents will help to support a buzzing shopping environment. High Street will remain the focus but with a network of smaller streets lined with shops, cafes and restaurants and other amenities replacing the internalised shopping centres.

Buildings on some sites in the northern part of this area will be at a city scale with an intensity that delivers energy and vitality to the centre and that also helps to deliver a new progressive identity to the town centre. However building heights will need to respond to the context of each site and step down towards the southern part of the Urban Core area to respond to heritage assets and the lower-scale context on the High Street (refer to Section 4.3).

#### Windsor Road

This area forms the southern approach to the town and already includes a mix of large-scale office and residential buildings. The area will continue to provide a mix of uses with the larger scale buildings defining the broad street and enhancements to the public realm will make this approach into the town more welcoming particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

#### Stoke Road Corridor

This mixed-use corridor provides the northern approach into the town and will retain its mixed-use nature on the main street. Public realm improvements will enhance the streetscape. To the east of Stoke Road the fragmented pattern of sheds and yards will be replaced with a coherent pattern of residential streets providing a new residential quarter linked with the railway station's northern entrance.

#### Horlicks / Stoke Gardens

The former Horlicks factory site will be redeveloped to provide a new residential quarter to the west of Stoke Road. The former Horlicks factory main building and chimney will be retained providing character and identity and a link to the town's past. New homes will bring more people to this part of the town increasing footfall on Stoke Road and enhancing its vitality.

#### Akzo Nobel / Petersfield Avenue

Whilst much of this area is likely to remain in industrial use for the foreseeable future, the vacant Akzo Nobel and Gas Works site and some smaller sites on Petersfield Avenue, will bring new life to the area with a mix of new homes and employment space. This will transform the environments on Wexham Road and Petersfield Road providing positive frontage and animation to these streets.

#### Bath Road

Slough's success in attracting businesses to locate their headquarters in the town will continue to be displayed along the Bath Road and the main change in this area will be in the character of the streetscape with Bath Road being humanised from a busy and intimidating highway into a civilised street.

#### Herschel Village

To the south of the High Street the blocks of modest scaled residential terraces will be retained and enhanced. Vacant plots will be developed at a scale that is contextual with the terraces and the links to Herschel Park to the south enhanced through public realm improvements. Modest infill development of service yards on plots to the rear of the High Street will improve integration with the Urban Core to the north. The Upton Hospital site is located within this area and it is anticipated that it will be redeveloped for residential use including family homes.



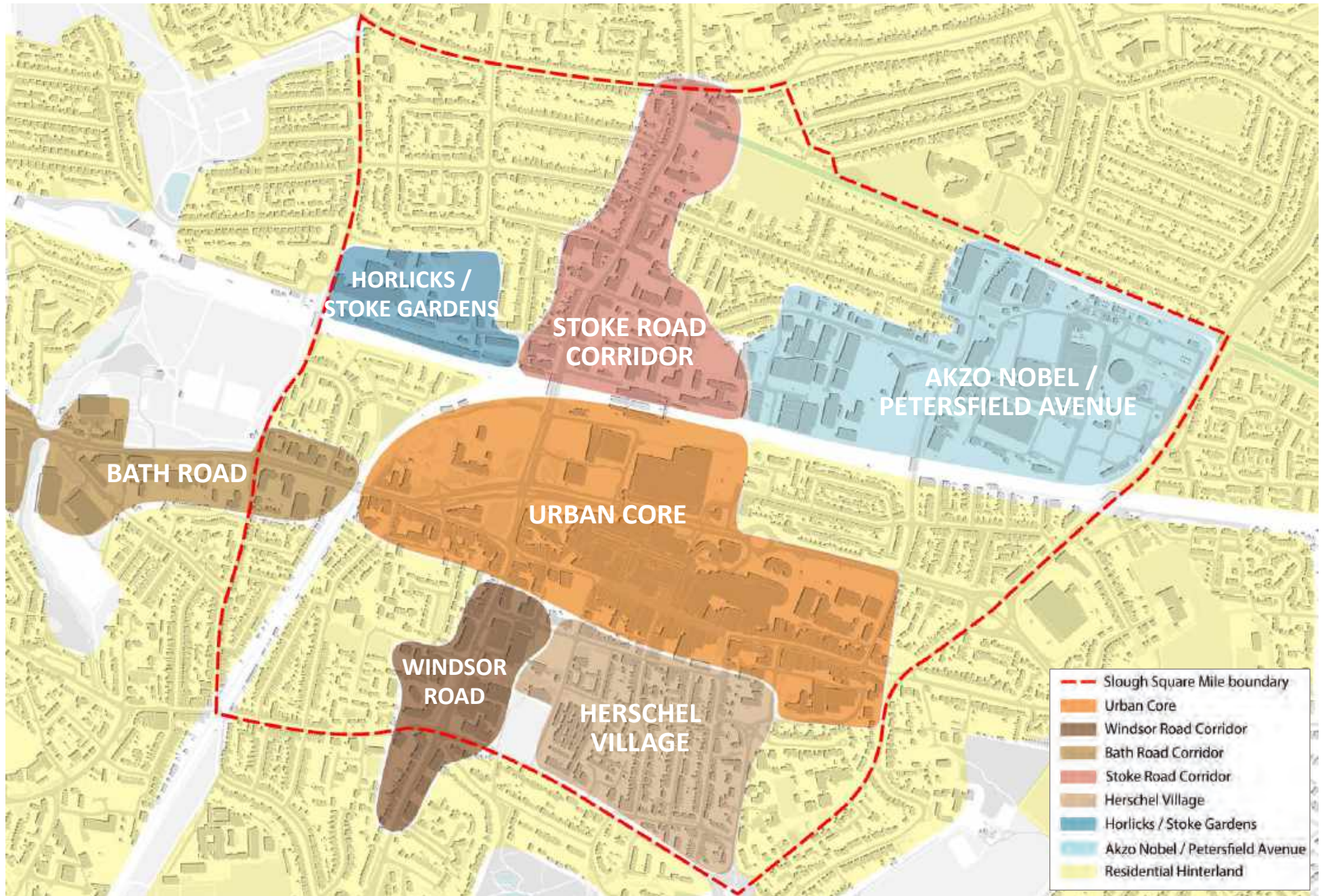


Figure 3.1: Spatial Concept One - Character areas

## CONNECTIVITY AND OPEN SPACES

Improving connections and overcoming severance is fundamental to the vision for Slough's Square Mile creating an environment that is more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, enabling residents to more easily access the Square Mile and to feel more connected with the town centre.

A network of new and improved routes and spaces are proposed making Slough a more pleasant and healthy place to live and work in. These will deliver seamless pedestrian connections from one part of the centre to another and from the residential neighbourhoods within and adjacent to the Square Mile making walking a more attractive and safe option.

Important moves are indicated on the spatial concept in Figure 3.2 and are detailed further in section 4.5.

These include:

1. Provision of new spaces in the centre that can provide locations to gather, meet, relax and play;
2. Introduction of a more permeable street-based urban form in the heart of the town between High Street and Wellington Street continuing the connected grid of streets that are found within the historic terraces area to the south;
3. Enhanced connections to and from the railway station to better integrate it into the network of routes in the town;
4. Improvements to routes across the railway lines and provision of new pedestrian / cycle connections to reduce the severance that it creates;
5. Transformation of the environment on the main streets through the centre to turn these from imposing highways into civilised, tree lined streets that have a more human-scale environment and that are safe for pedestrians and cyclists to walk or cycle along or to cross; and
6. Enhanced connections from the town centre to residential neighbourhoods and to the open spaces located on the edge of the Square Mile and beyond.



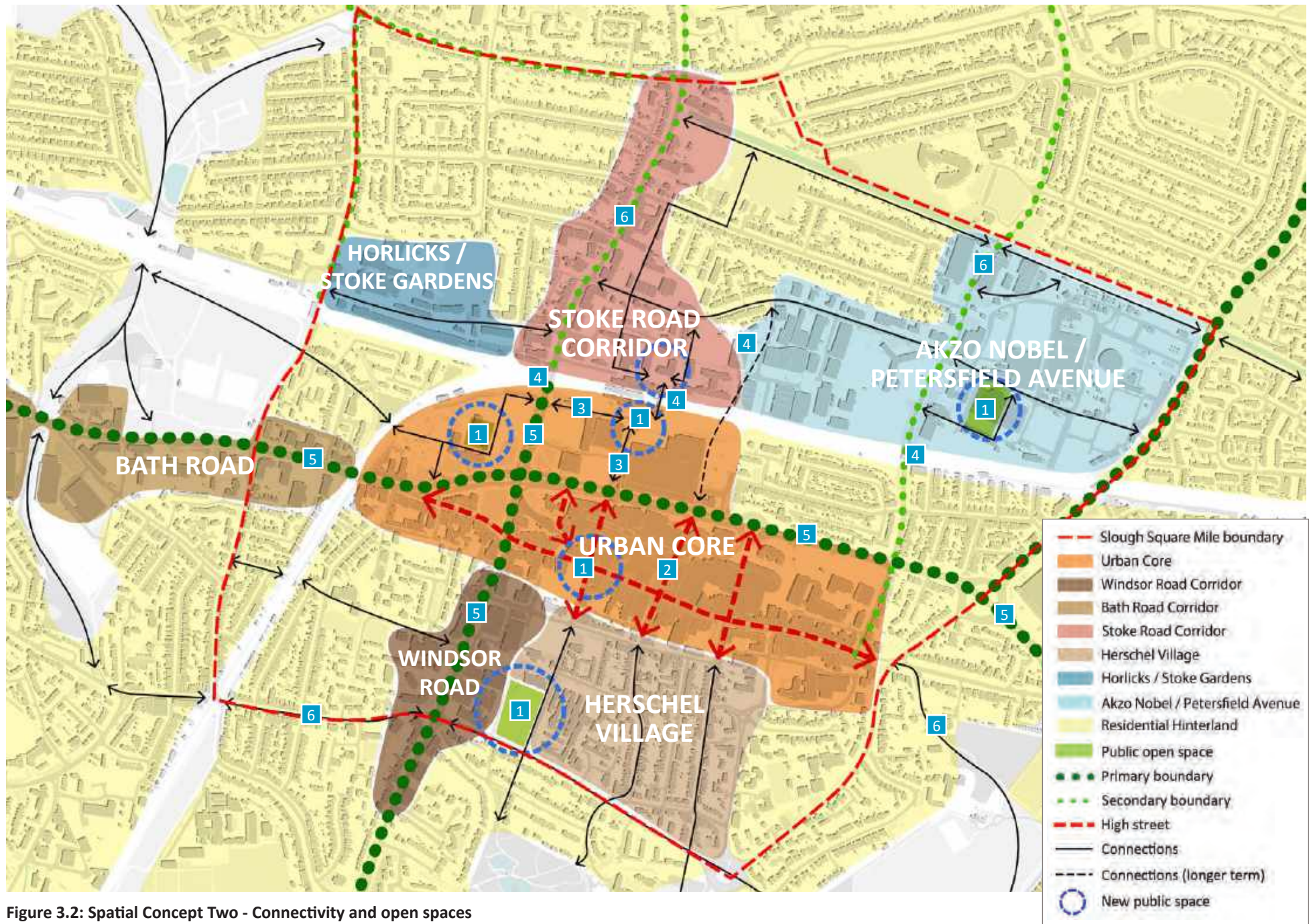


Figure 3.2: Spatial Concept Two - Connectivity and open spaces





Figure 4.1: Illustrative Masterplan



# 4. Masterplan



## 4.1 ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The illustrative masterplan demonstrates how the principles set out in the vision for Slough's Square Mile could be successfully applied over the next 15 years.

It shows public realm improvements, new open spaces and potential building footprints. For development sites, simple building forms have been modelled which adhere to the development principles set out later in this report and these have been used to estimate potential development capacities. The indicative proposals have been informed by deliverability / viability testing carried out by Montagu Evans. Where a planning application has already been consented on a site it is included within the plan.

In reality, the exact form and appearance of particular development will vary from those illustrated here. In general, the illustrated development on each site has been calibrated to provide a good quality of life for future residents, avoid impacts on the amenity of existing town centre users, provide ample public and private open space and deliver development quanta that contribute to the local need.

### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The illustrative masterplan demonstrates how the framework can deliver approximately:

- 115 to 280,000m<sup>2</sup> office floorspace;
- 14 - 15,500m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace;
- 6,700m<sup>2</sup> leisure / cultural floorspace;
- 5,000m<sup>2</sup> education / innovation floorspace;
- 48,000m<sup>2</sup> B8 industrial floorspace; and
- 7,400 new homes.

A more detailed estimate, providing a site by site breakdown, is provided in Figure 5.2 within the delivery section of this report. The new retail space indicated above does not take account of the loss of retail floorspace through redevelopment of the town's two shopping centres.

