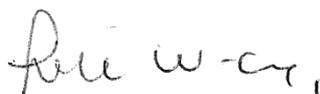


Date of issue: Wednesday, 4 November 2020

MEETING	BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY	
	Member	Authority
	Councillor Anderson	Slough Borough Council
	Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
	Councillor Clark	The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
	Councillor Jorgensen	Wokingham Borough Council
	Councillor Page (Chair)	Reading Borough Council
	Councillor Somner	West Berkshire Council
	Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Laura Fitzgerald	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Malcolm Kempton	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Bob Mountain (Vice-Chair)	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Simon Ratcliffe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
DATE AND TIME:	THURSDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 2020 AT 4.00 PM	
VENUE:	VIRTUAL MEETING	
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NICHOLAS PONTONE 07514 939 642	

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



JOSIE WRAGG
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART 1

AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

Apologies for absence.



<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
1.	Declarations of Interest		-
	<i>It is a principle of the BLTB that the interests of the Thames Valley Berkshire area will take precedence over a member's own interests or those of their nominating authority.</i>		
	<i>All members must declare, and take relevant action, if they believe they have a pecuniary or other interest on a matter to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the nominating authority or LEP.</i>		
	<i>The Chair will invite any member representing a local authority seeking financial approval for a scheme to declare that interest.</i>		
2.	Membership Update		-
	<i>To welcome new representative(s) of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to BLTB.</i>		
3.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th July 2020		1 - 12
4.	Briefing Note - TVB/BLTB 'How We Work'		13 - 14
5.	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21		15 - 26
6.	Establish a new pipeline of projects and allocation of the remaining Local Growth Funds		27 - 44
7.	Update to BLTB on One Year scheme evaluations		45 - 46
8.	Financial approval GBF1 Slough: Langley High Street Widening Phase 3		47 - 122
9.	Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre - "The Deck"		123 - 220
10.	Transport for the South East - Subscription Report Update		221 - 228
11.	Updated Assurance Framework for Berkshire Local Transport Body		229 - 242
12.	BLTB Forward Plan		243 - 244
13.	Date of Next Meeting - 11th March 2021		-

Press and Public

This meeting will be held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. Part I of this meeting will be live streamed as required by the regulations. The press and public can access the meeting from the following link (by selecting the meeting you wish to view):

<http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Please note that the meeting may be recorded. By participating in the meeting by audio and/or video you are giving consent to being recorded and acknowledge that the recording will be in the public domain.

The press and public will not be able to view any matters considered during Part II of the agenda.

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Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th July, 2020.

Present:-

Councillor Anderson	Slough Borough Council
Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Clark	RBWM
Councillor Jorgensen	Wokingham Borough Council
Councillor Page (in the chair)	Reading Borough Council
Councillor Somner	West Berkshire Council
Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Charles Eales	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Malcolm Kempton	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Bob Mountain	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Matthew Taylor	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

Also present:- Councillor Atkinson (deputy member, BFC)

Apologies for Absence:- Simon Ratcliffe

PART 1

14. Declarations of interest

Agenda item 7 (Minute 20) Financial Approval for Scheme 2.45 – as the report referenced the Western Rail Link to Heathrow, Councillor Jorgensen declared that she worked for British Airways.

Agenda item 10 (Minute 23) Financial Approval for Scheme 2.44 - Councillor Page declared that he was an elected Member of Reading Borough Council which owned Reading Buses.

Agenda item 17 (Minute 30) Proposed Letter of Support for TfSE Proposal to Government – Councillor Page declared that he was the BLTB nominated representative on TfSE and that he was the Vice-Chair of that body.

It was noted that Councillors Clark, Anderson and Jorgensen were elected members of local authorities seeking financial approval for schemes on the agenda, but they did not have disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and would participate and vote on these matters.

15. Election of Chair 2020/21

Nominations were invited for the Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year. The Founding Document stated that a Local Authority Member should chair BLTB.

Councillor Page was proposed by Councillor Brunel-Walker and seconded by Councillor Anderson.

Berkshire Local Transport Body - 15.07.20

There being no other nominations, Councillor Page was elected as Chair for the next year.

Resolved – That Councillor Page be elected as Chair of BLTB for the 2020/21 municipal year.

(Councillor Page in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting)

16. Election of Vice-Chair 2020/21

Nominations were invited for the Vice-Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year. It was confirmed that the Founding Document of the BLTB required that the Vice-Chair be from the Local Enterprise Partnership members.

Bob Mountain was proposed by Charles Eales and seconded by Matthew Taylor.

There being no other nominations, Bob Mountain was elected as Deputy Chair for the next year.

Resolved – That Bob Mountain be elected as Vice-Chair of BLTB for the 2020/21 municipal year.

17. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th March 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 4th June 2020

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) held on 12th March 2020 and the extraordinary meeting held on 4th June 2020 be approved as a correct record.

18. Briefing note – TVBLEP/BLTB “How We Work”

Members noted a briefing note that summarised the process by which Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body operated in investing in local transport schemes.

Resolved – That the BLTB ‘How We Work’ briefing note be noted.

19. Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21

A report was considered on the progress of the Thames Valley Local Growth Deals and Business Rates Retention Pilot funded schemes which had invested a total of £172m between 2015/16 and 2020/21.

The full list of schemes was set out in the appendix to the report and scheme promoters reported any recent updates over and above the information included in the report. The key additional points noted were as follows:

Berkshire Local Transport Body - 15.07.20

- 2.05 Newbury: Sandford Park – the western access was unlikely to proceed which would, if confirmed, return £900k to the pot available for allocation to other viable schemes.
- 2.30 TVB Smart City Cluster – the showcase event planned for May 2020 had had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions and it was now hoped to be rescheduled for December 2020.
- 2.35 Reading West Station Upgrade – GWR reported that funding requests to DfT had been accepted in principle.

A verbal update was also provided on the bids submitted by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP as part of various Government initiatives to promote economic growth as part of the recovery from Covid-19. A wide ranging package of schemes had been put forward for a share of the £900m Getting Building Fund of which Berkshire had been allocated £7.5m, the lowest of any LEP in England. The nature of the funding meant that it was focused on schemes that could be delivered quickly and these included skills and employment programmes.

The updates and progress reports were noted.

Resolved – That the progress made on the schemes previously given programme entry status, as set out in the composite report be noted.

20. Financial approval: Scheme 2.45 Langley High Street Widening Phase 2

A report was considered that recommended giving conditional financial approval of £1,033,000 to scheme 2.46 Slough Langley High Street Widening – Phase 2.

Phase 1 of the scheme had been given financial approval at the June 2020 BLTB meeting to enhance the High Street/Meadfield Road Junction. The new business case submission set out the case for investment in the widening of Langley High Street to both the south and north of the junction with Meadfield Road to provide a comprehensive solution to managing all traffic flows through the junction. A third phase was also proposed for future funding and the combined package of measures would deliver a step-change in provision along the Langley High Street corridor, supporting the planned closure of the parallel Hollow Hill Lane as part of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH), as well as enabling development growth across the corridor.

The scheme had a very high Benefit Cost Ratio of 10.8:1 and the Independent Assessor concluded that there was a strong strategic and economic case for the investment. Approval was recommended, subject to three conditions relating to reaching agreement with Langley Memorial Ground Trustees to acquire land; producing a revised assessment of costs; and receiving confirmation from the Council on their funding contribution and commitment to cover any cost overruns. Slough Borough Council representatives confirmed that it expected these conditions would be met and also commented that the scheme would provide opportunities to enhance public transport links in the

corridor, which included a Crossrail station, and would seek to tackle noise and air quality issues.

After due consideration it was agreed to give conditional financial approval to the scheme on the terms set out in the report.

Resolved – That scheme 2.46 Slough Langley High Widening Phase 2 be given conditional financial approval in the sum of £1,033,000 in 2020/21 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 14 step 5 of the report, subject to meeting the following conditions:

- (a) Slough Borough Council (SBC) to demonstrate positive discussions with the Langley Memorial Ground Trustees that result in an outline agreement for the acquisition of the land required to develop the scheme;
- (b) Production of a revised, and more robust, assessment of scheme costs, post-preliminary scheme design; and,
- (c) Formal confirmation (e.g. S151 Officer letter) to cover SBC funding allocation, along with confirmation that SBC will cover any potential cost overruns.

These conditions should be met at the earliest feasible date, but no later than 31st August 2020.

21. Financial Approval for 2.29 Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride - Addendum 2 Access, Turning Head and Urban Realm

A report was considered that recommended giving financial approval for £675,000 to Addendum 2, Access, Turning Head and Urban Realm Improvements to scheme 2.29 Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride.

The original scheme to redevelop the transport links at Winnersh Triangle was approved in March 2019 and a number of enhancements had since been proposed. Addendum 1 (Car Park enhancements) was approved by the BLTB in June 2020. Wokingham Borough Council, with the support of Frasers Property (the owners of the adjacent business park), were now seeking to promote an additional access and public urban realm scheme around the Winnersh Triangle station forecourt. This second addendum submission would bring the total LGF awarded for the three schemes to £4,240,444.

The scheme would allow improved access for buses, taxis and passenger drop-off by way of a new fourth arm directly off Wharfedale Road/A329(M) slip road roundabout; remove the existing right turn bus lane on Wharfedale Road; and provide an enhanced station forecourt turning head to be used by the Park and Ride buses, taxis and all passenger drop-off. The Independent Assessor had concluded that Addendum 2 could be delivered within the appropriate timescales and was a good strategic fit. The scheme had a Benefit Cost Ratio of 2.9:1 and full financial approval was recommended.

Members asked a number of questions about whether disabled access and cycling facilities could be further enhanced. Frasers Property responded by explaining the practical considerations of such measures and BLTB noted that the scheme proposed had a limited budget but it could be possible for further enhancements to be delivered in the future if additional funding could be identified.

At the conclusion of the discussion the BLTB agreed to give the scheme full financial approval on the terms set out in the report.

Resolved – That Addendum 2 Access, Turning Head and Urban Realm Improvements for scheme 2.29 Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride be given full financial approval in the sum of £675,000 Local Growth Funds in 2020/21. This was on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 of the report.