Other sites not identified in the Regeneration Framework may also come forward for development. These are considered as windfall. Section 4.3 sets out built form principles that would also apply to these developments.

Delivering a step change in Slough's Square Mile will not be delivered by building new homes but rather through the economic prosperity that comes with an expanded Central Business District. New jobs will support the local population, make town centre living more desirable and invigorate the retail, leisure and cultural activity and offer in the town.

The Regeneration Framework promotes a volume of office development that can deliver this step change. This volume is informed by the commercial approach taken by British Land / ADIA in relation to the Slough Central site rather than by being informed by market analysis and is in principle supported by the Council.

## 4.2 LAND USES

### OVERVIEW

Creating vital and vibrant town centres means mixing uses so that there is activity at all times of the day. The traditional town centre with its shopping precinct, office quarter and residential hinterland is a thing of the past and creating a 21st century town centre means that leisure uses must be located to support the office space, and a myriad of uses from cultural spaces, schools, doctors surgeries, gyms and dentists, cafes, hairdressers and bars are needed to support the increasing number of people that will be living in the centre. A towns' shopping offer must 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 Slough's Square Mile will start to change the dynamic of the town and help to support a richer and more diverse offer.

Whilst uses will be mixed across the Square Mile the Regeneration Framework identifies the locations where particular uses should be located in order to respond to existing character, take advantage of public transport accessibility or deliver vibrancy and activity to a particular part of the centre.

### OFFICE / EMPLOYMENT

The Regeneration Framework promotes a step change in the town centre delivered through the expansion of the CBD. This will take in sites to the south of the railway station some of which have already been developed for office (Porter Building and Future Works), sites on William Street and with the concentration of office buildings on the Slough Central site. This will transform the environment on Wellington Street, provide a positive sense of arrival into the town and project an image of prosperity and success, changing perceptions of the town.

Slough has always been an attractive location for employers and has the highest number of HQ buildings in the UK (outside London) however historically most of these have been located on the trading estate or Bath Road.

Delivering office based employment uses in the centre will have a much greater impact on the town's economy and the economic prosperity will cascade across the other activities in the centre. Attracting occupiers will mean that the environment in the town centre must be enhanced to deliver a better sense of place and quality.

Office buildings will be large footprint and provide Grade A office accommodation; it will however be important to ensure that a range of accommodation, at a range of rents is provided within the Square Mile supporting and attracting a variety of occupiers from start ups, fledgling companies and smaller businesses to larger companies looking for an HQ. Incubator, secondary and studio space must also be available.



**The expanded Central Business District should be developed around a high quality public realm**



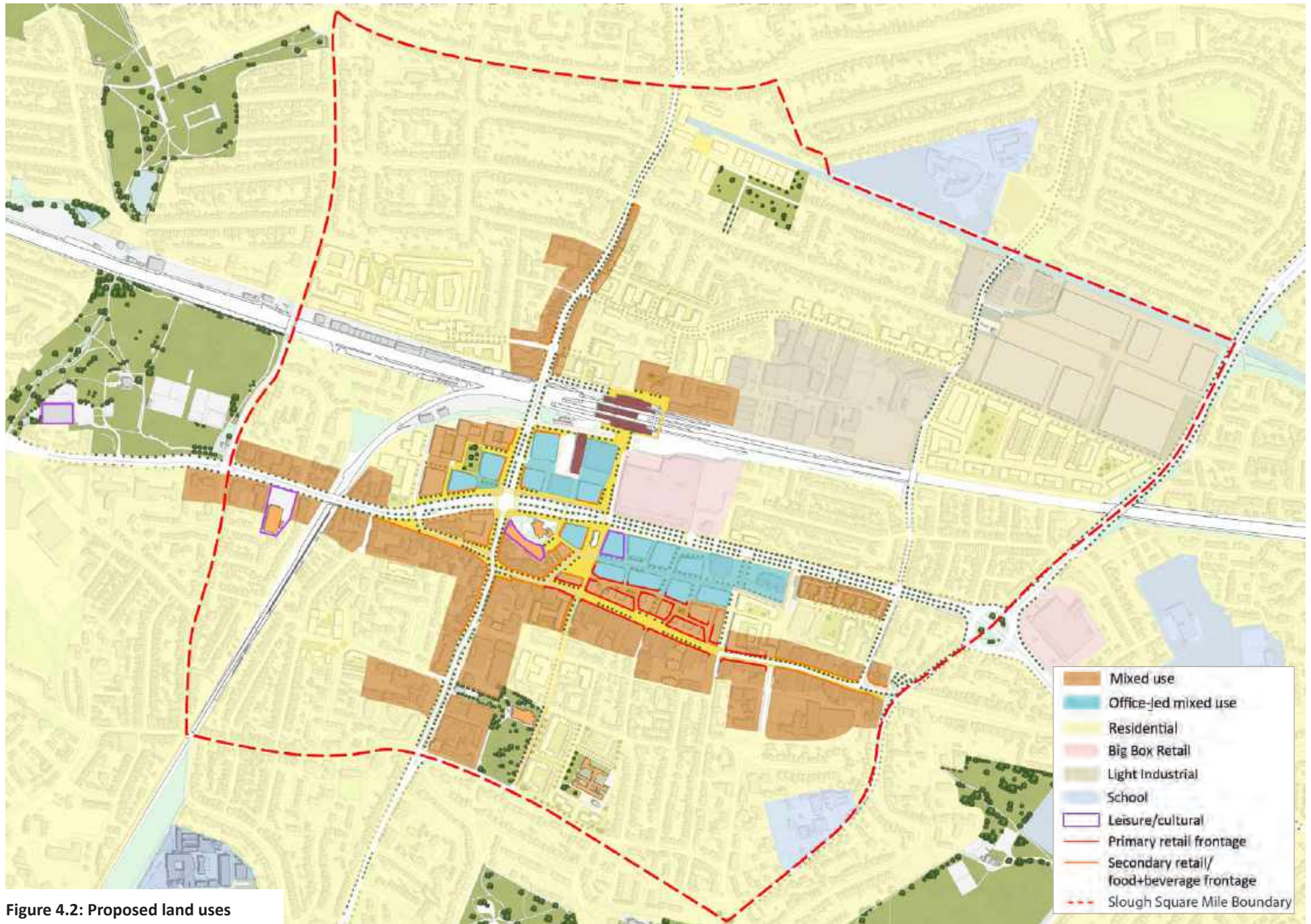


Figure 4.2: Proposed land uses

## RETAIL

High Street is the main shopping street in Slough and this will continue to be the case in the future however the changing retail environment means that the overall amount of retail floorspace in the centre is likely to reduce significantly with space in the shopping centre replaced by a street based environment. Whilst some retail sectors are still performing well (as identified in the property market review in section 2.12) others are not fairing so well and there is likely to be a shift towards more leisure uses (cafes, bars, restaurants) in parts of the centre.

Retail uses rely on footfall and changes in the centre that increase permeability to the High Street will be important to its future success. The shopping experience in Slough is very linear – a processional route along the High Street. The potential to deliver shopping circuits on the Slough Central site (the Queensmere / Observatory site) would enhance the shoppers experience in the town.

The eastern end of High Street has already developed a differentiated offer with a high proportion of independent shops, cafes and restaurants. This part of town is more reflective of the multi-cultural make up of Slough's population and improvements to the public realm in this area could help to strengthen its draw and benefit local businesses.

Local retail provision is provided on Stoke Road and is also promoted on the North West Quadrant site.

## LEISURE / CULTURAL USES

Leisure and cultural uses are an increasingly important part of the town centre mix with many people coming to the centre as a social activity rather than to shop.

The leisure market in the UK has diversified to reflect these changes with new experiences and activities becoming commonplace. Escape rooms, boutique cinemas, indoor play areas for children and competitive socialising activities for adults can all play a role in bringing people into a centre and animating its streets. These uses can also work in tandem with restaurant, cafes and pubs increasing dwell time, spend and activity in a centre.

Leisure uses in the Square Mile should go hand in hand with the delivery of a high quality public realm; the opportunity to sit outside to eat, drink or socialise has become increasingly popular in recent years.

Food and beverage uses are promoted around the new civic square in the Slough Central site, on the eastern and western ends of the High Street, and on Brunel Way, close to the station.

A town centre cinema is also promoted in the Slough Central site (to replace the existing cinema in the Queensmere Centre). A prominent site is required and one option is to locate a cinema close to the proposed Civic Square on Wellington Street.

## INDUSTRIAL FLOORSPACE

Whilst the general presumption is to relocate industrial floorspace (B8 distribution uses) away from the Square Mile as these uses can be anti-social for residents both in terms of noise and the traffic that they generate, some sites in the area may be suitable by virtue of their location; with access onto the strategic road network and / or the considerable clean up costs associated with making the sites suitable for an alternative use. Two such sites are the Akzo Nobel site and the former Uxbridge Gas Works sites located between Wexham and Uxbridge Road. For these sites the northern (more contaminated portion) is identified for B8 distribution use and the southern portion for residential uses.

## RESIDENTIAL

The Regeneration Framework identifies potential for 7,400 new homes across the Square Mile. Delivering a mix of homes of varying size and tenure will be important to creating a mixed and balanced community in the town and ensuring that new homes are available to Slough's existing residents. Planning policy requires that affordable homes are delivered as part of new development.

For many of the Regeneration Framework sites there is opportunity to deliver homes at high densities and residential dwellings on these sites will take the form of apartments. On less central sites including Stoke Wharf, sites on Mill Street (both north of the railway line) and the Upton Hospital site a proportion of homes should be provided as family houses.



## 4.3 BUILT FORM PRINCIPLES

### FRONTAGE AND ENCLOSURE

A major issue within Slough's Square Mile is that many streets, beyond the High Street, do not benefit from either active frontage or enclosure and definition by buildings.

The scale of redevelopment coming forward in the Square Mile is transformative and, if coordinated, presents an opportunity to establish a coherent block structure in areas that are currently fragmented or lack permeability. Comprehensive and joined-up design thinking can ensure that development encloses and fronts onto street spaces, that permeability through the town is improved and that opportunities for more and varied uses are created. New developments will have to be designed to a consistent building line with entrances on the street. Blank frontages on side roads should be minimised.

The illustrative masterplan (Figure 4.1) shows how bringing forward development on the main sites across the Square Mile can achieve this.

For main streets active frontages should be proposed at ground floor level. It is recognised that retail or food and beverage uses will not be appropriate everywhere and nor will there be sufficient demand to support retail uses away from central sites and on those streets with a lesser footfall. Alternative uses that may provide ground floor activity in these locations may include smaller scale offices, workspace, community or cultural use.

### GENERAL BUILDING HEIGHTS

The height of new developments in Slough will need to respond to the existing or emerging character of the parts of the Square Mile within which they are located.

Figure 3.1 on page 59 set out a number of character areas across the Square Mile and the height principles respond to this.

The potential height of buildings has been modelled on the opportunity sites in order to test their impact from various locations in the town. These are shown on the following pages. As with the illustrative masterplan consented schemes have been included within the model.

Figure 4.3 on page 70 indicates broad building height zones for different parts of the Square Mile responding to the existing and proposed character. These heights have been informed by the modelling work and the need to create a skyline for the town that creates a harmonious and positive image and that works from different vantage points.

The height of any proposed new development will need to respond to the particular characteristics of its site and location within the Square Mile. General guidance is provided for each character area on the following pages.