22. Financial Approval Scheme 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 (reprofiled)

A report was considered that recommended giving financial approval of £4,213,000 from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and £1,068,000 from the Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP) to scheme 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1, re-profiled.

The scheme had originally been submitted for financial approval and conditionally approved by BLTB in January 2019. Since then, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead had been required to amend its Local Plan, resulting in a reconfiguration of development site allocations. This had resulted in necessary amendments to the original scheme proposals, as well as revisions to the dependent development 'unlocked' by the scheme.

The revised scheme included capacity improvements at six key junctions around Maidenhead to provide congestion relief associated with background growth in traffic, alongside trips generated by specific residential and commercial development sites within the town centre that had been allocated within the Local Plan. The improvements to the junctions detailed in the report would include a range of measures including carriageway widening, signalisation, and junction reconfiguration, with some associated improvements to cycling provision. The Independent Assessor concluded that the case for the scheme was strong and the overall Benefit Cost Ratio was very high at 17:1. Full financial approval was recommended and agreed on the terms set out in the report.

Resolved – That scheme 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 be given re-profiled financial approval in the sum of £4,213,000 from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and £1,068,000 from the Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP) funds in 2020/21 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 12 step 5 of the report.

23. Financial approval: Scheme 2.44 Reading Buses Completing the Connection

A report was considered that recommendation giving conditional financial approval for £1,541, 243 to scheme 2.44: Reading Buses Completing the Connection.

The project aimed to provide a complete travel picture to existing and prospective public transport customers by enabling bus operators across Berkshire to securely store, manage and make available live bus time predictions to customers via the real time information (RTI) system; and to be scalable, by allowing, for example, the subsequent addition of new or upgraded screens at transport interchanges, bus stops and on-board buses.

It was anticipated to include:

- A new software platform and applications to underpin the RTI system using open data principles to calculate and disseminate to customers live departure information for multiple transport operators;
- Installation of audio-visual information screens and speakers on 51 local buses, to inform and help all passengers and specifically assist customers with aural or visual impairments;
- Installation of three large-format bus departure screens at two key railway stations, showing live departure information derived from the RTI system for multiple operators' bus and coach services; and
- Development of an online travel shop, allowing customers to purchase and receive tickets either on their mobile or in smartcard format.

The Independent Assessor concluded that there was a strong business case and the Benefit Cost Ratio was 3:1 over five years and 4:1 over ten years. The scheme had been given programme entry status in March 2020 and at this meeting Members had requested clarification on issues including State Aid compliance and access to other operators. In relation to State Aid it was confirmed that external legal advice had been sought and it was considered to be compliant.

Members were supportive of the aims of the scheme but some concerns were expressed that from the information provided it did not appear that other operators had been engaged. The scheme promoter confirmed that other operators could access the system and benefit from new information screens on buses, subject to them contributing to the running costs. Contact had been made with some other bus operators and it was highlighted that Reading Buses was the largest operator across Berkshire therefore passengers across the area would benefit from the investment.

Other questions raised included whether the online travel shop would be integrated with park and ride tickets and those of other operators. The scheme promoter confirmed that there was scope to sell other tickets in the travel shop.

Following confirmation that the scheme would provide equitable and open access to other providers and that the integrated ticketing would be available from the travel shop, BLTB agreed to give the scheme conditional financial approval on the terms set out in the report.

Resolved – That Reading Buses Completing the Connection project be given full financial approval in the sum of £1,541,243 Local Growth Funds in 2020/21. This was on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 of the report, subject to meeting the following condition:

(a) Agreement to provision of ongoing operating costs in relation to the investment to demonstrate compliance with state aid requirements. Details will be agreed with input from a solicitor with state aid expertise and added to the grant letter.

24. Financial approval: Scheme 2.40: Windsor Town Centre Package

A report was considered that recommended giving financial approval of £1,562,500 to scheme 2.40 Windsor Town Centre Package.

The proposed scheme would invest in public realm enhancements within proximity of Windsor Castle and wider, small-scale, wayfinding interventions, both of which aimed to increase visitor expenditure within the town. The public realm enhancements would be on Castle Hill and St. Alban's Street, directly outside the visitor entrance to Windsor Castle. The scheme support local businesses to improve their offer (e.g. through increased use of street cafes), as well as enhancing the look and feel of the area and improve the overall visitor experience.

The Independent Assessor had concluded that the business case was strong, although the risks would need to be carefully managed. The scheme had a Benefit Cost Ratio of 2.3:1. BLTB recognised importance of maximising the economic opportunities from tourism as part of the recovery from Covid-19. It was agreed that the scheme be given full financial approval on the terms set out in the report.

Resolved – That scheme 2.40 Windsor Town centre package be given full financial approval in the sum of £1,562,500 Local Growth Funds in 2020/21. This is on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 below.

25. 2.09.2 Slough: A4 Cycle Route NCN422 - One Year Evaluation Report

In accordance with the requirement for BTLB to consider one and five year impact reports on completed schemes, a report was presented on the one-year impact report for scheme 2.09.1 Slough: A4 Cycle Route NCN422. The Appendices to the report comprised of the scheme promoter's impact report and review by the Independent Assessor.

The A4 Cycle Route was designed to improve the basic cycling infrastructure along the given stretch, to encourage an increase in cycling levels and to improved road safety for all road users, but primarily cyclists. The funded scheme was part of a wider ambition to improve cycling provision along the route. The scheme had been delivered close to budget and some delays had been experienced.

The Independent Assessor had concluded that the one-year impact report represented a well-constructed and balanced document that met many of requirements for a one-year impact report, relating to what and how the scheme has been delivered. However, it had limitations in the quantified assessment of the outcomes and it was unclear whether any significant modal shift had resulted and whether private car trips had reduced as a result of the scheme. Whilst Members recognised that some of the benefits were hard to accurately measure and quantify it was considered to be important that impact reports collect the necessary quantitative data needed to properly evaluate the schemes. A number of learning points as set out in the report were highlighted and recognised.

BLTB agreed to note the reports of the scheme promoter and Independent Assessor.

Resolved – That the reports from the scheme promoter and the Independent Assessor be noted.

26. 2.22 Slough: Burnham Station Access - One Year Evaluation Report

A report was considered on the one-year impact evaluation of scheme 2.22 Slough: Burnham Station Access. The appendices included the reports from the scheme promoter and the Independent Assessor.

The scheme promoters reports was considered to be a “...well constructed and balanced” document that met many of the requirements for a one-year assessment. The scheme had been delivered close to budget and a positive impacts had been identified in terms of traffic management and enhanced access to the station by a variety of modes. However, there were some limitations to the assessment and the report stated that there was a requirement to carry out traffic counts and journey time surveys, car parking usage counts, cycle parking/docking station usage, satisfaction surveys and reported crime levels to be able to more fully evaluate the scheme against its original objectives. A learning point was noted that in future there be closer alignment to monitoring and evaluation plan that were set out in the full business case to ensure the metrics were in place to quantify the evidence of the impacts of schemes.

It was agreed that the reports be noted.

Resolved – That the reports from the scheme promoter and the Independent Assessor be noted.

27. Requested scheme updates following June BLTB meeting

As had been agreed by BLTB at the meeting held on 4th June 2020, a report was received that updated on three projects approved:

- 2.24 Newbury railway station upgrade;
- 2.38 Theale railway station upgrade and
- 2.13 Thames Valley Park and Ride/ Wokingham Borough Council Bus Service Tender.

Members noted the progress that had been made in meeting the conditions attached to the approval of each scheme and asked a number of questions. It was noted that the GWR bid to DfT for funding for Newbury station had now been approved and that was welcomed by BLTB. A draft of the demand analysis study for the business start up units had been considered by the scheme promoters and it was expected the findings would be provided to TVB LEP by the beginning of August. The updates were noted.

Resolved – That the following update reports from the scheme promoters be noted.

28. Thames Valley Berkshire - Call for bids announce July 2020

A report was considered that set out the requirements to create a new call for bids in order to meet anticipated additional funding being made available for Berkshire. The amount, and source, of funding was yet to be confirmed, but it was considered important to ensure a strong pipeline of schemes was in place to be ready for future funding opportunities.

The report detailed arrangements for assessing and prioritising potential projects based upon the changes to the Prioritisation Methodology approved in July 2019 and proposed an update to the existing methodology in light of the current Covid-19 green recovery agenda by increasing the weighting of “investing in natural capital” from 10% to 15%. The proposed timetable was stated in paragraph 17 of the report and the aim was for BLTB to approve a new prioritised list of scheme as the next meeting in November 2020.

Members commented that the prioritisation methodology had served BLTB well since it was first agreed and the process was considered to be robust. The increased weighting to support the green recovery agenda was welcomed and agreed. The new call for bids as set out in the appendices to the report was approved.

Resolved – That a new call for bids be approved as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report and as per the updated LGF prioritisation methodology.

29. Update to the BLTB re Business Rate Retention Pilot monies - Revenue Support

The BLTB received an update on the latest Business Rate Retention Pilot (BRRP) Revenue Support monies allocated to be spent on infrastructure project development within the six Berkshire local authorities.

Each authority had been allocated £100,000 and 56% of the funds provided had been spent as at June 2020. A summary of the activity in each area was detailed in the report. There was ongoing discussions with local authority officers and a commitment to spend the funding committed. The report was noted.

Resolved –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That Transport officers supply regular updates to the LEP with latest spend levels and developments on projects.

30. Proposed BLTB letter of support for TfSE Proposal to Government

A report was considered that sought approval to send a letter support for Transport for the South East's (TfSE) proposal to government for statutory status, both in terms of the strategic and economic case and the specific powers and functions TfSE has requested.

All six of the Berkshire Local Authorities, as constituent authorities, had already signed and submitted letters of consent regarding the proposal to government to TfSE, a letter of support from the Berkshire Local Transport Body would further endorse Berkshire's support for the vision and objectives of the emerging sub-national transport body. Subject to the consent of all constituent authorities, the TfSE Shadow Partnership Board was expected to submit it's final proposal to Government in September 2020 along with the final version of the transport strategy.

BLTB agreed to submit the letter as at Appendix A to the report.

Resolved – That the letter of support for Transport for the South East (TfSE) and their Proposal to government be endorsed.

31. BLTB Forward Plan 2020/21

The BLTB Forward Plan which set out the matters to be considered at future meetings was considered and noted.

Resolved – That the BLTB Forward Plan be noted.

32. Date of next meeting: Thursday 12th November 2020, 4pm

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as Thursday 12th November 2020 at 4pm.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 6.02 pm)

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Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) and the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) – investing in strategic infrastructure

This briefing note is intended to set out the way TVB LEP works with BLTB to invest Local Growth Funds in transport schemes.

1. TVB LEP is a business-led organisation responsible for determining the key funding priorities to which Local Growth Funds (LGF) and other public resources are directed in order to implement a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and meet its commitments in the TVB Growth Deals. As a company limited by guarantee (registered at Companies House No. 07885051) it operates according to its Articles of Association, which comply with the Companies Act 2006. As a publicly-funded body it behaves in accordance with an Assurance Framework, which determines the practices and standards necessary to provide assurance to government and local partners that decisions over (all government) funding are proper, transparent and deliver value for money. [**LEP Assurance Framework (AF 4.0) March 2019**]
2. BLTB consists of six elected members (usually the lead member for transport or related portfolio), and six private sector representatives recruited and appointed by the LEP. [**AF 4.0 para 4.2.3**]. It is a Joint Committee of the six unitary authorities in Berkshire and its constitution is set out in its [Founding Document](#).
3. TVB LEP recognises BLTB as “the BLTB has been designated as the competent body to prioritise, invest in and oversee transport capital schemes on behalf of the LEP. DfT retains responsibility for the approval process of schemes in excess of £20m LGF. The LEP will accept any BLTB recommendation or refer them back but will not substitute its own recommendations.” [**AF 4.0, para 5.9**]
4. The process established by government for making Growth Deals is to invite LEPs to submit competitive proposals, and after due consideration to make awards based on all or part of a LEP bid. To date TVB LEP has agreed three Growth Deals. Each of these has included, among other things, the award of capital funds for individual transport schemes that were prioritised in the TVB LEP bid and named in the Growth Deal settlement.
5. TVB LEP works with its partners to identify and prioritise suitable schemes. It is a lobbying organisation, and, via Growth Deals, a joint-funder of selected schemes promoted by (usually, but not always) a local transport authority. [**BLTB Founding Document (FD) 11-13**]
6. BLTB requires promoters to develop each scheme in accordance with current WebTAG guidance published by DfT. In order to receive financial approval from BLTB, the Full Business Case must be subject to independent assessment and a positive recommendation about value for money. [**BLTB FD 14-16**]
7. The scheme promoter is responsible for all aspects of the design, risk management, insurance, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including their responsibilities as highway and planning authorities, any other statutory duties, and any financial or other liabilities arising from the scheme. [**BLTB FD 18**]
8. The time taken between an initial government call for bids and the final announcement of a new Growth Deal can be in excess of a year. TVB LEP (together with BLTB for transport schemes) must go through a number of steps to respond to a government call for bids. Similarly, a transport scheme promoter also must go through several steps:



- LEP receives a call from government or Growth Deal proposals
- LEP asks BLTB to issue a call for transport capital schemes, which meet the Growth Deal criteria
- BLTB consults on and publishes prioritisation methodology for assessing schemes
- Local Transport authorities and other promoters propose schemes for inclusion
- BLTB applies the prioritisation methodology and recommends a priority order of schemes for inclusion in the overall LEP Growth Deal bid
- LEP submits Growth Deal bid including transport schemes
- Government announces Growth Deal approvals (if any) including named schemes and provisional financial allocation
- BLTB awards schemes named in the new Growth Deal “programme entry” status. This reserves the provisional financial allocation for each named scheme until the scheme promoter comes forward with a Full Business Case (FBC), which demonstrates at least “good value for money”
- The scheme promoter works up the detail of the scheme, including planning permission and any other regulatory approvals, design, costs, environmental and other impact assessments. The scheme FBC is then subject to independent scrutiny and a report is made to BLTB

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020**CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB****PART I****Item 5: Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21*****Purpose of Report***

1. To report on the progress of the [Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Dealⁱ](#), as amended by Growth Deal 2 ([£10.2 million further support to Thames Valley Berkshireⁱⁱ](#)) and Growth Deal 3 ([Factsheet GD3ⁱⁱⁱ](#)) with particular reference to the schemes included in the Transport Packages of the [Strategic Economic Plan^{iv}](#); and on the progress of schemes funded by the Business Rates Retention Pilots (BRRP) of 2018/19 and 2019/20. This report also reports on the transport element of the [Getting Building Fund](#) (GBF) released in September 2020.
2. The headline figure for transport scheme grants under the three Local Growth Deals is £135.926m. This includes £24m of “DfT retained” allocation relating to the Wokingham Distributor Roads. This report provides progress reports on all programme entry schemes and the TVB Smart City Cluster scheme. A further £25m has been released through BRRP1 2018/19 and £11m from BRRP2 2019/20. Thames Valley Berkshire has received £7.5m through the GBF, of which £1,643,000 has been allocated to a transport project.
3. £14.742m LGF was spent on transport schemes in 2015/16, £16.546m in 2016/17, £15.055m in 2017/18, £8.810m in 2018/19 and £12.441m 2019/20. In addition, £21.487m was spent from BRRP.

Recommendations

4. That you note the progress made on the schemes previously given programme entry status, as set out in the accompanying composite report.

Other Implications***Risk Management***

5. The delegation of programme management responsibilities to the LEP/BLTB brings risks. The well-established scrutiny given by both BST(O)F and BLTB meetings is designed to mitigate that risk.
6. There will be an element of risk for scheme promoters who invest in developing their schemes to full business case stage in accordance with the approved [Assurance Framework^v](#). However, there is also risk involved in not developing the schemes; that risk is that any reluctance to bring the schemes forward will result in any final approval being delayed or refused.
7. The risks associated with each scheme are monitored locally. Table 4 has been adapted to show the current risk rating of each of the schemes. Completed schemes are shown in blue.

Financial

8. Thames Valley Berkshire LEP has been granted freedoms and flexibilities in managing the Local Growth Deal Capital Programme. This means that we will receive an annual allocation of capital within which it will be our responsibility to manage the award of LGF to individual schemes. This is a positive development for TVB LEP and recognises the confidence that government has in our governance arrangements.

Table 1: Available Finance for Transport Schemes in TVB Local Growth Deal, BRRP and GBF

£m	2015/16 – 2020/21
LTB previously approved	14.5
Growth Deal 1	56.1
Growth Deal 1 “DfT Major Schemes”	24.0
Growth Deal 2	7.5
Growth Deal 3	33.8
Local Growth Deal Total	135.9
BRRP 2018/19 and 2019/20	36.0
Getting Building Fund 2020/21 and 2021/22	1.6
Grand Total	173.5

9. The profile and status of the available money in each year is as follows:

Table 2: Local Growth Deal, BRRP and GBF Financial Allocations for Transport Schemes by Financial Year

£m	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Combined Growth Deal 1, 2, 3 and LTB Allocation approved	14.7	16.5	15.1	8.8	12.4	-	-	67.6
Growth Deal 1 (DfT Major Schemes) <i>indicative</i>	-	-	-	0.9	22.1	1.0	-	24.0
Combined Growth Deal 1, 2 and 3 LTB Allocation <i>indicative profile</i>	-	-	-	-	-	44.3	-	44.3
Local Growth Deal Total	14.7	16.5	15.1	9.7	34.5	45.3	-	135.9
BRRP	-	-	-	11.5	10.0	14.5	-	36.0
Getting Building Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.6	1.6
Grand Total	14.7	16.5	15.1	21.2	44.5	59.8	1.6	173.5

10. The breakdown of types of projects with allocated LGF, BRRP and GBF monies is shown below:

Table 3: Breakdown of schemes by type by funding allocated

£m	LGF	BRRP	GBF	Total
MRT / P&R projects	23.5	21.1	-	44.6
Railway projects	30.7	-	-	30.7
Highway improvements	24.6	-	1.6	26.2
Unlocking direct housing	21.6	12.3	-	33.9
Other	10.5	2.6	-	13.1
DfT retained	24.0	-	-	24.0
Unallocated funds	0.1	-	n/a	1.0
Total funding	135.97	36.0	1.6	173.5

11. Table 4 has been amended to present all project data previously shown across several tables. It shows the final award of scheme finance for 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 the provisional allocation for 2020/21, which is subject to alteration following the government's confirmation of the Local Growth Deal funding profile. It also shows Red Amber Green (RAG) risk rating and completed projects in blue, the data that LTB approval was granted or sought and any notes including when future evaluations are due.

ⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/327587/35_Thames_Valley_Berkshire_Growth_Deal.pdf

ⁱⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399438/Thames_Valley_Berkshire_Factsheet.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/589268/170202_Thames_Valley_Berkshire_LEP_GD_factsheet.pdf

^{iv}<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/documents?page=1&folder=192&view=files>

^v<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

Table 4 – Local Growth Deal and BRRP Scheme Funding Profiles

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
LOCAL GROWTH FUND														
2.01	Newbury: Kings Road Link Road	GD 1	G		Mar-15	Oct-16	Due Jan 21	0.000	1.335	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.335
2.02	Bracknell: Warfield Link Road	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 20	Jan-15	Feb-15	Apr 17; open Oct 18	3.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.500
2.03	Newbury: London Road Industrial Estate	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 18. Delays to linked housing	Mar-15	Feb-16	Apr-17	0.500	1.400	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.900
2.04.4	Wokingham: Arborfield Cross Relief Road	DfT major	G	DfT "Large Scheme"	Jul 19 & Aug 19 via DfT	Aug-19	Due Nov 20	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.874	22.126	1.000	24.000
2.05	Newbury: Sandford Park	GD 2	AG	Completion beyond March 21. Western access funds returned	Jul-16	Aug-18	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
2.06	Reading: Green Park Railway Station	GD 1	AG	Additional LGF & NSF awarded. Open to public Aug 21	Nov 14 & July 19	Mar-18	Due May 21	0.000	0.000	4.575	0.000	4.575	0.550	9.700
2.07	Bracknell: Coral Reef Roundabout	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Nov 17	Jan-15	Apr-15	Apr-16	2.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.100
2.08	Slough: Rapid Transit Ph 1	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 20	Jul-14	Dec-15	Dec 17; buses Mar 19	3.100	2.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.600
2.09.1	Sustainable Transport: NCN 422	GD 1	AG	Nearing completion	Nov-15	Jan-17	Due Nov 20	0.000	2.100	1.500	0.200	0.400	0.000	4.200
2.09.2	Sustainable Transport: A4 Cycle	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 20	Nov-15	Feb-17	Sep-18	0.000	0.483	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.483

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
	(w/ Bucks)													
2.10	Slough: A332 Improvements	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 21	Nov-14	Dec-15	Sep-19	1.267	1.433	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.700
2.11	Reading: South Reading MRT phase 1	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 21	Nov-15	Sep-16	Jul-19	0.000	2.970	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.970
2.12	Reading: South Reading MRT phase 2							0.000	0.000	1.530	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.530
2.13	Wokingham: Thames Valley Park and Ride	GD 1	AG	Completion delayed. Bus service tender is on hold.	Jul-17	Feb-18	Due Nov 20	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.900	0.000	2.900
2.14	East Reading MRT Phase 1	GD 1	Project withdrawn											
2.25	East Reading MRT Phase 2	GD 3												
2.15	Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 21	Jan-17	Mar-17	Apr-19	0.000	0.200	2.700	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.900
2.16	Maidenhead: Station Access	GD 1	A	Highways work completed. Delay to forecourt work	Nov-17	Jan-19	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.690	1.666	1.394	3.750
2.17	Slough: A355 route	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 18	Nov-14	Dec-15	Feb-17	2.275	2.125	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.400
2.18	Not used													
2.19	Bracknell: Town Centre Regeneration Infrastructure	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 19	Nov-15	Apr-15	Sep-17	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
2.20	Not used													
2.21	Slough: Langley Station Access	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 21	Nov-16	Mar-18	Feb-20	0.000	0.000	1.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.500
2.22	Slough: Burnham Station Access	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 20	Mar-16	Jan-17	Apr-19	0.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.23	Reading: South Reading MRT Ph 3-4	GD 3	AG	Delays to final section due to covid-19. See BRRP below.	Nov-17	Mar-18	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	2.250	0.090	0.000	0.000	2.340
2.24	Newbury: Railway Station	GD 3	AG	Conditional approval for additional LGF June 20	Conditional Jul 18, lifted Feb 19	Jan-19	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.630	0.000	3.061	6.691
2.25	East Reading MRT Phase 2 - See 2.14 above													
2.26	Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2 - See BRRP below													
2.27	Maidenhead Town Centre: Missing Links	GD 3	AG	Awaiting start on site	Conditional Nov 18, lifted Sep 19	Due Nov 20	Due Apr 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.242	2.242
2.28	Bracknell: A3095 Corridor	GD 3	AG	Work ahead of schedule but completion beyond March 21	Jul-18	Oct 18 enabling	Due Sep 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.200	1.800	3.519	5.519
2.29	Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride (was Parkway)	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site. Car park enhancements & urban realm work approved	Conditional Mar 19, lifted May 19	Due Nov 20	Due Sep 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.240	4.240
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster – See below													
2.31	Slough: Stoke Road Area Regeneration	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Completing beyond March 21	Jul-19	Aug 19 enabling	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	6.650	7.650
2.32	Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Work Ph. 1	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site. See BRRP below	Conditional Jan 19, lifted Jul 20	Due Nov 20	Due Apr 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.213	4.213
2.33	GWR: Maidenhead to Marlow Branch Line Upgrade	GD 3 reserv.	Project withdrawn											
2.34	Slough MRT Phase 2 – see BRRP below													

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.35	Reading: Reading West Station Upgrade	GD 3 reserv.	AR	Delayed start on site. Completing beyond March 21	Nov-19	Due Jan 21	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.100	3.100
2.36	Wokingham: Coppid Beech Park and Ride	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site. Completing beyond March 21	Mar-20	Due Nov 20	Due Oct 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.400	2.400
2.37	Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site	Nov-19	Due Jan 21	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.400
2.38	Theale Station Upgrade	GD 3 reserv.	AR	Start possibly delayed until March 21	Conditional June 20	Due Dec 20	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.000	4.000
2.39	Wokingham: Coppid Beech nrthbound on-slip widening	GD 3 reserv.	Project withdrawn											
2.40	Windsor: Town Centre Package	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site	June-20	Due Mar 21	Due Apr 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.563	1.563
2.41	Not used													
2.42	South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway – see BRRP below													
2.43	Wokingham: Barkham Bridge	GD 3 reserv.	G		Nov-19	Nov-19	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.100	2.136	4.236
2.44	Reading Buses: Completing the Connection	GD 3 reserv.	A	Conditional approval Jul 20	Due Jul 20	Due Nov 20	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.541	1.541
2.45	Slough Langley High Street phase 1	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site	Conditional June 20, lifted Oct 20	Due Dec 20	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.324	1.324
2.46	Slough Langley High Street phase 2	GD 3 reserv.	AG	Awaiting start on site	Due July 20, lifted Oct 20	Due Dec 20	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.033	1.033
N/a	Independent assessment costs	GD 3 reserv.	N/a					0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.045	0.045
					Predicted Spend			14.742	16.546	15.055	9.684	34.567	44.11	135.05

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Unallocated Funds														0.956
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster	LGF	A	Part funding moved to BRRP; challenge fund delays	Nov 17 by LEP Board	Jan-18	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.255	0.802	0.300	1.440
BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT														
Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Capital Projects														
2.23	Reading: South Reading MRT Ph 3-4	BRRP	AG	Delay to final section due to covid. See 2.23 LGF above	Nov-17	Mar-18	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.808	0.000	0.000	7.808
2.26	Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2	BRRP	G	Phase 1 privately funded Moved from LGF.	Conditional Nov 18, lifted Feb 19	Jan-19	Due Jan 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.000	3.260	0.000	6.260
2.32	Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Work Ph. 1	BRRP	AG	Awaiting start on site. See LGF above	Conditional Jan 19	Due Nov 20	Due Apr 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.068	1.068
2.34	Slough MRT Phase 2	BRRP	A	Project facing delays due to Covid	Jan-19	Aug-19	Due Apr 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	12.300	13.300
2.42	South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway	BRRP	A	On site but significant delays	Nov-19	Oct-19	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.000	0.000	5.000
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster	BRRP	A	Additional BRRP awarded	Mar-20	Jan-18	Due Mar 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.293	0.284	0.577
N/a	Superfast Berkshire	BRRP	A	Moved from LGF (digital)		Jul-15	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.436	0.111	0.547
Capital Projects Funds Total										0.000	10.808	9.989	13.763	34.560
Revenue Projects														
N/a	BLIS development	BRRP	N/a	Work completed				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.046	0.000	0.090

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
N/a	Business Case Preparation	BRRP	N/a	6 proposals approved				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.600	0.000	0.000	0.600
N/a	Forward Plans Team	BRRP	N/a	Proposals being developed	Mar-20	Oct-20	Mar-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.750	0.000	0.750
Revenue Projects Funds Total								0.000	0.000	0.000	0.644	0.796	0.000	1.440
Predicted BRRP Spend								0.000	0.000	0.000	11.452	10.785	13.763	36.000
Unallocated BRRP														0.000
GETTING BUILDING FUND														
GBF1	Slough Langley High Street phase 3	BGF	A		Due Nov 20	Due Feb 21	Due Nov 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.643	1.643

12. In addition to these capital schemes, there is a further Local Growth Deal funded project called 2.30 TVB Smart City Cluster. The project delivers three key deliverables:
- a. Smart city platform: consisting of an Internet of Things (IoT) communication platform across Reading, Wokingham, West Berkshire and Bracknell and a cross-authority open data platform. This is enabling infrastructure for the delivery of a wide range of IoT technologies including traffic signal communications which will provide the revenue savings to maintain and operate the system.
 - b. Challenge funded IoT solutions: grant funded IoT solutions to real Local Authority challenges which will utilise the platform. These grants will be awarded through competition and will be on the basis of co-funding.
 - c. Cross authority / cross sector smart city group: This includes a Steering Group to oversee the project delivery and act as a catalyst for wider smart city debate, project development and funding.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

13. The [Assurance Framework](#)^{vi} referred to above identifies the steps that scheme promoters should take in order to secure financial approval from the LTB. There are, in effect, two layers of scheme approval. The first, and primary layer rests with the scheme promoter (all the schemes referred to in this report are being promoted by Local Authorities). In order to implement the schemes in question, each promoter will need to satisfy themselves that all the legal implications have been considered and appropriately resolved. The secondary layer of approval, given by the LTB, is concerned with the release of funds against the detailed business case. The arrangements for publication of plans via the LEP and promoters' websites, the arrangements for independent assessment and the consideration of detailed scheme reports are appropriate steps to ensure that any significant Human Rights Act or other legal implications are properly identified and considered.

Supporting Information

14. The Thames Valley Berkshire LEP website has published summary information about all its Growth Deal-funded projects, including all transport projects. Please go to Thames Valley Berkshire [Local Growth Fund](#)^{vii} and [Business Rates Retention Pilot](#)^{viii} e-Books.
15. There is a detailed progress report on each of the schemes in the accompanying composite report.

Monitoring and Evaluation

16. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Deal has now been agreed with government. In addition to the need for transport scheme promoters to collect and publish monitoring and evaluation reports that comply with DfT guidance for capital schemes, there will be requirements to cooperate with the overall monitoring and evaluation plan for the Growth Deal.