Slough's skyline viewed from Upton Court Road across Lascelles Park from the south east of the Square Mile (blue buildings are existing; yellow consented; and orange representations of the scale of development promoted through the Regeneration Framework). This establishes a harmonious skyline where greater height marks the centre of town



Aerial view of indicative development massing in the Square Mile





VIEWS OF INDICATIVE MASSING FROM TOP:  
View towards town centre approaching from the north on Stoke Road; View towards town centre approaching from the west on Bath Road; and Viewing west towards the Square Mile from Salt Hill Park



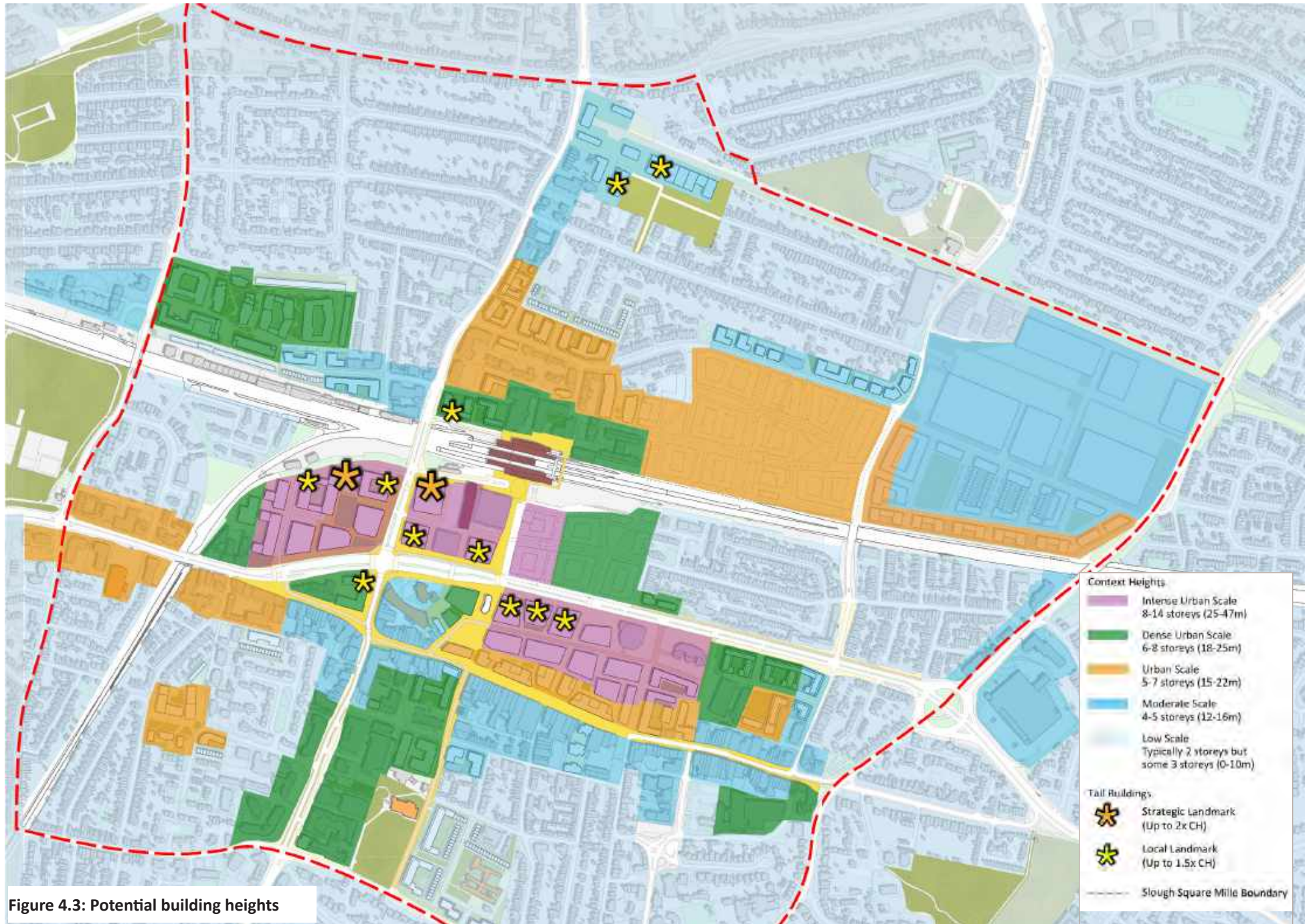


Figure 4.3: Potential building heights



## Urban Core

### Central Business District / North West Quadrant

Within the Urban Core there is opportunity to establish an intensely urban area where a mix of office and residential buildings deliver a new vibrant centre for the town. Within the northern part of the area the scale of buildings will range from 8 to 14 storeys but with the potential for some taller buildings that mark key arrival points into the town centre or the heart of the expanded CBD.

At this scale buildings will provide a strong sense of enclosure to the broad streets, Wellington Street and William Street that pass through the area.

The height of a building should respond to its location and heights should vary in order to create an interesting and dynamic skyline. Promoting all buildings at the upper level of the range indicated will not be acceptable.

Building heights will need to step down to respond to the setting of heritage assets within the area including Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Ethelbert.

### High Street

Building heights must also step down towards the High Street where the existing context is of a more moderate scale. Many of the buildings that front onto the south side of the High Street are three or four storeys in height and this lower scale means that sunlight lands onto the street for much of the day.

The southern side of the High Street is composed of numerous small plots. Over time many have been redeveloped and in recent years several schemes have been built that deliver residential apartments over ground floor retail. Further developments of this kind may be acceptable so long as they deliver active ground floors and that the scale of buildings responds to the context – this typically means four storeys but with the potential for up to two additional set back storeys (refer to Figure 4.4). This scale will ensure that sunlight continues to shine onto High Street. Such proposals should also provide frontage, enclosure and definition to streets to the rear (Herschel Street and Chapel Street) with frontage aligned to the existing building line.

To avoid creating an unbalanced High Street buildings on the northern side of the street should typically be no higher than six storeys.

### Windsor Road

Any new development within this area should respond to the scale of the existing context, typically four to six storeys. Some buildings in prominent locations for instance on the junction of Windsor Road and Albert Street could be of a greater stature but must ensure that rights to light are respected in adjacent properties.

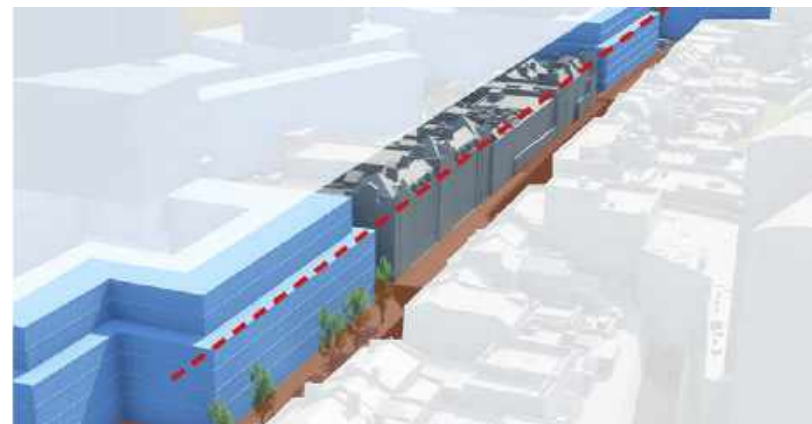


Figure 4.4: High Street parapet principle

### Stoke Road Corridor / Horlicks / Stoke Gardens

The context height of development north of the railway line is typically two or three storeys however buildings of significant height have been developed close to the railway station and the consented proposals for the Horlicks factory site include building of up to ten storeys.

Typical development height within this area should be four to six storeys but with greater height on sites closer to the centre. New developments within this area must step down where they interface with existing lower scale developments

### Akzo Nobel / Petersfield Avenue

Typical residential development height within this area should be four storeys with potential for an additional set back storey on sites on the northern side of Petersfield Avenue and within the core part of the Akzo Nobel site. Greater height (five storeys plus a set back storey) may be acceptable on the Wexham Road and Uxbridge Road frontages and adjacent to the railway line.

### Bath Road

Developments on Bath Road are typically four to six storey in height and this should remain the prevailing height within this area. Greater height would impact on the primacy of the Urban Core where greater heights are promoted.

### Herschel Village

The typical building height of buildings within the Herschel Village area to the south of the High Street is two storey. New development should respect this context height. Greater height (four or five storeys) may be possible on sites on the edge of the area where the sites interface with areas where buildings are of greater scale.

## POTENTIAL FOR TALL BUILDINGS

The previous section sets out the general height principles that development should adhere to in Slough's Square Mile. There are already a number of taller buildings within the area and in the right places they can play a role in the intensification of the town and in defining the it's character and identity. Tall buildings in the wrong places, or with excessive height, can be detrimental, lead to a fragmented skyline, harm the setting of the town's heritage assets and undermine the integrity of its townscape character.

Figure 4.3 indicates locations where tall buildings may be appropriate in the centre. In these locations a tall building can help to enhance the legibility of the centre, by marking an important location within the town's structure, reinforcing a point of arrival or indicating the primacy of a particular use (e.g. the railway station).

Any tall building should be:

- Of a height and scale, mass and volume that is proportionate to its role, and its position in the local context; and
- An outstanding and elegant design that makes a positive contribution to the skyline when viewed from any direction.

Tall buildings should also:

- Enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area without adversely affecting established valued townscapes and views including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings and their settings;
- Present a positive relationship with the street and deliver a high-quality public realm; and
- Be designed to avoid creating any adverse impact on the microclimate and amenity of the proposal site and the surrounding area.

The evaluation in this study considers building height from the perspective of place making principles in relation to Slough's Square Mile and its future identity. Evaluation of this height in relation to longer distance views to the town centre, including from viewpoints from Windsor Great Park, have not been made. Tall buildings may, for example, be visible in the backdrop to views of Windsor Castle from some locations. Applicants promoting tall buildings will need to carry out their own heritage assessment to identify whether their proposals cause harm.

As with the illustrative masterplan this model demonstrates how the height principles set out in the vision for Slough could be successfully applied to the Square Mile.



## 4.4 MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT

### A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Slough Council adopted its 'Town Centre Transport Vision' in February 2019 (subsequently referred to as the Transport Vision). This recognises that transport will play a vital role in delivering wider policy objectives for the town, including the significant levels of redevelopment described within this Regeneration Framework. Equally, the Regeneration Framework should help to facilitate the Transport Vision and maximise the benefits that it can bring.

Although this Regeneration Framework is focused primarily on Slough's Square Mile, as a hub for public transport, a major through-route for general traffic and the focus for many walking and cycling routes from the surrounding neighbourhoods, the role of the town's transport offer extends far beyond the Square Mile itself.

The Transport Vision promotes the following key principles:

- Make public transport the dominant mode of travel to and from the centre of Slough and the rest of the Borough and beyond;
  - Provide the capacity for movement to and from the centre of Slough, in the form of a high quality, reliable, high capacity public transport network, which enables a higher scale of development.;
  - Maximise the benefits of enhanced strategic public transport connectivity to London, Heathrow Airport and the wider Thames Valley;
  - Make walking and cycling to and from the centre of Slough an attractive option, and greatly improve the permeability of the centre of Slough for pedestrians;
  - Create an attractive environment in which people are put first in terms of movement and use of space for interaction, creating safe, healthy and vibrant urban spaces which encourage people to live, work and relax locally;
- Use the high-quality design of transport infrastructure to enhance the quality of the public realm;
  - Significantly reduce the dominance of the car as a mode of travel to, from and through the centre of Slough; and
  - Minimise the impacts of roads, parking and motorised vehicles on the urban realm and on people, including improved air quality and road safety.

Most importantly, the Transport Vision seeks to deal with the problems of a car dominated town centre to achieve benefits in terms of local air quality, road safety and the quality of the urban realm. Improved journey times for buses and more space for pedestrians and cyclists would also result, and such changes are necessary in order to create a more attractive, healthy and vibrant urban core.

## WALKING AND CYCLING

The most relevant key principles from the Transport Vision relating to walking and cycling are:

- Make walking and cycling to and from the centre of Slough an attractive option, and greatly improve the permeability of the centre of Slough for pedestrians;
- Create an attractive environment in which people are put first in terms of movement and use of space for interaction, creating safe, healthy and vibrant urban spaces which encourage people to live, work and relax locally; and
- Use the high-quality design of transport infrastructure to enhance the quality of the public realm.

As a minimum, both pedestrians and cyclists should each be provided with a more continuous, safe, legible and direct network. Just as importantly, other vehicles should be restricted to speeds and volumes that are appropriate to the street they are using, especially where these vehicles can mix with pedestrians and cyclists. For journeys under two kilometres walking should be the first choice for most people most of the time. Similarly, for journeys up to five kilometres cycling should be the first choice for most people most of the time.

The walking and cycling networks could comprise of two main elements. The first shares the main road network with private cars and public transport. On these streets it is most likely that the speed and volume of general traffic will be such that pedestrians and cyclists will need to be fully segregated from them, either in space (such as segregated cycle lanes along links) or in time (such as separate signal staging at junctions). Where facilities for cyclists of sufficient quality cannot be introduced due to other constraints then this should be recognised, and alternative routes provided rather than accepting low-quality infrastructure.

To compliment the main road network, there could also be a 'disaggregated' network on quieter, residential streets and also through open spaces. These 'low-traffic neighbourhoods' are formed of a number of connected residential streets, bordered by main roads in which vehicle speeds and volumes should be low enough that the majority of people should feel comfortable navigating them on foot or by bicycle without significant interventions (such as formal pedestrian crossings and segregated cycle lanes).

This can be achieved in a number of different ways, but the result is that through traffic is discouraged or removed whilst still enabling vehicles to access people's homes. Furthermore, two adjacent low traffic neighbourhoods can be joined together by introducing crossing facilities on the main road that separates them, potentially creating a network of quiet streets to enable people to walk or cycle across Slough whilst avoiding main roads.

Together, the combined networks of main road 'superhighways' and 'low-traffic neighbourhoods' could form a comprehensive network connecting the town centre with the rest of Slough.

Figure 4.5 shows the proposed network of routes. It also shows the future potential to deliver a new pedestrian / cycle bridge over the railway line either close to the existing station or, in the longer term further to the east (as part of the redevelopment / reconfiguration of the Tesco site).