17. The difference between the two processes is that one concentrates on the transport impacts and the other on the economic impacts. The basic information required from each scheme promoter is set out in the scheme proformas. This requirement is less onerous for schemes under £5m Growth Deal contribution and runs to much more detail for the larger schemes.
18. For most schemes there will be little or no additional Growth Deal monitoring burden beyond that already signalled. Extra effort may be required to comply with the standard set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation plan which is “accurate, timely, verified and quality assured monitoring data”. For schemes mentioned by name in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (see list below) there will be a separate discussion about the duties on the scheme promoter:

2.01 Newbury: King’s Road Link Road

2.04 Wokingham: Distributor Roads Programme

2.06 Reading: Green Park Railway Station

2.08 Slough: Rapid Transit Phase 1

Background Papers

Each of the schemes referred to above has a proforma summarising its details. Both the LEP and LTB prioritisation processes and scoring schemes are also available background papers. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for TVB Growth Deal is also available.

^{vi} <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

^{vii} <https://spark.adobe.com/page/IUILL858NStY0/>

^{viii} <https://spark.adobe.com/page/6LOjEtuDgacVm/>

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB

Item 6: Establish a new pipeline of projects and allocation of the remaining Local Growth Funds

Purpose of Report

1. To present the prioritised list of sixteen bids received in response to the July 2020 call for bids.
2. To recommend a pipeline of future schemes that can be mobilised quickly should any additional LEP funding become available.
3. To give programme entry status to Bracknell Town Centre - “The Deck”, a town centre regeneration project.

Recommendation

You are recommended to:

4. Approve the prioritisation scores of the sixteen bids received as set out in Table 1 and creation of a new pipeline.
5. Give programme entry status to Bracknell: “The Deck” town centre regeneration project within the Local Growth Fund programme.

Other Implications

Financial

6. The risks associated with large scale infrastructure investments are well known, and the BLTB has established risk management arrangements for the Local Growth Fund transport capital programme (£135.9m over six years), referred to as the BLTB Assurance Framework.
7. As part of the Local Growth Fund oversight a new BLTB Assurance Framework (Third Revision) was approved by the BLTB in July 2019, item 11.
8. Compliance with the Assurance Framework and the updated prioritisation methodology is specifically designed to address the risks inherent with planning and managing a major capital programme of investment. The objectives are to identify, prioritise and support individual capital schemes which will:
9. Support economic development in general and the LEP’s strategy in particular
 - a) Represent good or better value for money
 - b) Be delivered on time and to budget
 - c) Follow appropriate procurement procedures.
10. Promoters of infrastructure projects seeking funding will need to follow the Assurance Framework and updated prioritisation methodology for any additional funding. This means that

the pipeline of schemes will be prioritised having met the eligibility criteria, according to the evaluation process, moving to Programme Entry Status acceptance, followed by submission and independent assessment of a WebTAG compliant Full Business Case before being considered for financial approval.

11. It is a requirement of government that all LGF monies must be transferred to delivery partners by March 2021. In order to do so schemes must have made a “significant” start by this date.
12. Local Growth Funds are administered and controlled by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, the LEP’s Accountable Body.

Risk Management

13. The risk management arrangements already put in place by the Local Transport Body are as follows:
 - a) The [Assurance Framework](#) has been drafted following DfT guidance and has been approved by the DfT for use in allocating capital funds for transport schemes.
 - b) Hatch Regeneris have been appointed to act as Independent Assessors for all LEP-funded schemes.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

14. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise.

Supporting Information

15. The call for bids was approved at your meeting on [15 July 2020](#) (item 28), and the prioritisation methodology is set out at Appendix 2 below.
16. The table below sets out the details of the bids received. The full pro-forma submissions of the 16 registered bids are available via the hyperlinks in the table below. Hatch Regeneris, the Independent Assessor has also been involved in this process and has endorsed our approach.

Prioritisation of future projects

17. Table 1 shows the results of the prioritisation scoring, using the prioritisation methodology outlined within appendix 1.

Table 1 New Schemes Pipeline November 2020

Short Title	Short description	SEP	Deliverable	Economic Impact	TVB area	Nat Cap	Total Weighted score	Rank	Funds Requested
TVB Smart City Cluster Scaling Digital Transport	Deploy technology to deliver travel capacity for business growth across Berkshire whilst meeting challenges of climate change & poor air quality	3	6	8	2	3	23	1	3,000,000
South Reading MRT phase 5 and 6	Dedicated bus priority on A33 corridor, linking Reading town centre to Green Park, Mere oak P&R & in the longer-term proposed Grazeley Garden Settlement & UoR Four Valleys developments	3	4	8	2	3	21	2	10,000,000
Ascot Town Centre	Public realm scheme to provide a vibrant, active high street, unlock potential for emerging development & provide infrastructure for active & sustainable travel	3	4	8	2	3	21	2	5,500,000
A322 Smart Corridor	This scheme aims to bring further enhancements to the strategic route A322/A329 between the M3 & M4 using intelligent transport systems allowing us to link junctions to provide better traffic control not just in Bracknell but with the junctions managed by Wokingham BC & Surrey County Council	3	6	4	3	3	19.5	4	2,200,000
Waterloo Road-Old Wokingham Road Access	Providing additional road capacity at the junction of Peacock Lane / Old Wokingham Road / Waterloo Road & introduces a new pedestrian / cycle route from Wokingham Borough Council's Eastern Gateway Development to the existing pedestrian cycle network at Jennett's Park in Bracknell	2	4	8	1	3	19	5	2,500,000
Enhancing the Connection	Replaces obsolete/ unreliable 20-year-old existing Real Time Information (RTI) displays; through display of information for multiple operators' services, will support the strategic objective of encouraging sustainable transport choices, tallying with objectives in the Berkshire LAs Local Transport Plans, & with the national aim to reduce overall carbon emissions	3	4	4	3	3	18	6	2,500,000
A4 Windmill Way to TVU	Creation of enhanced areas of public realm along the A4/ Bath Road, with promotion of active travel & public transport via road space reallocation	2	2	8	2	3	18	6	6,000,000
Brunel Way Public Realm	A4 / Brunel Way / William Street public realm to support the Shopping Centre redevelopment & new Central Business	1	2	8	2	3	17	8	19,500,000

Short Title	Short description	SEP	Deliverable	Economic Impact	TVB area	Nat Cap	Total Weighted score	Rank	Funds Requested
	District & enhance accessibility to the transport interchange								
Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan	Application focuses on providing cycling, & walking (Core Walking Zone) along some key links providing connectivity to Wokingham town centre	3	4	4	1	3	16	9	3,165,000
Amen Corner South Spine Road	As part of a new development to the south of London Road, Bracknell, there is a requirement for the provision of a new spine road linking London Rd & Cain Rd to access the development	2	2	8	1	1.5	15	10	2,500,000
Tilehurst Station Upgrade	Tilehurst station is constrained, with poor quality facilities, not conducive to encouraging rail usage. The growth potential is for Tilehurst as a feeder station to larger service centres in the Thames Valley & beyond to London or the West. Scheme will deliver an improvement in the quality of the station area, attracting new users/& open up new journey opportunities. An expansion of car parking & cycle parking facilities will give potential customers greater certainty of finding a place to park & attract more customers to use the station	2	4	4	1	3	15	10	6,500,000
Northern Loop FTR Grazeley	Wokingham BC is lead authority in designing a self-contained Garden Settlement at Grazeley in partnership with West Berkshire and Reading Borough Councils	3	2	4	1	3	14	12	10,800,000
Green Park Access Grazeley	The scheme provides roads north towards Green Park which will be used by high frequency public transport services connecting to Green Park Railway Station. This would unlock 1,000 – 2,000 dwellings via the provision of public transport capacity, and the resulting highway network capacity	2	2	4	1	3	13	13	1,360,000
M4 Transport Bridge Grazeley	Wokingham BC is lead authority in designing a self-contained Garden Settlement at Grazeley in partnership with West Berkshire District and Reading Borough Councils	2	2	4	1	3	13	13	12,800,000
M4 J10	M4 Junction 10 layout changes, altering the filter lanes to/from the M4 to/from the A329(M) in response to congestion & safety concerns	2	2	4	1	3	12.5	15	4,800,000
Slough Canal Horizon	A project embedded with unique solutions for current & future requirements. Encompassing green foundations, digital	1	2	4	1	3	11.5	16	5,076,240

Short Title	Short description	SEP	Deliverable	Economic Impact	TVB area	Nat Cap	Total Weighted score	Rank	Funds Requested
	innovation, enterprise stimulus & clear vision for contributing to TVB								

18. Of the sixteen bids received, four were projects that had previously been submitted as part of the [Getting Building Fund](#) call in June 2020 but were not funded.

Allocation of remaining Local Growth Funds and Programme Entry Status

19. £955,882 of LGF remains available for allocation to schemes, following the reduction in scope of 2.05 Newbury: Sandleford Park, returning £900,000 of LGF for reallocation.
20. The LEP is currently in the sixth and final year of the LGF, with all money to be expended by March 2021. As the existing BLTB pipeline of projects has recently been exhausted, and with a requirement to spend by March 2021, the LEP Board recommends to the BLTB that schemes from the recent Getting Building Fund (GBF) pipeline are considered for funding. However, key for any scheme wanting to utilise LGF funding will be the ability to obtain an approved business case and for work to have substantially started by March 2021.
21. The process for identifying projects for the GBF created a pipeline of 27 projects, of which 6 have been funded. Of the remaining projects on the prioritised pipeline, only “The Deck” scheme for Bracknell Town Centre regeneration will be able to be fully underway by Q1 2021.
22. You are recommended to issue Programme Entry Status, utilising the remaining £955,882 of unallocated LGF to Bracknell Town Centre - “The Deck” project.

Background Papers

23. The prioritisation methodology is attached at Appendix 1

APPENDIX 1 – PRIORITISATION METHODOLOGY

1. The following methodology is substantially the same as that used in Growth Deal 1, 2, 3 (2016), 3 (2018), 3 (2020), BRRP1 and BRRP2 bidding rounds.
2. First bids are checked for compliance with the overall eligibility criteria for the funding round. Schemes with missing, incomplete, inadequate or late pro-forma information may not be considered. All schemes declared eligible are then scored and allocated a priority ranking on the long list, or pipeline, of schemes. All qualifying schemes are scored and placed in order in the pipeline.
3. As and when funds become available, schemes are proposed for programme entry status following the “cab-rank” principle. Before being granted programme entry status, each scheme is assessed against its place in the prioritised list, available funds and its readiness to proceed to financial approval.
4. On each factor, a scheme will be awarded high (3 marks), medium (2 marks) or low (1 mark), see appendix 3 for the details of how marks are allocated. On each factor, each scheme is bound to score at least one mark, and will be given the highest mark that is supported by the information in the pro-forma. So, if a scheme submission matches both the examples for a medium and a high judgement, it will be judged high.
5. These raw scores are then weighted to reflect the relative importance of the six factors as follows:

Factor	Weighting
Infrastructure Projects will contribute to the delivery of the Thames Valley Berkshire SEP*	10%
Deliverability	20%
Sustainable long-term green economic growth	40%
Tangible benefit to the sub-region	10%
Investing in natural capital	15%
Maximising social value	5%
Total	100%

*The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) will be augmented with the Berkshire Local Industrial & Recovery Strategy (BLIRS) in due course

6. The calculation will be performed according to the following table:

Factor	Raw Scores			Weighting	Weighted scores		
	High	Med	Low		High	Med	Low
Contribute to the implementation of the Thames Valley Berkshire SEP	3	2	1	x 1.5	4.5	3.0	1.5
Deliverability	3	2	1	x 2.0	6.0	4.0	2.0
Sustainable long-term green economic growth	3	2	1	x 4.0	12.0	8.0	4.0
Tangible benefit to the sub-region	3	2	1	x 1.5	4.5	3.0	1.5
Investing in natural capital	3	2	1	x 0.5	1.5	1.0	0.5
Maximising social value	3	2	1	x 0.5	1.5	1.0	0.5
Total				Max =	30.0	Min=	10.0

7. The range of possible scores will be 30 (all high scores) - 10 (all low scores). A ranking putting all the submitted schemes in order will be produced.
8. The schemes are first scored by staff from the LEP, and the independent assessor, and then moderated with the scheme promoter. Once all the scores are moderated and agreed, the draft prioritised list is published for further checking before being recommended to BLTB for approval.
9. As agreed at the July 2019 BLTB meeting, and following on from the concerns about deliverability, the independent assessor suggested adding an extra stage of assurance and checking at the point where a scheme is converting from next in line in the priority list to programme entry status.

Schemes seeking programme entry status from BLTB will therefore need to meet three conditions:

- a) To have the highest priority in the long-list of pipeline schemes
- b) There being sufficient available uncommitted funds in the relevant funding programme
- c) To have submitted a Full Business Case development programme to the satisfaction of the LEP's Independent Assessor

The Full Business Case development programme will include, amongst other things:

- a) a timetable for producing an Appraisal Specification and Option Assessment Reports as well as the five cases of the Full Business Case
- b) a statement of what modelling tools are available
- c) a commitment to delivering sufficient design work and operational planning prior to FBC submission

APPENDIX 2 - THE SCORING METHODOLOGY FOR THE SIX FACTORS

1. Infrastructure Projects will contribute to the implementation of the Thames Valley Berkshire SEP or emerging Local Industrial Strategy

		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Contribute to the implementation of the Thames Valley Berkshire SEP	High 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Housing SDL cannot proceed without this Distributor Road; investment in this scheme will unlock £££'s of private investment This scheme is identified as part of Core Policy XX Town Centre Regeneration in the Council's adopted Core Strategies Document The development of MRT on this corridor is key to increasing the capacity of the network to deliver the journeys that will support the growing economy 	<p>A high score will be awarded to proposals for direct investment which:</p> <p>Support one or more of the objectives¹ in the SEP, in particular (see page 30):</p> <p>3 Labour Supply: Address congestion; Bring forward planned housing</p> <p>6 Functioning Towns: Infrastructure within towns; Infrastructure between towns; Town centre investment</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Are directly linked to the following connectivity issues named in the SEP Implementation Plan² section on Infrastructure (page 9):</p> <p>Packages 1, 2 and 3: further phases or extensions of projects funded in Growth Deal 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>Package 5: MRT schemes</p> <p>Package 6: Access to London Heathrow; Access to London via motorway and rail; Electrification beyond Newbury; Rail links to London Gatwick; Third Thames Crossing near Reading</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Promote local sustainable transport networks (see Strategy p 17)</p>
	Medium 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This infrastructure will help unlock a housing scheme of [less than 100] units This scheme will support the regeneration of the industrial estate, and contribute to the retention of x,000 jobs in the borough 	<p>A medium score will be awarded to proposals for other investments which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Estate Employment Sites Utilities Local housing sites

¹ The objectives of the SEP are (see page 30 of <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/getfile/Public%20Documents/Strategic%20Economic%20Plan/TVB%20SEP%20-%20Strategy.pdf?inline-view=true>)

PEOPLE

1. Use better those who are already in the workforce
2. Inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition
3. Ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply issues

IDEAS

4. Ensure that knowledge is effectively commercialised and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire
5. Strengthen networks and invest in the 'soft wiring' to use ideas better
6. Make Thames Valley Berkshire's towns genuine hubs in the ideas economy

²<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/getfile/Public%20Documents/Strategic%20Economic%20Plan/TVB%20SEP%20-%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf?inline-view=true>

	LoW 1 mark		A low score will be awarded to all other proposals
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2. Deliverability

2		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Deliverability	High 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline Planning permission and/or positive planning history • Partnership finance clearly identified • Preliminary Benefit cost ratio (BCR) calculated as positive 	<p>A high score will be awarded to capital proposals which have a strong prospect of a start on site in the relevant period for this call for bids. This will be awarded if there is a positive assessment of all of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Land assembly, ownership or control b) Planning permission c) Optimism bias in preliminary value for money calculations <p>AND (where relevant) a positive assessment of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Partnership arrangements across boundaries or agencies
	Medium 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features in published Local Plan • Finance subject to further discussion • No preliminary BCR calculation, but comparable schemes have recently been positively assessed 	<p>A medium score will be awarded to proposals which have a reasonable prospect of a start on site the relevant period for this call for bids. This will be awarded if there is a positive assessment of two of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Land assembly, ownership or control b) Planning permission c) Optimism bias in preliminary value for money calculations <p>AND (where relevant) a positive assessment of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Partnership arrangements across boundaries or agencies where relevant
	Low 1 mark		<p>A low score will be awarded to all other proposals</p>

3. Sustainable long-term green economic growth

		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Sustainable long-term green economic growth	High 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This scheme will also support development which will add 39,322 sq m of retail space and bring 400 jobs to the area • The scheme will facilitate development of 25,000m2 of retail space 60,000m2 of office space and 800 new dwellings. • 85,800sqm of employment development. • SDL incorporates up to 15,000sqm of employment. 	<p>A high score will be awarded to a proposal which can quantify (in terms of commercial or retail floor space, jobs or houses) a major regeneration, large new development or other substantial impact on the economy which is directly linked to the transport scheme</p> <p>Additional credit will be achieved by the inclusion of specific green recovery agenda criteria relating to environmental benefits (e.g. air quality improvements, CO2 reduction, modal shift, other environmental benefits to the community etc)</p>
	Medium 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling commercial and residential development • Enabling redevelopment for housing of frontage properties currently blighted. • Enhancing the attractiveness of town centre and associated major redevelopment sites • Supporting Town Centre Regeneration 	<p>A medium score will be awarded to a proposal which can quantify (in terms of commercial or retail floor space, jobs or houses)</p> <p>EITHER</p> <p>a minor regeneration, small new development or other minor impact on the economy which is directly linked to the scheme;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>a major regeneration, large new development or other substantial impact on the economy which is indirectly linked to the scheme</p> <p>Some inclusion of green recovery agenda criteria</p>
	Low 1 mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GVA to be investigated • Improving journey times and reliability • Customers and suppliers will also benefit from better access, improved journey times, and lower vehicle operating costs • Reducing congestion on a key highway corridor 	<p>A low score will be awarded to all other proposals.</p>

4. Tangible benefit to the sub-region

		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Tangible benefit to the sub-region	High 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scheme will support x,000 jobs, which will provide employment for people from across the TVB area The planned catchment for the new retail units is a 25-mile radius The proposed route runs through three boroughs 	A high score will be awarded to proposals which have significant impact well beyond a local area
	Medium 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X,000 sq m of refurbished employment space will allow the borough to be more competitive in retaining jobs 	A medium score will be awarded to proposals which have a major impact, but only in a local area
	Low 1 mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary school will support the development of 100 houses in the neighbourhood 	A low score will be awarded to all other proposals

5. Investing in Natural Capital

		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Investing in Natural Capital	High – 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adverse noise, biodiversity, heritage or water environment impacts and enhancement of landscape features • The proposal includes the decontamination of xx hectares of former industrial land • The proposal includes on site generation of electricity from renewable sources 	<p>A high score will be awarded to proposals which</p> <p>EITHER</p> <p>can quantify a positive impact</p> <p>OR</p> <p>can demonstrate that mitigating measures will significantly reduce any negative impacts on one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greenhouse gas emissions; • air quality; • noise disturbance; • natural environment, heritage and landscape; and • streetscape and urban environment.
	Medium – 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minor benefits in terms of air quality / carbon emissions compared to the ‘do nothing’ situation • Reducing slow moving/ queuing traffic would contribute to reduction in NO2 emissions in AQMA 	<p>A medium score will be awarded to proposals which</p> <p>EITHER</p> <p>make un-quantified positive claims about impact on the above environmental factors</p> <p>OR</p> <p>can demonstrate that mitigating measures will reduce negative impacts</p>
	Low – 1 mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon emissions will be reduced through a more direct route for freight vehicles • Decrease in the number of people affected by noise and improvements in local air quality • Positive impact on carbon emissions. • Promoting public transport over private car use 	<p>A low score will be awarded to all other proposals</p>