Figure 4.5: Proposed future cycle network (this also indicates the walking network)

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The most relevant key principles from the Transport Vision relating to public transport are:

- Make public transport the dominant mode of travel to and from the centre of Slough and the rest of the Borough and beyond;
- Provide the capacity for movement to and from the centre of Slough, in the form of a high quality, reliable, high capacity public transport network, which enables a higher scale of development; and
- Maximise the benefits of enhanced strategic public transport connectivity to London, Heathrow Airport and the wider Thames Valley.

At the heart of an improved public transport offer for Slough is a proposed Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) network derived from a phased enhancement of the current 'SMaRT' network.

Ultimately, this will provide a Borough-wide network of infrastructure that provides 100% segregation of MRT vehicles from general traffic, thereby providing speed and reliability of journey times as well as higher ride quality than conventional buses.

The Council has already delivered Phase 1 of the 'SMaRT' bus priority scheme between Slough Trading Estate and the centre of Slough. A second phase is planned which would continue delivery east of the centre of Slough via the A4 London Road to M4 Junction 5 and beyond, possibly to Heathrow Airport.

Ultimately, the full MRT network could include a number of corridors, not only connecting the town centre with the trading estate and Heathrow Airport, but also Windsor, Uxbridge, Wexham Park Hospital, and key development sites including the northern expansion.

Such a network would have a total length of approximately 30km. The vehicles that might eventually operate on this network could range from a conventional bus through to full tram.

Whilst the exact alignment of the final variant of the MRT has yet to be finalised, for the purposes of the Regeneration Framework it has been assumed that the east-west spine will simply follow the A4 Bath Road / Wellington Street.

MRT stops should be located where they integrate with crossing points on Wellington Street and shelters must be provided within a high quality public realm setting for waiting passengers.

The other major changes to public transport serving Slough will be the arrival of the Elizabeth line in mid-2022. Slough currently has a relatively low mode share for rail commuting (8.4% compared with 12.9% in Guildford and 17.8% in Woking, 2011 Census), but faster services to central London are likely to change this; and the potential for the Western Rail link to Heathrow airport (WRLtH).





Figure 4.6: Proposed public transport



## THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

The most relevant key principles from the Transport Vision relating to the highway network are:

- Significantly reduce the dominance of the car as a mode of travel to, from and through the centre of Slough; and
- Minimise the impacts of roads, parking and motorised vehicles on the urban realm and on people, including improved air quality and road safety.

The Transport Vision promotes the creation of a low-car zone within the centre of Slough where the only motorised vehicles allowed in these areas are public transport vehicles and the impact of moving or parked cars will be significantly reduced. This will help to achieve the desired shift in the way people travel, away from the car towards walking and cycling. Equally, it will enable the streets and other public spaces within the low-car zone to provide a far better environment for people to spend time in the town centre.

The other key element of the Transport Vision relating to the highway network is the transfer of road space, and hence capacity, away from the private car towards walking, cycling, public transport and the public realm. This is primarily focused on important gateways to and corridors through the Square Mile, particularly to the north and the west of the area. Implicit within this approach is also the need to enhance the aesthetic and ecological quality of these corridors.

## PARKING SUPPLY

The most relevant key principle from the Transport Vision relating to the parking supply in the Square Mile are:

- Minimise the impacts of roads, parking and motorised vehicles on the urban realm and on people, including improved air quality and road safety.

The Transport Vision seeks to reduce the overall supply of public parking in the centre of Slough, particularly as complimentary policies encourage a shift towards other modes of travel.

Long-term predictions of the likely demand for car parking are difficult to make as peoples travel habits change. However, given the current surplus of car parking in the Square Mile and the fact that much of this is temporary it is expected that overall car parking provision will decline.

Future development will need to ensure that overall car parking provision in the Square Mile is sufficient, particularly as land uses change. Intelligent use and sharing of spaces at different times of the day by complimentary land uses will help to maximise the efficiency of car parking provision. Furthermore, limiting the use of public car parks for contract car parking will help to create increased capacity for visitors, particularly on weekdays when the existing car parking provision sees its highest demand.

For those private car trips that remain, appropriate infrastructure should be introduced to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles, which have the potential to offer improvements in local air quality and a reduction in carbon emissions.

Equally, the expansion of car clubs, whereby members can pay for the use of a vehicle on an hour-by-hour basis, can replace the need to purchase a private car. The provision of dedicated (and potentially cheaper) car parking for both electric and car club vehicles will help to increase the uptake of these alternatives. However, care will need to be taken to avoid these options taking mode share away from walking, cycling and public transport. Furthermore, the Square Mile must provide sufficient levels of cycle and e-scooter parking in the right locations to promote the uptake of these modes.

In the short to medium term the two Council owned car parks Herschel and Hatfield together with provision on the Slough Central site and elsewhere in the town will be sufficient to meet public need. Should the Queensmere and Observatory car parks be redeveloped some level of public car parking is likely to be required to replace this. This could be provided as part of an underground car park that also provides for that development or within a new multi storey structure on that site.

Longer-term, a significant share of car parking supply could be accommodated at peripheral park and ride sites, particularly for commuters. The provision of park and ride sites around Slough can help to encourage the use of non-car modes for the 'last mile' of journeys, thereby reducing the impact of cars on the centre of Slough. Park and ride sites could be linked to the centre of Slough by direct services on the proposed MRT network. As such, park and ride could offer competitive journey times, when compared to 'car only' journeys and be competitive financially by offering lower cost, or free, parking.



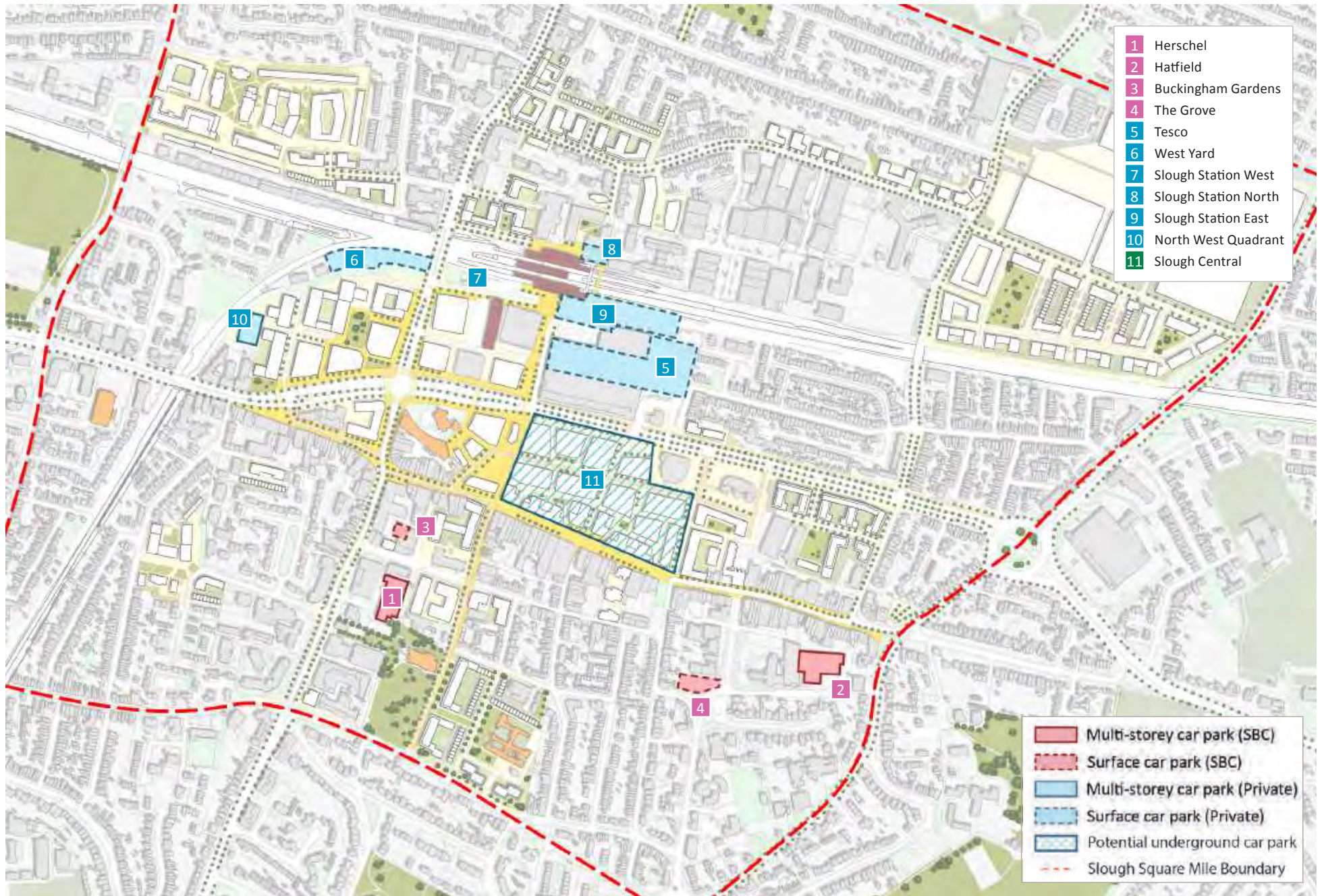


Figure 4.7: Future public parking provision

## 4.5 STREETS, SPACES AND PUBLIC REALM

### STREETS AND SPACES

Delivering transformational change in Slough will require more than new buildings. Equally important will be the space between these buildings. Delivering a more connected network of routes and spaces will be critical to creating a place that people will enjoy spending time in, a place that will attract investment and a place that will deliver healthy and fulfilling lives.

The Regeneration Framework promotes a number of new spaces in the centre; redefines the way that other spaces are used and establishes a framework that will make the links to existing spaces on the periphery of the town more attractive to use.

The important spatial elements are identified below and in the adjacent Figure 4.8. A number of these elements are illustrated further on pages 84 to 93.

- 1. Civic Square** – a new public square in the heart of the town at the meeting place of two of the most significant routes; the north to south Brunel Way / Church Street axis and High Street. This predominantly hard surfaced space will provide the focus of civic life in the town; a place to gather, to celebrate and to have fun;
- 2. Brunel Way** – this route provides the link between the railway station and the town's two largest regeneration sites the North West Quadrant and Slough Central. These routes must be designed as a seamless and attractive pedestrian connections to and from the station (refer to 'improved links to public transport hubs');
- 3. Wellington Street** – new development will start to change the character of this street providing enclosure and animation. However transforming the environment for pedestrians and cyclists will be needed for this street to fully contribute to Slough's future success (refer to 're-imagining the A4');
- 4. High Street** – new development to the north will transform the central setting of High Street and turn it from a linear processional route to one that interfaces with a more permeable fabric in the Slough Central site. The public realm will require an upgrade and there is opportunity to give further priority to pedestrians at both the western and eastern ends (refer to 'new types of public space' and 'a vibrant independent offer');
- 5. Windsor Road** – this route forms the main southern approach into the town and is already well defined by buildings of civic scale. It has potential to become a grand tree lined, civic avenue (refer to Sustainable radial routes);
- 6. Church Street** – This important north to south street provides a connection to St. Mary's churchyard and Herschel Park. This link can be made more legible through a coordinated public realm treatment and tree planting that delivers greater priority to pedestrians;
- 7. St. Mary's Churchyard** – this is one of the few green spaces in the centre. The potential for part, or all of it, to offer a quiet and contemplative public space should be investigated;
- 8. Stoke Road / Wexham Road / Uxbridge Road** – these three routes provide important connections into the town centre from the north. A unified and consistent public realm treatment that prioritises the environment for pedestrians and cyclists is required to encourage more walking and cycling into the town centre from the neighbourhoods to the north of the centre;
- 9. Petersfield Avenue** - this route provides an important west to east connection and walking route between Stoke Road and Wexham Road and potentially onwards to Uxbridge Road through the Akzo Nobel and former Gas Works sites when these are brought forward for development. The route can also serve to link residential areas to the northern entrance to the railway station. The public realm needs improving on this route to deliver continuous footways and with tree planting improving the streets quality, and breaking up the visual impact of on street car parking.
- 10. New pocket parks** – On larger development sites there is potential to deliver small public spaces that can provide places for relaxation, children's play, and that soften the built form through landscape.





Figure 4.8: Proposed network of streets and spaces



Trees enhance this cycle route



Incorporating street trees and planting into the streetscape (Maid Marian Way, Nottingham)



Roof gardens can provide amenity with a view



## STREET TREES / PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

There can be no doubt that street trees can make a huge contribution to the character and quality of an area providing both physical and visual amenity, improving biodiversity and enhancing sense of place.

The Regeneration Framework promotes tree planting within the streets and spaces within the Square Mile and this is indicated in the illustrative masterplan. On main routes avenue tree planting is advocated providing continuity, reinforcing the street space as well as protecting pedestrians from traffic and providing shelter from the elements (rain and sun).

Every effort should be made to ensure that trees are planted wherever this is practically possible however it is also recognised that in some locations narrow footways, underground services or a general lack of space may make this difficult to achieve. Where this is the case opportunity to introduce greenery in other forms from rain gardens to green walls should be taken.

The species selected must be suitable to the location with consideration given to the mature size of trees, their growth pattern and form and future management and maintenance.

## LANDSCAPE, ROOF GARDENS AND GREEN WALLS

There are currently few open spaces in the Square Mile and whilst there are some opportunities to provide additional spaces as part of new development, larger open areas are located further afield on the edge of the centre.

This means that the town must be creative with the space that it has. There is considerable opportunity for tree planting to green Slough's streets and ground level planting along main streets can change the character.

Slough should also look to the towns' roofscape to add greenery and biodiversity. Roof gardens, green walls, when well designed, can deliver considerable amenity. In Slough there is the added benefit of views to Windsor Castle to add to the offer.





**A high quality co-ordinated public realm treatment enhances the attractiveness of a centre**



**Well designed public spaces become a focus for people in a town centre**

## PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

The Regeneration Framework establishes a vision and spatial plan for the Square Mile, and indicates a network of streets and spaces where public realm investment should be focused.

Figure 4.8 identifies the future network of streets and spaces in the Square Mile that, when delivered, will create attractive and seamless connection between different parts of the centre and the neighbourhoods close to the Square Mile.

This will form the starting point for the preparation of a more comprehensive Public Realm Strategy for the Square Mile. This will test further the concepts outlined in the Regeneration Framework and assign priority to proposals.

At this stage it is anticipated that the Public Realm Strategy will:

- Identify the role and character of spaces;
- Identify the role and character of streets;
- Set out principles for public realm design;
- Set out an approach to design to give more priority to pedestrians;
- Set out proposals that integrate cycling provision into the public realm;
- Consider further the integration of the MRT;
- Define a palette of materials, street furniture, lighting and detailing with consideration of different character / quality of provision for different parts of the centre;
- Set out principles for blue and green infrastructure including planting; and
- Provide guidance / consideration of future management and maintenance.

Concept designs will be prepared for important streets and spaces within the Square Mile and these will serve to outline the character and quality of the spaces that is anticipated and set a standard for other parts of the Square Mile.

## INITIAL CONCEPTS

As a pre-cursor to the Public Realm Strategy the following pages provide initial concept ideas presented through plan, section and sketches for five important parts of the Square Mile.

These are :

- Brunel Way;
- Wellington Street;
- High Street (West);
- High Street (East); and
- Windsor Road.

These are represented as examples of what could be delivered to change the environment on these streets rather than definitive solutions. Some concepts, for instance the ideas for Brunel Way, may be delivered in the short term; others present a much longer term position (for instance in the case of the concept ideas for Windsor Road).

It is intended that the proposals will be interrogated further as part of the Public Realm Strategy and that concept proposals for other parts of the Square Mile (for instance Civic Square and William Street) will also be explored at that stage.

## IMPROVED LINKS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUBS

As key arrival points into the town centre and hubs for activity, public transport nodes create an important first impression for visitors and an opportunity to engage with the public realm as part of people's everyday routines. This will only become more important as Slough realises a shift away from the private car towards more sustainable modes of travel. Ensuring that these hubs form an integrated part of the town centres network of streets and spaces is therefore vital to its attractiveness as a destination.



### EXAMPLE 1: BRUNEL WAY

The busiest public transport hub in Slough is the train station, which is set to become even more popular with the arrival of Elizabeth line services in mid-2022. With the train station located over 300 metres from the High Street and separated by the A4 dual-carriageway, the connection between the two must work extra hard to create a legible, welcoming and direct link.

Equally, new development opportunities to the west, such as the North West Quadrant, as well as connections with the bus station and the proposed Mass Rapid Transport system mean that this space must accommodate multiple desire lines. Furthermore, operational requirements such as access for maintenance by network rail and the need to accommodate rail-replacement bus services must all be considered.

Pedestrians travelling between the station and the town centre must currently contend with traffic on Brunel Way as well as the station / Tesco car park access with little assistance. Once beyond the immediate station environs there are relatively few opportunities to pause and rest, queuing taxis eat into potential footway space in this most valuable of locations and there is little sense of the importance of this route.

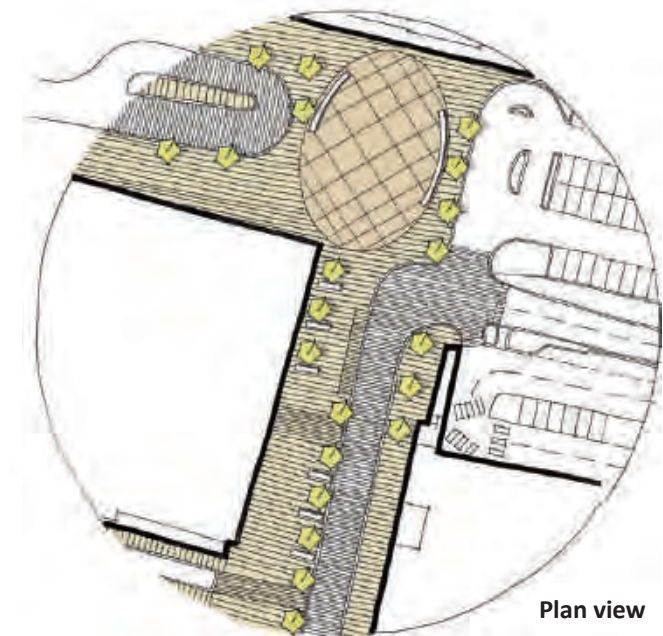


Section through the Future Brunel Way

By reconfiguring traffic management along Brunel Way there is the potential to create a traffic-free route for pedestrians between the train station and Wellington Street, with only two minor crossovers to navigate. This would also have the benefit of encouraging pedestrians onto the western side of Brunel Way where the existing, wide pedestrian crossing on Wellington Street can operate most efficiently.

This will then lead directly into any future redevelopment of the Queensmere / Observatory shopping centres and the High Street beyond. The importance of this pedestrian link cannot be understated, forming a critical spine through the town centre.

Taxi drop-off and pick-up will need to be accommodated nearby, as will the bike hire dock. New tree planting and seating will help to create a more welcoming public realm along this route, complimenting the recent and future adjacent development on this side of the street whilst maintaining views to the steeple of St. Mary's Church.



Plan view





The Future Brunel Way

## RE-IMAGINING THE A4

The A4, running between London and Bath, is possibly the single most significant feature in Slough. Whilst it may help people to orientate themselves, its overall impact on the town centre is a negative one. Passing just to the north of the town centre, it is a significant actual and perceived barrier to north-south movement (compounded by the adjacent and parallel railway line), hostile to anyone walking or cycling and is a significant contributor to the town's poor air quality. Its hostility has also encouraged a generation of adjacent developments to create highly defensive architectural responses interfacing with it and these have further compounded its issues.



### EXAMPLE 2: WELLINGTON STREET

The Council plans a phased reduction in general traffic capacity along the A4, enabling space to be reassigned to other modes, not least a possible transit corridor.

Whilst the exact alignment and final form of the MRT has yet to be confirmed, for the purposes of the Regeneration Framework it has been assumed that it will simply follow the A4 (rather than, for example, diverting past the train station) and will operate on one side of the A4 (rather than with-flow on either side of the corridor).

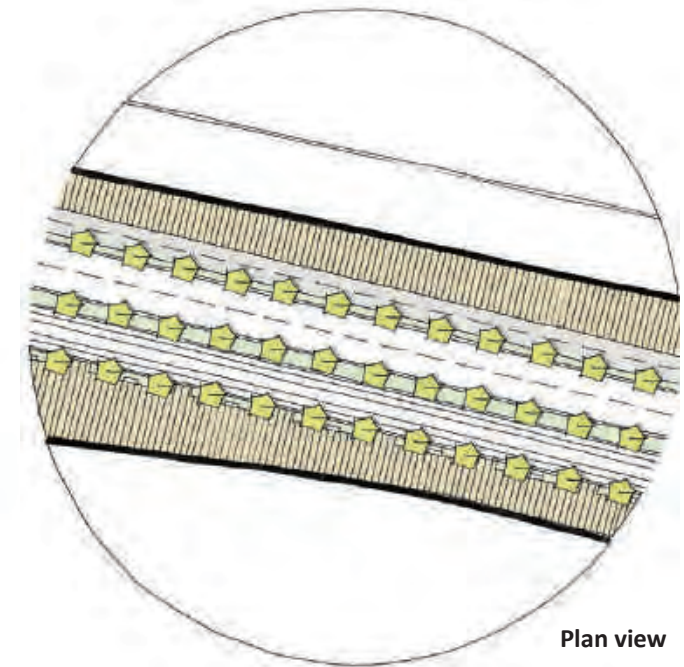
A reduction in general traffic will also enable the A4 to become a tree-lined avenue that becomes the focus of the wider walking and cycling networks. Both segregated cycling facilities on key radial routes and access to adjacent low-traffic neighbourhoods should connect conveniently and legibly with a high-quality, segregated bi-directional cycle track along the A4.



Section through the re-imagined A4

This cycle track should benefit from continuity and priority at junctions. Equally, pedestrian movements both along and across the A4 should be seamless and options to pause and rest should be frequent and attractive.

Wherever comprehensive improvements are made to the town centre streets, options to intercept water run-off and reduce or dissipate the load on the drainage network should be explored. The A4 represents a significant opportunity to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage features (SUDS), potentially acting as an exemplar for subsequent schemes. Furthermore, such interventions will help to soften the streets aesthetic and increase its biodiversity. More generally, the A4 has the potential to become one of Slough's most positive features.



Plan view





A re-imagined A4 incorporating the MRT (note the sketch shows a tram although the MRT may not take this form)



## NEW TYPES OF PUBLIC SPACE

Focused almost entirely along a long (approximately 1km), linear High Street, Slough town centre can often feel one-dimensional when compared with other town centres that offer different types of spaces and experiences. Town squares, alleyways and street markets all help to compliment a 'standard' high street offer and broaden a town centres appeal. As such, Slough would benefit from creating new types of space.



### EXAMPLE 3: HIGH STREET (WEST)

The western end of Slough High Street that connects Windsor Road with the A4 currently forms part of a small gyratory for northbound general traffic. Importantly, for those passing through Slough along the A4, this end of the High Street will be their only glimpse of the town centre.

As is common in Slough, space for moving and storing vehicles has been maximised with relatively little space provided for pedestrians, with no public seating or tree planting. Whilst connections for pedestrians to the rest of the High Street are direct via a signal-controlled crossing, they must cross four lanes of traffic on a sweeping bend. Despite the relative hostility of this environment, a number of restaurants and pubs cluster in this area.

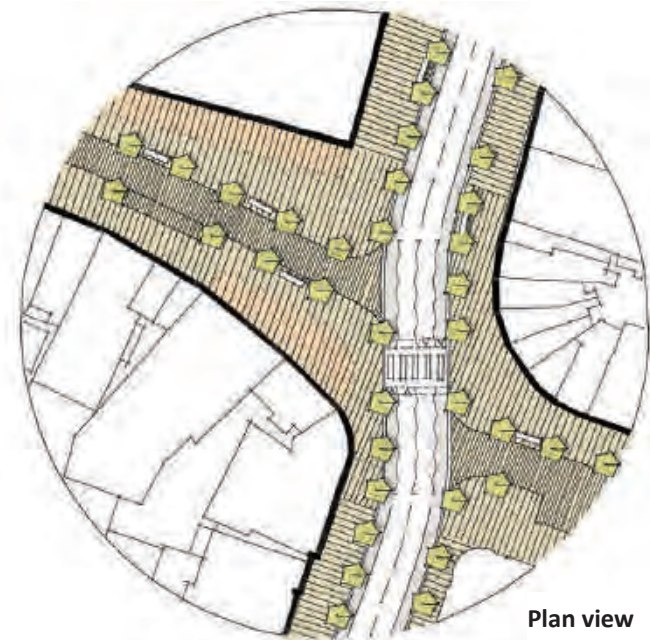
With plans to create a 'Low-Car Zone' in the town centre, which could see traffic on Windsor Road significantly reduced, the small gyratory could be removed and two-way general traffic reintroduced to William Street. The viability of this proposal in terms of traffic impacts has yet to be established.



Section through western end of High Street

Limiting general traffic to only those accessing the town centre could enable the removal of the existing bus lanes and the introduction of high-quality, segregated cycle lanes. Furthermore, this reduction in traffic volumes and the complexity of vehicle movements would enable the current signalised junction to potentially be removed and replaced with a wide Zebra crossing, reducing pedestrian delays and improving air quality.