6. Maximise Social Value

		Examples of Descriptors	Scoring Guide
Maximise social value	High – 3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This stretch of road, including the junction, is responsible for an annual 40 slight injury accidents (approx 5% of the Borough’s overall figure) and a further 8 KSI accidents in the last three years. The scheme is designed to reduce both these figures by half in three years following completion. This scheme will create xx apprenticeships in association with the local college 	<p>A high score will be awarded to proposals which can</p> <p>EITHER quantify a positive impact on, OR can demonstrate that mitigating measures will significantly reduce any negative impacts in relation to one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal affordability; physical activity; road accidents; crime and security; access to a range of goods and services; and community severance <p>OR can open up apprenticeships or new jobs associated with the proposal to local unemployed and long-term unemployed people</p>
	Medium – 2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive impact for the communities affected by rat-running Facilitates residential development including new primary school and extra care home facility Reduced risk of accidents as result of better management of traffic and better provision for road crossings. It is likely that the scheme would lead to impacts that would require full SDI appraisal. 	<p>A medium score will be awarded to proposals which</p> <p>EITHER make un-quantified positive claims about impact in relation to the above social/distributional issues OR can demonstrate that mitigating measures that will reduce but do not eliminate negative social/distributional impacts</p>
	Low – 1 mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing opportunities to develop local walking and cycling improvements Improved journey times to and from London There are no significant impacts. It is unlikely that the scheme would lead to any impacts that would require full SDI appraisal. The expected impacts are likely to be both marginal in extent and dispersed among people groups or spatially. 	<p>A low score will be awarded to all other proposals</p>

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, Lead Officer to the BLTB

Item 7: Update to BLTB on One Year scheme evaluations

Purpose of Report

1. Per section 19 of the agreed [BLTB Assurance Framework](#) process:

“Evaluation: Evaluation post implementation. The scheme promoter will publish one- and five- year impact reports post scheme opening. These reports will be reviewed by the independent assessor and reported to the BLTB.”

2. In the light of ongoing Covid 19 impacts, gathering appropriate and robust data for scheme assessments and evaluations are proving difficult. As such, we are recommending that schemes due for current evaluations are postponed until a future BLTB meeting when a meaningful report can be presented.

3. Current schemes due for evaluation are:

- Scheme 2.10 - Slough: A322 Improvements
- Scheme 2.11 and 2.12 - Reading: Phase 1 & 2 South Reading MRT*
- Scheme 2.15 - Bracknell: Martin’s Heron roundabout

(*RBC have submitted an evaluation report and this is currently being assessed by Hatch Regeneris)

Recommendation

4. You are asked to note the update and await reports from the scheme promoters which will be produced in due course.

Conclusion

5. There is no further action required at this point, but all schemes will continue to be monitored against required conditions.

Background Papers: None

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

CONTACT OFFICER: TIM WHEADON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

ITEM 8: FINANCIAL APPROVAL SCHEME GBF1 SLOUGH: LANGLEY HIGH STREET WIDENING PHASE 3

Purpose of Report

1. To consider giving financial approval to scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Widening – Phase 3.
2. This scheme is an extension to the junction and rail station accessibility improvement scheme delivered at Station Road/ Waterside Drive in 2018, and the junction improvement scheme delivered at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road in March 2020. It is also an extension to the adjoining proposed junction improvements at Meadfield Road/ High Street (referred to throughout this report as ‘Section 2’) and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (referred to throughout this report as ‘Section 1’) which have conditional LEP funding approval.
3. Phase 1 of the scheme 2.45 Langley High Street Improvements was given financial approval at the [June 2020](#) BLTB meeting and Phase 2 was given financial approval at the [July 2020](#) BLTB meeting.
4. As a combined package of measures, Sections 1, 2 and 3 are promoted by Slough Borough Council to deliver a step-change in provision along the Langley High Street / Station Road corridor, supporting the planned closure of the parallel Hollow Hill Lane as part of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH), as well as enabling development growth across the corridor.

Recommendation

5. You are recommended to give scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Widening Phase 3 conditional financial approval in the sum of £1,643,000 in 2021/22 from the getting Building Fund on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 14 step 5 below, subject to meeting the following conditions:
 - 1) SBC to demonstrate positive discussions with the landowners that result in documented outline agreement for the acquisition of the land required to develop the scheme;
 - 2) Production of a revised, and more robust, assessment of scheme costs, post-preliminary scheme design;
 - 3) Formal confirmation (e.g. S151 Officer letter) to cover SBC funding allocation, along with confirmation that SBC will cover any potential cost overruns; and
 - 4) The scheme retains an initial Benefit Cost Ratio of at least 1.5 to 1.

These conditions should be met at the earliest feasible date, but no later than 1st March 2021.

Other Implications

Financial

6. A call for bids process was undertaken in January 2020 and a list of prioritised projects were agreed at the BLTB meeting March 2020. Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening phase 3 is funded from this reallocation. See Appendix 1.
7. This report recommends that Slough Borough Council be authorised to draw down the capital sum £1,643,000 from the recent Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)/ [Getting Building Fund](#) (GBF) monies for this scheme.
8. The funding agreement set out at paragraph 14 step 5 sets out the roles and responsibilities, reporting and auditing arrangements, timing and triggers for payments, contributions from other funders, consequences of delay, consequences of failure, claw back, and evaluation requirements at one and five years on.

Risk Management

9. The risk management arrangements already put in place by the Local Transport Body are as follows:
 - The [Assurance Framework](#) has been drafted following DfT guidance and has been approved by the DfT for use in allocating capital funds for transport schemes
 - Hatch Regeneris have been appointed as Independent Assessors and have provided a full written report (see [Appendix 2](#)) on the full business case for the scheme
 - The funding agreement set out at paragraph 14, step 5 makes clear that the financial risk associated with implementation of the scheme rests with the scheme promoter.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

10. The scheme promoter is a local authority and they have to act within the law. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB, should any questions arise.

Supporting Information

11. The scheme will be carried out by Slough Borough Council.
12. In October 2020 Hatch Regeneris completed their assessment with a recommendation for conditional approval, which is attached at Appendix 2.
13. The full details of the scheme are available from the [Slough Borough Council website](#)ⁱⁱ. A summary of the key points is given below:

Task	Timescale
Financial approval	November 2020
Detailed designs	Q2 2021
Construction starts	Q3/Q4 2021
Completion	Q1 2022

Activity	Funder	Cost (approx)
Major scheme funding	Berkshire Local Transport Body	£1.643m
Council contribution	Slough Borough Council capital programme	£0.410m
Total		£2.053m

14. The table below sets out the details of this scheme's compliance with steps 1-5 of paragraph 14 of the full [Assurance Framework](#)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Assurance Framework Check list	Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening - Phase 3																																			
Step 1: Unapproved or Long List of schemes.	<p>This business case submission sets out the case for investment in the widening of the Langley High Street / Station Road corridor between Langley Road and Langley Station rail bridge.</p> <p>This scheme is an extension to the junction and rail station accessibility improvement scheme delivered at Station Road/ Waterside Drive in 2018, and the junction improvement scheme delivered at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road in March 2020. It is also an extension to the adjoining proposed junction improvements at Meadfield Road/ High Street (referred to throughout this report as 'Section 2') and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (referred to throughout this report as 'Section 1') which have conditional LEP funding approval.</p> <p>The scheme was submitted as part of a wider scheme for Langley High Street, for inclusion in January 2020 LEP Call for Bids. The updated prioritisation methodology assessment process was used and the overall scheme was given 18 points and ranked 6th of 6 schemes submitted. The scheme has since been split into three elements, with this being phase 3.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Factor</th> <th>Raw score</th> <th>Weighting</th> <th>Weighted score</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strategy</td> <td>3</td> <td>1.5</td> <td>4.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deliverability</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Economic Impact</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TVB area coverage</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>18</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Factor	Raw score	Weighting	Weighted score	Strategy	3	1.5	4.5	Deliverability	1	2	2	Economic Impact	2	4	8	TVB area coverage	2	1	2	Environment	1	1	1	Social	1	0.5	0.5	Total			18
Factor	Raw score	Weighting	Weighted score																																	
Strategy	3	1.5	4.5																																	
Deliverability	1	2	2																																	
Economic Impact	2	4	8																																	
TVB area coverage	2	1	2																																	
Environment	1	1	1																																	
Social	1	0.5	0.5																																	
Total			18																																	
Step 2: Programme Entry: evolution of the scheme from outline proposal to full business case, external view on the	<p>The scheme became part of the approved forward pipeline by the BLTB on 12 March 2020^{iv} (minute 33 refers).</p> <p>The Slough Borough Council website^v holds the latest details of the full business case, including the VfM statement certified by the senior responsible officer.</p>																																			

Assurance Framework Check list	Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening - Phase 3
business case, and independent assessment (See paragraphs 15 and 16)	<p>Any comments or observations on the scheme received by either TVB LEP or Slough Borough Council have been fully considered during the development of the scheme.</p> <p>The report of the Independent Assessor is attached at Appendix 2. The Independent Assessor was asked to report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness – has the promoter prepared a complete Full Business Case submission, when judged against the prevailing advice from the DfT • Accuracy – has the promoter performed the relevant calculations and assessments accurately and without error • Relevance – has the Full Business Case considered all relevant matters, including use of appropriate forecasting models and planning assumptions, and has it included any irrelevant considerations such unduly-optimistic assumptions or out of date modelling data • Value for Money – does the scheme promoter’s Value for Money assessment comply with the prevailing DfT guidance • Evaluation arrangements – has the scheme promoter made provision for appropriate post-implementation evaluation of the scheme. • Remedies – where the independent assessment reveals a gap between the FBC supplied and the standard anticipated by the DfT guidance, then the advice for the LTB should include recommendations for remedial actions required – e.g., collection of further data, sensitivity tests on particular assumptions etc.
Step 3: Conditional Approval	<p>The Independent Assessor has recommended the scheme for approval but with the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) SBC to demonstration positive discussions with the landowners that result in documented outline agreement for the acquisition of the land required to develop the scheme; 2) Production of a revised, and more robust, assessment of scheme costs, post-preliminary scheme design; 3) Formal confirmation (e.g. S151 Officer letter) to cover SBC funding allocation, along with confirmation that SBC will cover any potential cost overruns; and 4) The scheme retains an initial Benefit Cost Ratio of at least 1.5 to 1. <p>These conditions should be met at the earliest feasible date, but no later than 1st March 2021.</p>
Step 4: Recommendation of Financial Approval - High Value for Money	<p>The analysis contained within the Full Business Case suggests that the scheme will generate “Very High” Value for Money.</p> <p>Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of <i>1.5-1.9 to 1</i>, indicating this scheme should deliver at least ‘medium’ value for money from investments.</p>