Vehicular access to the western end of the High Street will need to be maintained for reasons of access and servicing, but this could be limited to certain times of the day. Essentially, the street would feel pedestrianised with any vehicle movements limited to a narrow corridor defined informally by the use of newly introduced tree planting and street furniture. Adjacent restaurants and pubs would then be able to benefit from the introduction of outdoor seating, helping to establish a new and vibrant area within the town centre.



Plan view





Giving space to people at the western end of High Street



## A VIBRANT, INDEPENDENT OFFER

The way that we all use our town centre has been changing for some time. It is becoming less and less common for people to visit for their weekly shop (with many preferring to do this online), while many more people now visit their town centre for the experience. A cup of coffee, a haircut, meeting-up with friends and something to eat. Town centres need to adapt, providing the spaces to encourage these types of activities and allow the small, independent traders that create the foundations of this type of experience to thrive. Slough already benefits from a large number of independent retailers that are predominantly located beyond the pedestrianised core, but the street scene often does little to help these retailers flourish.

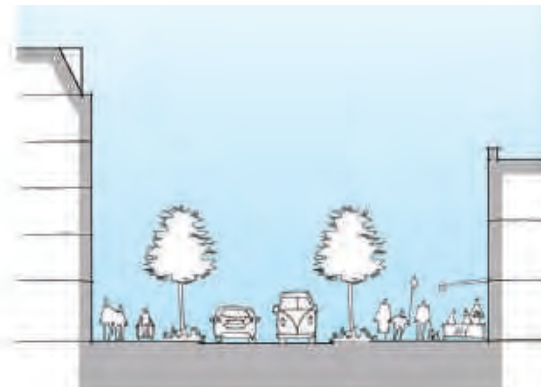
### EXAMPLE 4: HIGH STREET (EAST)

The eastern end of the High Street is dominated by independent shops and restaurants, many specialising in Asian, Arabic and Eastern European produce. And while the paving and lighting has received a relatively recent upgrade, the street is still dominated by the movement and parking of a relatively small number of vehicles.

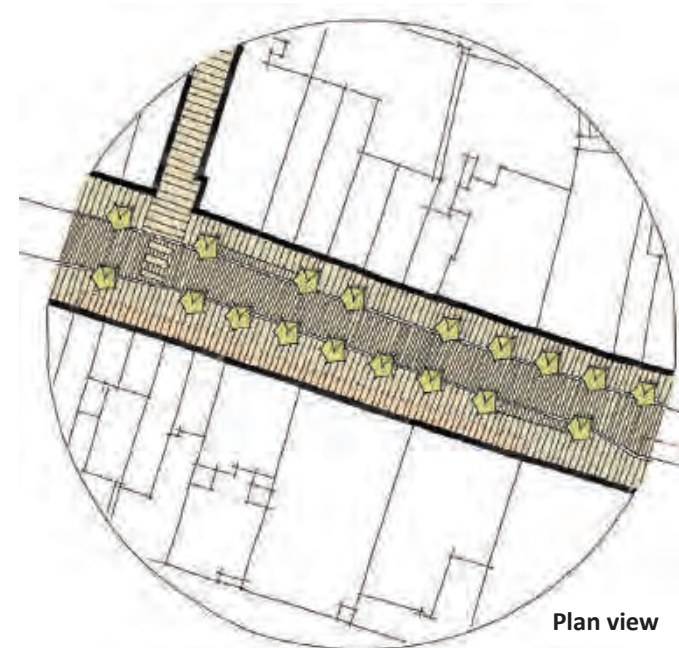
Currently, to enable nine vehicles to park at the side of the carriageway over 100 square metres of potential footway space are lost. Removing these nine car parking spaces could add an additional two metres in width to over 50 metres of footway, enabling trees to be planted, produce to be displayed, and tables and chairs to be introduced. Retailers already know that a softer edge between the public and private realm encourages shoppers to browse, just ask most green grocers who display their fruit and vegetables. It would also help to create a stronger identity for the area, further differentiating it from the pedestrianised area where High Street chains are more prevalent.

The dominance of the carriageway and the implied priority of motor traffic could be further reduced through the adoption of alternative materials or finishes for the carriageway.

The street already benefits from relatively high levels of footfall as it is on an important walking route that connects the town centres pedestrianised area with neighbourhoods to the east as well as the main pedestrian route to Hatfield car park. The challenge is to capture a greater share of this footfall, encouraging people to pause and explore rather than simply pass through. To this end, a new pedestrian crossing that aligns with the alleyway to Hatfield car park will make moving around the area on foot easier.



Section through the eastern end of High Street



Plan view





A more animated eastern High Street with wider footways and cafe seating

## SUSTAINABLE RADIAL ROUTES

There are a number of significant north-south routes that meet the A4, connecting Slough town centre with the surrounding neighbourhoods. As direct, prioritised routes, they have the potential to offer all modes of travel an efficient and legible means of accessing the town centre. Uxbridge Road, Stoke Road, Wexham Road, Stoke Poges Lane, Yew Tree Road and Windsor Road are all important corridors, but generally they prioritise private car movements at the expense of other modes. A shift in the way that space is apportioned to various modes of travel will be essential if more attractive networks for walking, cycling and public transport use are to be created.



### EXAMPLE 5: WINDSOR ROAD

With the introduction of the proposed 'Low-Car Zone' and the planned reduction in general traffic using the A4, corridors such as the Windsor Road can be re-evaluated in terms of the space and infrastructure that they afford different users. Currently, the width of this four-lane single carriageway encourages relatively high vehicle speeds, is daunting for pedestrians to cross and does very little to encourage someone to consider trying their bicycle to get into town. Furthermore, while many of the adjacent land uses, such as the Police station, County Court and Council offices suggest a strong civic quarter, the streetscape currently fails to articulate this.

Windsor Road has the potential to become a grand, tree-lined civic avenue and an important 'cycle superhighway' route, whilst still accommodating existing bus routes and facilitating access to nearby car parks. The existing four lanes for general traffic could be reduced to two, reducing the significant mass of asphalt that currently dominates the street scene. This can then be lined on both sides with trees and possible SUDS features to soften the street and help to break-up the relatively large distance between the set-back building lines. Behind these trees, with-flow cycle tracks will provide segregated and uninterrupted conditions for those travelling by bike.

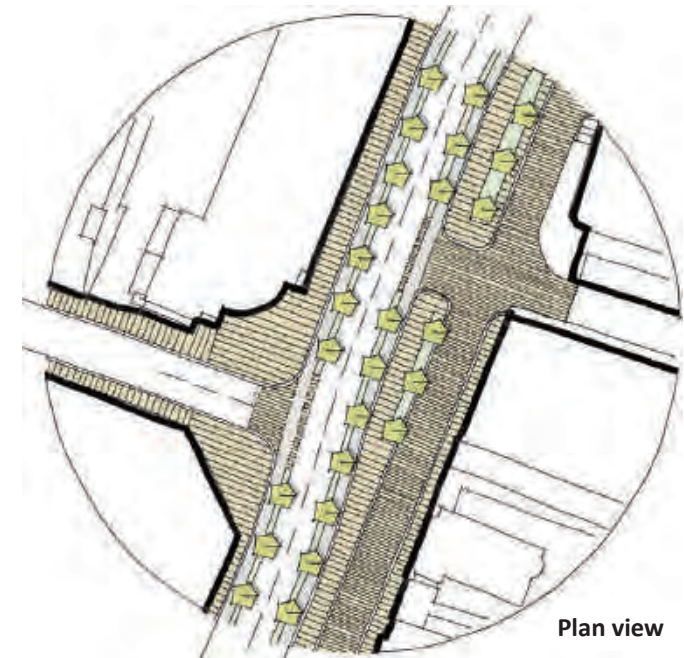


Section through Windsor Road

Combined with continuous footways, pedestrians and cyclists will have priority at minor side street junctions. Despite the footway widths remaining largely unchanged, the additional distance and features between pedestrians and vehicular traffic will help to reduce the hostility of the carriageway.

This could be further enhanced through the adoption of a 20 mph speed limit. Additional tree planting could also be introduced between the main carriageway and the adjacent service road, whilst an alternative surface finish, such as a coloured aggregate, imprint or a crushed stone resin bonded surface dressing, would help to reduce the current highway engineered aesthetic.

The viability of this proposal in terms of traffic impacts has yet to be established.



Plan view





Windsor Road, a grand civic street (long term vision)

## 4.6 CREATING A PLACE FOR CULTURE

### CULTIVATE: SLOUGH

Slough is a town that aspires to be a Cultural City, with culture being at the heart and soul of the Borough. Culture's symbiotic relationships with cross cutting agendas makes it a driver toward inclusive growth outcomes, regeneration and a thriving economy; an economy that is activity-led and contributes towards the skills and wellbeing of Slough's diverse communities.

The word Slough means soil and was first recorded in 1195. The word culture comes from the Latin 'cultura' which means growing or cultivation and from the French 'colere' which means to till as in to till the ground.

CULTIVATE: SLOUGH is about creating a fertile place for culture and the arts to be nurtured and developed; supporting an eco-system of growth, regeneration and wellbeing, helping to promote the Borough as an attractive place to live, work and stay.

The ambition of CULTIVATE: SLOUGH - the developing Cultural (Arts) Strategy for Slough - is to recognise the strengths of the arts and cultural sector already working in the Borough, contributing not only to wellbeing, but also skills and employment, community cohesion, regeneration and good growth, and celebrate this success by ensuring delivery is sustainable in the wider strategic context.

The Council owns a number of potential cultural venues including:

- The former Adelphi Theatre on Bath Road, which once hosted performances from the likes of The Beatles and Rolling Stones;
- The recently built Curve, which includes The Venue, a 280 max capacity lecture, conference and performance space (150 seated capacity); and
- 4,000 sq.ft. of shell-and-core ground floor space at the western end of the High Street which forms part of the Old Library redevelopment scheme.

### THE CULTURAL STRATEGY

The developing cultural strategy for the Borough is shaped by the priorities and ambition of the Council, whilst being responsive to local communities and the local cultural sector.

The ambition within the strategy is to:

- Widen participation and engagement in cultural and arts activities from all the diverse sectors and communities in the Borough;
- Ensure everyone is actively encouraged to access cultural opportunities irrespective of background, social or economic circumstances, health or any disability;
- Map current cultural provision, identify gaps and connect and advocate cultural opportunities to create a comprehensive and clear cultural offer;
- Connect to council priorities of: health & wellbeing, including isolation, cohesion and mental wellbeing; economic development & regeneration, in particular town centre regeneration; skills gap and skills development including life skills and pathways into creative industries; and
- Develop Slough as a destination town.

The Council is looking to take the strategy forward by identifying the longer term uses for key assets including the Adelphi Theatre, The Venue and the ground floor shell-and-core space at the Old Slough Library site.



## 4.7 MEANWHILE SLOUGH

### OVERVIEW

Development across the UK suffers from vacant ground floors which, coupled with changing retail patterns, are proving hard to animate. As a result, town centres are losing some of their attraction and buzz.

Although street markets and festivals can transform parts of the city, there are missing time frames between the two extremes of permanent and temporary.

The realm of the meanwhile often gets little consideration. This interim usage, which is the missing time frame, is paid too little attention. Meanwhile spaces should not be confused with pop-up places, which are a quick fix, intended to titillate the weary consumer – although meanwhile uses may incorporate elements of the pop-up.

The value of meanwhile spaces lies in their refusal to waste time or let sites lie fallow. They represent a broader strategy for change that is by nature experimental, giving the freedom to try out, at scale, new and unfamiliar ideas about the more permanent city and negotiate more informal practices of governance. It is clear that ideas in this parallel commercial culture do travel. Freedom is infectious, the discoveries made in these laboratories for future change disseminate fast, with experiments tried out in one place swiftly inspiring others, on a very different kinds of site.

Meanwhile projects are diverse but many involve the capture and re-use of waste materials, often acting as social projects by capturing many kinds of human energy which happen to be unconnected, undervalued or just undiscovered.

They may have a cultural or educational dimension, promote or engender health and well being, help to nurture or support entrepreneurial behaviour or just be fun or playful.

Temporary urbanism is a tool for exploring the corners of larger sites; as a way to start building months or years before a main development can start; or as a strategy for building the identity of a place and drawing out talented local collaborators. A proliferation of supported experiments in the city enriches its culture, making it more inclusive and creating a series of interconnected memories that feed communities and keep places alive.



**Blue House Yard, a temporary redevelopment of a car park in Wood Green to provide work and creative space**

### A MEANWHILE STRATEGY FOR SLOUGH

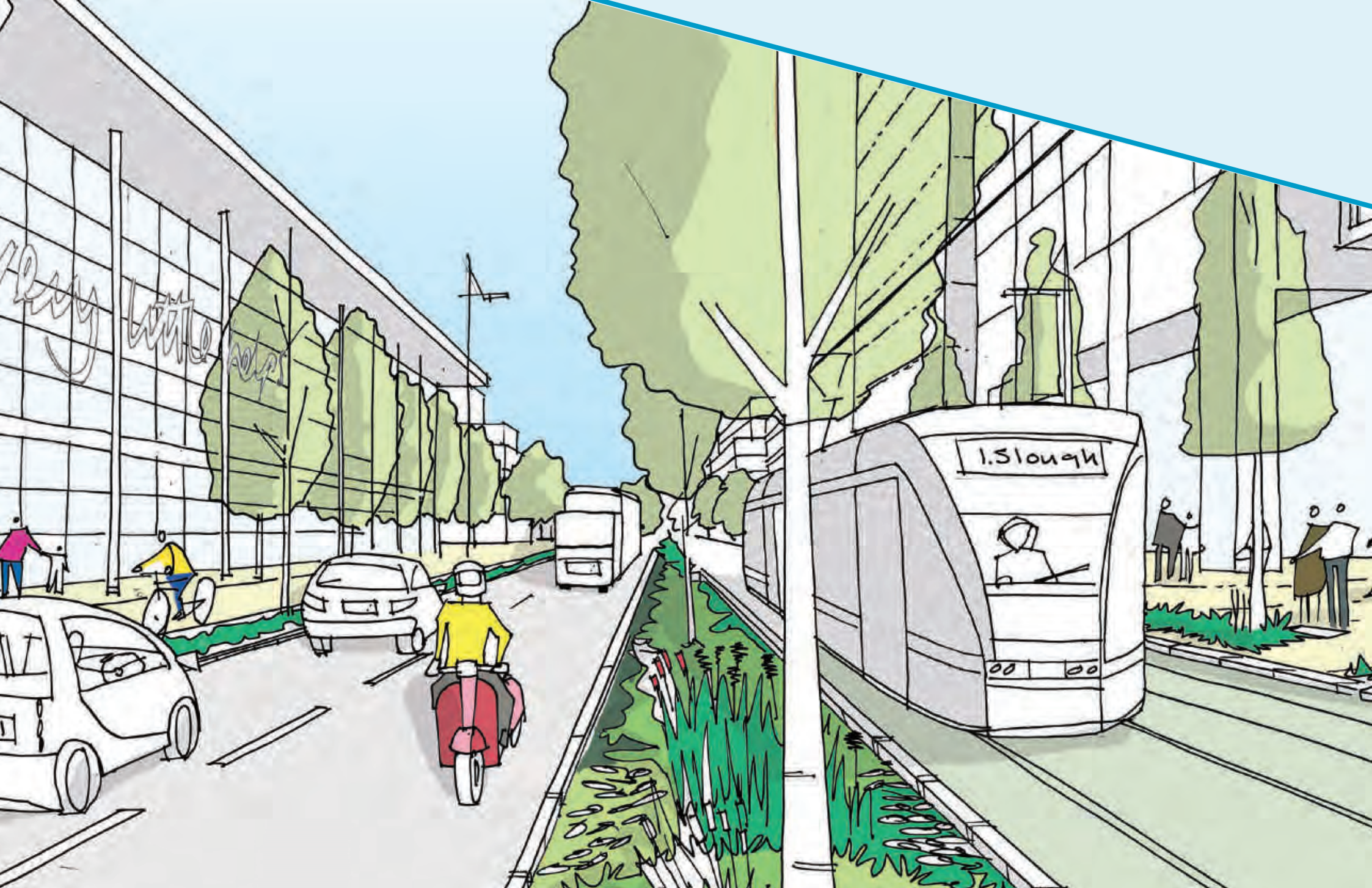
For Slough there are huge opportunities with substantial vacant sites and many developments in the offing.

The Council are currently commissioning consultants to prepare a meanwhile use strategy for the town. This strategy will identify in greater detail:

- Which sites are most suitable for meanwhile activity;
- Which types of meanwhile activity is best suited to that particular site or area;
- Who are the most suited meanwhile activity operators that can deliver from there; and
- What operating models are most suited

This work will be strongly linked to the Council's inclusive growth and cultural strategies.







# 5. Delivery Plan



## 5.1 OVERVIEW

The Regeneration Framework contains a series of development projects. It sets out the sites that have scope for transformation and will shape the Square Mile over the next 15 years and beyond. It is visionary, yet provides flexibility to ensure that it can meet changes in circumstances, especially economic and property related.

To be an effective Regeneration Framework there needs to be an understanding of how projects and initiatives will be delivered and programmed. This chapter provides an outline delivery plan and explains the proposals, the rationale and scope for change and how sites are anticipated to come forward over time.

While this delivery plan outlines the programme to realise change in the Square Mile, it is a starting point. Schemes and initiatives evolve, seizing opportunities as they arise and responding to challenges which projects may face. Reviewing and updating a delivery plan is therefore an important and a necessary process. It is therefore a living document.

The delivery plan describes each of the key sites on an individual, site by site, basis. For these key development projects the following information is provided:

1. Site description;
2. Development opportunity;
3. Development principles;
4. Potential capacity;
5. Overarching delivery approach;
6. Key delivery partners; and
7. Delivery timeframe

This information is set out in the Regeneration Framework Appendix.

The opportunities described in the Regeneration Framework are focused on the core town centre and its environs - the Square Mile, reflecting the contribution of the less central sites in the overall functioning of this area. Their inclusion ensures the masterplan takes an integrated approach to the town centre, the surrounding area and community it serves and supports.

## 5.2 DELIVERY PARTNERS, PROCESS AND FUNDING

### DELIVERY AGENCIES

Delivering change in Slough's Square Mile will need to be supported by activity from a wide range of stakeholders, delivery partners and agencies – both public and private.

While Slough Borough Council is expected to play a central role (including as landowner, economic development, highways and planning authority – it too may use its powers where necessary to enable development, such as Compulsory Purchase) other agencies will also be fully expected to contribute to its delivery. Without this, the masterplan will not come to fruition.

In addition to Slough Borough Council, agencies that may be involved with enabling, funding and delivering the projects may include, among others:

1. Landowners;
2. Developers;
3. Businesses;
4. Thames Valley Berkshire LEP;
5. Slough Urban Renewal (SUR);
6. North West Quadrant LLP (JV with Muse);
7. Stoke Wharf LLP (JV with Canal and River Trust);
8. Arts Council;
9. Universities and Higher Education establishments;
10. Herschel Homes (Slough Council's wholly owned housing company);
11. Registered Providers;
12. SCVS (Slough Community Voluntary Service);
13. HOME (community and arts organisation);
14. STAR: Slough Residents Association;
15. Slough Business Improvement District (BID);
16. Other public sector organisations – such as Homes England and the NHS; and
17. Transport bodies - such as Network Rail and bus operators.

Other organisations may also be identified – or be founded during the lifetime of the framework – which can assist in the shaping and the delivery of projects.

### DELIVERY MECHANISMS

There is unlikely to be a one size fits all delivery mechanism for the Regeneration Framework projects – the choice should reflect the size, scale, financials and nature of the individual masterplan initiatives.

In describing development projects overarching delivery mechanisms are suggested. In very broad terms, delivery mechanisms fall into several key categories:

1. Public sector led;
2. Private sector led; and
3. Public Private Partnerships.

The delivery of the masterplan will also be expected to rely on support of statutory planning mechanisms and policies, and particularly Slough's emerging Local Plan, as well as developer obligations / S106 requirements.

Other strategies too will build on the foundations and concepts set out in this framework and enable the delivery approaches and programmes to be refined; for example, through the Borough's emerging transport and cultural strategies.

The framework also looks to support the Council's Inclusive Growth and Climate strategies. These strategies will look to influence and leverage from the framework development proposals, say through agreements with developers to employ local workers or adopt more sustainable construction and travel to work practices.



## FUNDING THE MASTERPLAN'S DELIVERY

Not all of the proposals contained in the masterplan are wholly commercial in nature. Project delivery is fully expected to be secured using a combination of public and private sector investment, with the balance of need for funding varying depending on the type, nature, cost and commercial viability of the project. Where projects are less commercial in nature, funding avenues might include:

1. Prudential Borrowing;
2. S106 Agreements / developer contributions;
3. Housing Revenue;
4. Arts Council;
5. Council's Capital Programme;
6. National Lottery Heritage Fund;
7. Transport Funds;
8. LEP funds;
9. Government agencies, such as Homes England; and / or
10. Other ad hoc funding opportunities.

Crucially, funding opportunities continue to evolve and will undoubtedly do so over the lifetime of the Regeneration Framework. Any funding strategy must be refreshed and reviewed as time progresses.

Supporting broad brush viability work has been undertaken to help shape views on the development scope within the framework, acknowledging that further site specific information may be unearthed as projects move forward.

This too may shape the financial outputs of the developments further. And in the context of the long term timeframe attached to the framework, then a degree of flexibility may be expected, including from a viability perspective; where relevant and justified through the planning process - for residential schemes this may be reflected in the amount of affordable housing they can reasonably support.



- | MAIN SITES        |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1                 | Former Horlicks Factory           |
| 2                 | Stoke Gardens                     |
| 3                 | Stoke Wharf                       |
| 4                 | Mill Street sites                 |
| 5                 | Stanley Cottages                  |
| 6                 | Petersfield Avenue sites          |
| 7                 | North West Quadrant               |
| 8                 | Octagon site, Brunel Way          |
| 9                 | Future Works                      |
| 10                | Old Library site, 85 High Street  |
| 11                | Slough Central                    |
| 12                | Tower House / Ashbourne House     |
| 13                | Chalvey Park                      |
| 14                | Burlington Road car park          |
| 15                | Buckingham Gateway                |
| 16                | Aspire, Heschel Street            |
| 17                | Herschel Street sites             |
| 18                | Upton Hospital                    |
| 19                | Akzo Nobel                        |
| 20                | Slough Gas Works                  |
| SMALLER SITES     |                                   |
| 21                | 18-24 Stoke Road                  |
| 22                | Lion House, Petersfield Avenue    |
| 23                | 7 Windsor Road, (Herschel Street) |
| 24                | 271-279 High Street               |
| 25                | 204-206 High Street               |
| 26                | Alpha Corner                      |
| 27                | Alpha Street                      |
| 28                | Thames Central                    |
| LONGER TERM SITES |                                   |
| 29                | Tesco Extra, Wellington Street    |
| 30                | Bus Depot, Stanley Cottages       |
| 31                | Royal Mail Sorting Office         |

Figure 5.1: Town centre sites



## 5.3 SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND PHASING

### SITE OPPORTUNITIES

The masterplan contains a considerable number of key site or area based development opportunities. These are:

1. Former Horlicks Factory
2. Stoke Gardens
3. Stoke Wharf
4. Mill Street sites
5. Stanley Cottages
6. Petersfield Avenue
7. North West Quadrant
8. Octagon site, Brunel Way
9. Future Works
10. Old Library site
11. Slough Central
12. Tower House / Ashbourne House
13. Chalvey Park
14. Burlington Road car park
15. Buckingham Gateway
16. Aspire
17. Herschel Street sites
18. Upton Hospital
19. Akzo Nobel
20. Slough Gas Works

Further information on each of these sites including development opportunity, design principles, potential development capacity and the delivery approach and timeframe is detailed in the Appendix to the Regeneration Framework.

A number of smaller sites are also identified with capacity for change and redevelopment. While not fully detailed in this outline delivery plan, these sites will also contribute to the rejuvenation of Slough town centre and its wider environs during the lifetime of this framework. These sites are:

21. 18 – 24 Stoke Road
22. Lion House, Petersfield Avenue
23. 7 Windsor Road
24. 271-279 High Street
25. 204-206 High Street
26. Alpha Corner
27. Alpha Street
28. Thames Central

These have either received planning permission or are consented under permitted development rights: many are under construction.

There are several large, strategic sites where potentially there is scope for change too, and particularly if the opportunity arises for current occupiers to relocate or consolidate their activities. Although these sites presently offer less certain outcomes, the Regeneration Framework alludes to the prospect of longer term change on these sites too. These sites are:

29. Tesco Extra, Wellington Street
30. Bus Depot, Stanley Cottages
31. Royal Mail Sorting Office and BT car park, Wellington Street

The location of each of the above sites is indicated in Figure 5.1.

## POTENTIAL SCHEME OUTPUTS, PROJECT PHASING AND DELIVERY TIMESCALE

Delivery of schemes will be phased across the lifetime of the Regeneration Framework. Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 summarise the scale of development envisaged, its delivery timeframes and phasing, noting:

1. They provide broad proxy of delivery timescales. Inevitably, some projects will take longer to come to deliver; others more quickly.
2. Many have considerable delivery lead in times before project implementation will actually take place: this is particularly the case for physical development projects where substantial enabling activities are required, especially for complex sites.
3. Some sites will have very long build out periods. This though does vary, not least due to economic circumstances but also due say to the number of competing sites at any one time.

The delivery of the commercial uses will be phased over time, and particularly office development. Offices, alongside new residential will be the most prevalent land uses to come forward. Smaller, short term interim activities are expected to be developed too, and as part of a strategy to mitigate the impact COVID has on the town centre. A Meanwhile Strategy will be developed to identify and inform those activities.

	SITE	OFFICE Sq m (nia)	RETAIL Sq m (nia)	LEISURE Sq m (nia)	INDUSTRIAL Sq m (nia)	RESIDENTIAL Units
1	Former Horlicks Factory site	0	239	0	0	1,300
2	Stoke Gardens	0	0	0	0	127
3	Stoke Wharf	0	0	0	0	320
4	Mill Street sites	1,970	0	0	0	429
5	Stanley Cottages	0	0	0	0	36
6	Petersfield Avenue	0	0	0	0	124
7	North West Quadrant*	28,000 - 43,500	2,400 - 4,000	0	0	1,300
8	Octagon Site	12,075	326	0	0	0
9	Future Works	25,065	0	0	0	0
10	Old Library site**	0	460	0	0	64
11	Slough Central	50,000 - 200,000	10,000	5,000	0	1,000
12	Tower House / Ashbourne House	0	0	0	0	77
13	Chalvey Park site	0	0	0	0	36
14	Burlington Road car park	0	0	0	0	48
15	Buckingham Gateway	0	376	1,730	0	175
16	Aspire, Herschel Street	0	0	0	0	238
17a	Herschel Street site (15-23 Church Street)	0	0	0	0	41
17b	Herschel Street site (Victoria St Junction)	0	0	0	0	36
18	Upton Hospital	0	0	0	0	294
19	Akzo Nobel	0	0	0	36,785	1,000
20	Slough Gas Works	0	0	0	11,430	217
21	18-24 Stoke Road	0	0	0	0	40
22	Lion House, Petersfield Avenue	0	0	0	0	155
23	7 Windsor Road	0	0	0	0	24
24	204-206 High Street	0	0	0	0	94
25	271-279 High Street	0	0	0	0	65
26	Alpha Corner	0	134	0	0	14
27	Alpha Street	0	0	0	0	14
28	Thames Central	0	0	0	0	146
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117,110 - 282,610</b>	<b>13,935 - 15,535</b>	<b>6,730</b>	<b>48,215</b>	<b>7,414</b>

\*NWQ also includes 5,000m<sup>2</sup> educational / innovation space \*\*Old Library includes 244 hotel bed spaces

Figure 5.2: Potential development quantum from opportunity sites (excludes longer term strategic sites)



## SCHEME PHASING

Phasing of development shows strong activity in the near term – perhaps spurred on by the anticipated arrival of the Elizabeth line. Yet, there is also very significant development activity forecast for the mid to long term, particularly given many larger sites will be coming through the development pipeline over that time.

Figure 5.4 indicates this phasing spatially over time.

	SITE	YEARS 0-5	YEARS 6-10	YEARS 11-15
1	Former Horlicks Factory site			
2	Stoke Gardens			
3	Stoke Wharf			
4	Mill Street sites			
5	Stanley Cottages			
6	Petersfield Avenue			
7	North West Quadrant			
8	Octagon Site			
9	Future Works			
10	Old Library site			
11	Slough Central			
12	Tower House / Ashbourne House			
13	Chalvey Park site			
14	Burlington Road car park			
15	Buckingham Gateway			
16	Aspire, Herschel Street			
17a	Herschel Street site (15-23 Church Street)			
17b	Herschel Street site (Victoria St Junction)			
18	Upton Hospital			
19	Akzo Nobel			
20	Slough Gas Works			
21	18-24 Stoke Road			
22	Lion House, Petersfield Avenue			
23	7 Windsor Road			
24	204-206 High Street			
25	271-279 High Street			
26	Alpha Corner			
27	Alpha Street			
28	Thames Central			

Figure 5.3: Anticipated phasing of development on opportunity sites





## INDICATIVE HOUSING TRAJECTORY

The indicative housing trajectory as indicated in Figure 5.7 shows the spread of dwellings to be delivered over the short, medium and long term.

The development outputs show the scale of the opportunity and change in the town. It too underlines residential developer interest in Slough, with many of the scheme promoters / landowners having already secured planning consent or moving toward seeking it.

Delivering a diverse mix of residential types and tenures will be key to meeting this housing trajectory. Collectively, the sites can offer that product diversity; there is scope to deliver houses and apartments, private sales, PRS / BTR and senior living for example, as well as a wide range of affordable products – social, intermediate, rent to buy. Indeed the framework should be flexible and where realistic to do so, invite diverse of residential types and tenures to meet different buyers' needs, thus helping to drive sales and the overall delivery of Slough town centre's regeneration programme.

	SITE	YEARS 0-5	YEARS 6-10	YEARS 11-15	TOTAL DWELLINGS
1	Former Horlicks Factory site	554	746		1300
2	Stoke Gardens		127		127
3	Stoke Wharf	320			320
4	Mill Street sites	27		402	429
5	Stanley Cottages			36	36
6	Petersfield Avenue			124	124
7	North West Quadrant	300	500	500	1300
10	Old Library site	64			64
11	Slough Central	119	257	624	1000
12	Tower House / Ashbourne House*	77			77
13	Chalvey Park site			36	36
14	Burlington Road car park		48		48
15	Buckingham Gateway		175		175
16	Aspire, Herschel Street	238			238
17a	Herschel Street site (15-23 Church Street)	41			41
17b	Herschel Street site (Victoria St Junction)		36		36
18	Upton Hospital		150	144	294
19	Akzo Nobel	300	500	200	1000
20	Slough Gas Works			217	217
21	18-24 Stoke Road	40			40
22	Lion House, Petersfield Avenue	155			155
23	7 Windsor Road	24			24
24	204-206 High Street	94			94
25	271-279 High Street	65			65
26	Alpha Corner	14			14
27	Alpha Street	14			14
28	Thames Central	146			146
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2592</b>	<b>2539</b>	<b>2283</b>	<b>7414</b>

\*Net additional dwellings

Figure 5.5: Indicative housing trajectory

## CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Culture will be at the heart of Slough's future. Culture is a broad definition; the activities undertaken in buildings, the building and public spaces themselves, a programme of events – or a combination of these and other facets.

In terms of physical development of culture in the town, the framework identifies initial potential locations to develop further Slough's cultural offer – The Adelphi Theatre, the Old Library and Slough Central. These will add to the offer in The Curve. The new open spaces and enhanced public realm in the centre will extend the potential opportunity for cultural activities to take place with thin Square Mile.

The approach to invigorating Slough's cultural offer will likely be dispersed across the town centre. It will draw on the Council's assets where suitable, as well as seek cultural elements in other locations where felt relevant, justified and deliverable, say because of its highly strategic location.

A Cultural Strategy will be prepared (with the foundations for this set in the emerging Cultivate:Slough proposition), and supported by business cases as appropriate. The Meanwhile Strategy too will identify and plan for smaller scale opportunities to enable and deliver an attractive, diverse cultural offer in the town. Refer to sections 4.6 and 4.7.

## INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The success of the framework lies in the delivery of both sites and associated infrastructure improvements. Together they will change the landscape of Slough town centre. In a town centre setting – and seeking to achieve a more sustainable, inclusive and healthy environment – many of these are geared toward improving pedestrian and cycleways to encourage local patronage of these modes of travel. The framework identifies a series of improvements, and a number are beyond those related to individual sites. These are indicated in Figure 5.6.

Many of these public realm and cycling enhancements do not readily relate themselves to a single site, yet their benefit will be shared by all who live in the area and use this infrastructure. While some funding for these wider initiatives will, in part, come from the public sector, where relevant, fair and necessary the expectation is that development sites too will contribute to their delivery (say by S106 / S278 agreements) and beyond the typical curtilage of the development site.

The framework provides a strategic outline of these infrastructure improvements, and further detailed design, feasibility, costing and funding workstreams will inform their final form, how and when they are delivered and paid for. These will be informed by the preparation of a public realm strategy for the town centre.

## OTHER MOVEMENT INITIATIVES

There are a number of other movement and public transport initiatives illustrated in the masterplan. These include the delivery of a Mass Rapid Transit system for the Borough which will ensure rapid and efficient public transport connectivity between key destinations in the Borough and an efficient means to access the town centre.

This reflects the Council's 2019 Transport Vision, and will be further defined and planned for in the Council's new Transport Strategy.

A balance will be struck between the need for car parking to support development and that of meeting climate change and healthy living and inclusivity objectives.

This will acknowledge that Slough town centre is very accessible – and more so with the arrival of the Elizabeth Line. The Transport Strategy will set car parking ratios for new development, reflecting different accessibility levels for areas in the town, and recognising that over the life of the framework, pedestrian, cycling and public transport improvements and initiatives will offer attractive alternative travel options, thus reducing the need for cars and associated parking over the longer term. This strategy may be complimented by new Park and Ride facilities set at the edge of the town.



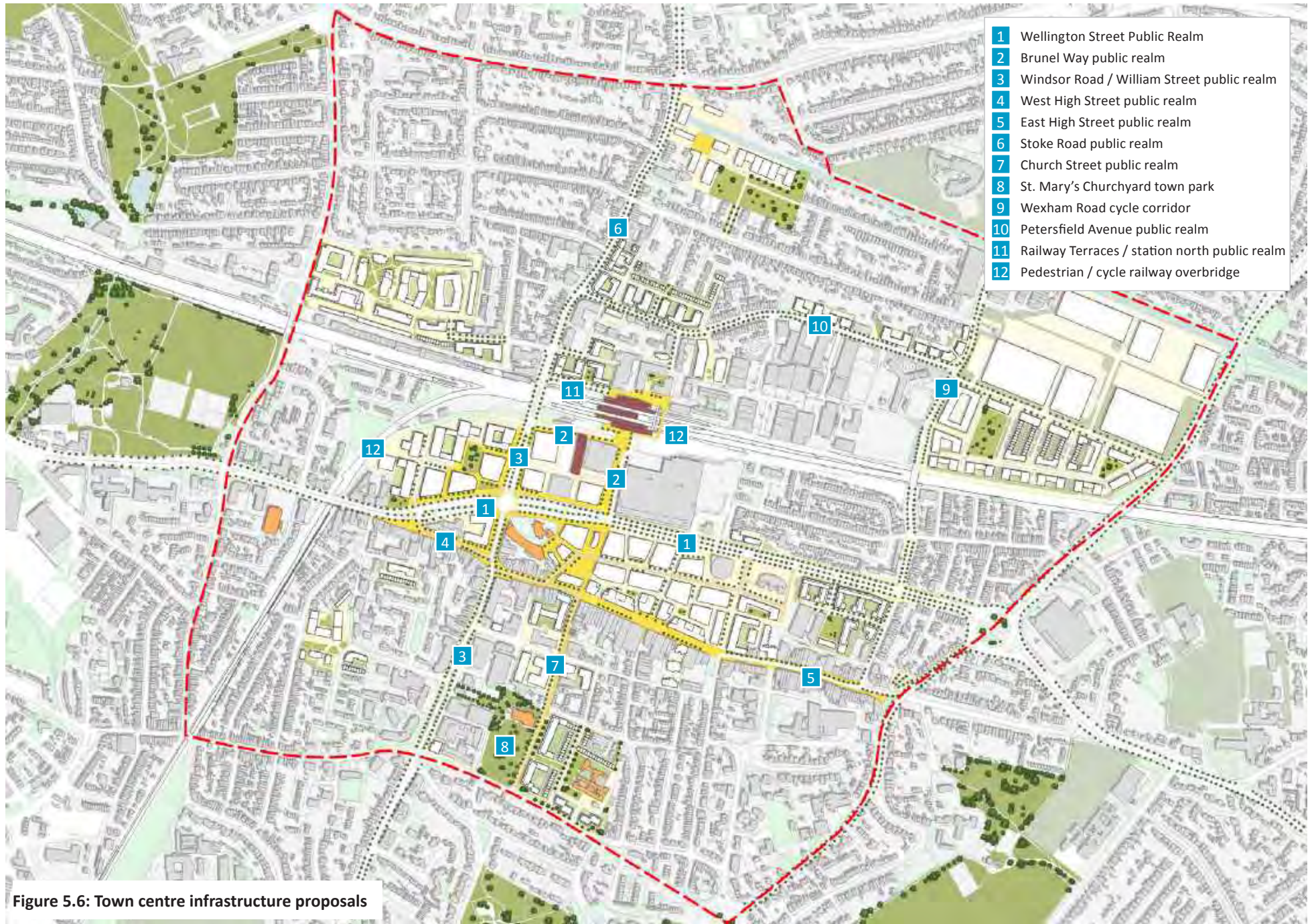


Figure 5.6: Town centre infrastructure proposals