Assurance Framework Check list	Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening - Phase 3
- Support of the Independent assessor	Overall, all three phases of the project will deliver a BCR in excess of 2 to 1 (“high value”). The recommendation is that you give the scheme Conditional Approval.
<p>Step 5: Formal Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - roles - responsibilities - reporting - auditing - timing and triggers for payments, - contributions from other funders, - consequences of delay, - consequences of failure, - claw back, - evaluation one and five years on 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Roles:</u> Thames Valley Berkshire LEP is a part funder of the scheme. Slough Borough Council is the scheme promoter, and is the relevant highway and planning authority. 2. <u>Responsibilities:</u> Thames Valley Berkshire LEP is responsible for allocating the capital finance in accordance with its Assurance Framework. Slough Borough Council is responsible for all aspects of the design, risk management, insurance, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including its responsibilities as highway and planning authority, any other statutory duties, and any financial or other liabilities arising from the scheme. 3. <u>Implementation:</u> In addition to any reporting requirements within Slough Borough Council, the scheme promoter will use the proforma supplied by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to make reports on progress of the implementation of the capital scheme to each meeting of the BLTB until the build is complete. In particular, Slough Borough Council will report on any change in the size, scope or specification of the scheme; and on any substantial savings against the scheme budget whether achieved by such changes to the size, scope or specification of the scheme, or through procurement, or through the efficient implementation of the scheme. 4. <u>Reporting:</u> The scheme promoter must provide accurate, timely, verified and quality assured quarterly monitoring and forecast data, which relate to defined output and outcome indicators agreed between Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and government as a condition of the Getting Building Fund programme. 5. <u>Auditing:</u> Slough Borough Council will keep financial records such that the expenditure on the scheme is readily identifiable, and if and when BEIS, DfT or other government department or the Accountable Body for Thames Valley Berkshire LEP requests access to financial or other records for the purposes of an audit of the accounts, Slough Borough Council will co-operate fully. 6. Timing and Triggers for payments: See the Claim Proforma (available on request). 7. <u>Contributions from Other Funders:</u> Slough Borough Council capital

Assurance Framework Check list	Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening - Phase 3
	<p>programme will contribute £410,000 in 2021/22. In the event that the scheme experiences or it is anticipated that the scheme will experience a shortfall in these contributions, Slough Borough Council will be required to notify Thames Valley Berkshire LEP of these developments. The provisions of clauses 8, Consequences of Delay; 9, Consequences of Change to the Design or Specification of the Scheme; or 10, Consequences of Failure will then be applied.</p> <p>8. <u>Consequences of Delay</u>: In the event that the scheme experiences minor delays to its overall Business Case programme (no more than 10 weeks), Slough Borough Council will report these delays and the reasons for them, and the proposed remedial action to the next available meeting of the BLTB. In the event that the scheme experiences major delays to its overall Business Case programme (11 weeks or longer) Slough Borough Council will be required to seek permission from Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to reschedule any payments that are due, or may be delayed in falling due because of the delay to the overall Business Case programme.</p> <p>9. <u>Consequences of Change to the Design or Specification of the Scheme</u>: In the event that Slough Borough Council wishes to change the design or specification of the scheme such the scheme delivered will vary in any material aspect from the description given in the overall business case, Slough Borough Council will be required to seek prior written consent from Thames Valley Berkshire LEP. Failing this permission, no further monies will be paid to Slough Borough Council after the change becomes apparent to Thames Valley Berkshire LEP. In addition, consideration will be given to recovering any monies paid to Slough Borough Council in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>10. <u>Consequences of Failure</u>: As soon as it becomes apparent to Slough Borough Council that it will not be possible to deliver the scheme within the current GBF programme, i.e. by the end of March 2022, written notice shall be given to the Accountable Body for Thames Valley Berkshire LEP. No further monies will be paid to Slough Borough Council after this point. In addition, consideration will be given to recovering any monies paid to Slough Borough Council in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>11. <u>Claw back</u>: If the overall scheme achieves savings against budget, these savings will be shared by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the other funders noted above in proportion to the amounts set out in the Financial Profile. The Accountable Body for Thames Valley Berkshire LEP reserves the right to claw back any amounts of grant that have been spent on purposes</p>

Assurance Framework Check list	Scheme GBF1 Slough Langley High Street Widening - Phase 3
	<p>other than the scheme as approved and any repayments due as a consequence of changes to the design or specification of the scheme or scheme failure.</p> <p>12. <u>Evaluation One and Five Years On:</u> Slough Borough Council will produce scheme evaluations One and Five years after practical completion that comply with DfT guidance.</p> <p>13. <u>Other Conditions of the Getting Building Fund:</u> Slough Borough Council will acknowledge the financial contribution made to this scheme through the Getting Building Fund process and will follow any required marketing, and branding guidelines. It will also give due regard to the Equality Act 2010 - Public Sector and with the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012, particularly through the employment of apprentices across the scheme supply chain.</p>

Conclusion

- 14. It is the conclusion of the Independent Assessor that on the basis of the strength of the strategic and economic cases, the scheme can be recommended for conditional approval as outlined.

Background Papers

- 15. The LTB and SEP scoring exercise papers are available on request

Appendix 1 - Local Growth Deal list of prioritised schemes agreed March 2020

Weighting	1.5	2	4	1	1	0.5				
Factor	SEP	Deliverable	Economic Impact	TVB area	Natural Capital	Social Value	Total Weighted score	Rank	Contribution Sought	Cumulative spend
LGF Eligible Projects										
Reading Buses: Completing the Connection	4.5	6	8	2	3	1.0	24.5	1	1,541,243	1,541,243
Superfast Broadband – Extension	4.5	6	8	2	1	0.5	22	2	46,920	1,588,163
2.29 Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride - Extension	4.5	4	8	1	2	0.5	20.0	3	1,411,142	2,999,305
2.24 Newbury: Railway Station improvements - Extension	4.5	4	8	1	1	1.0	19.5	4	640,000	3,639,305
2.30 TVB Smart City Cluster Extension	4.5	6	4	2	2	0.5	19	5	283,620	3,922,925
Slough Langley High Street (phases 1, 2 & 3)	4.5	2	8	2	1	0.5	18.0	6	4,000,000	7,922,925



Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

**Independent Assessment Summary Report: Langley High
Street Widening**

**Thames Valley Berkshire Local
Enterprise Partnership**

Independent Assessment Summary Report - Langley High Street Widening (Section 3)

October 2020

www.hatch.co.uk

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Executive Summary

- i. This technical note provides an independent assessment of the Langley High Street Widening (Section 3) Business Case submission to the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP). The scheme is promoted by Slough Borough Council (SBC).

Scheme Summary

The business case submission sets out the case for investment in the widening of the Langley High Street / Station Road corridor between Langley Road and Langley Station rail bridge.

This scheme is an extension to the junction and rail station accessibility improvement scheme delivered at Station Road/ Waterside Drive in 2018, and the junction improvement scheme delivered at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road in March 2020. It is also an extension to the adjoining proposed junction improvements at Meadfield Road/ High Street (referred to throughout this report as 'Section 2') and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (referred to throughout this report as 'Section 1') which have conditional LEP funding approval.

- ii. As a combined package of measures, Sections 1, 2 and 3 are promoted by SBC to deliver a step-change in provision along the Langley High Street / Station Road corridor, supporting the planned closure of the parallel Hollow Hill Lane as part of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH), as well as enabling development growth across the corridor.
- iii. The total scheme cost for the High Street Widening (Section 3) scheme is estimated to be £2.053 million, with £1.643 million sought from the Local Growth Fund (LGF).

Review Findings

Summary

- iv. The overall scheme is considered to align well with strategic priorities and there is an established need for the intervention in the future context of the predicted Hollow Hill Lane closure. The **Strategic Case** shows how the scheme will help off-set the impact of traffic diverting along the Langley High Street Corridor and, in particular, through the Station Road / Langley Road / High Street junction. In the absence of the Hollow Hill Lane closure, the strategic benefits of the scheme would be significantly reduced, albeit some local benefits will remain in terms of supporting local development.
- v. The preferred scheme option is demonstrated, at least in part, to meet three of the four scheme objectives (*to relieve congestion, improve connectivity, and improve journey times and quality for road users*). The evidence is less definitive on whether it will meet the fourth objective to mitigate air pollution impacts.
- vi. The benefits of the scheme are strongly articulated for the southern end of the scheme around the Langley Road junction but there remains some uncertainty around the scale of potential impacts of widening the carriageway to two lanes through the middle and northern ends of the scheme. This is primarily due to the need for traffic to filter into single lanes to pass under the Langley Station rail bridge, creating a pinch-point for traffic movements. Whilst a long-term aspiration for the corridor would be to resolve this pinch-point, it would be a very expensive scheme and is unlikely to happen unless it is part of a wider strategy for large-scale housing development to the north.

- vii. The benefits of the scheme for pedestrians and cyclists is also uncertain, with limited dedicated provision (other than replacement of existing crossing facilities) and potential issues of road safety and severance unless specifically addressed within the detailed design process.
- viii. The overall **Economic Case**, whilst subject to limitations within the quantification process, presents a reasonable case for investment when considered within the context of the wider corridor improvements. The underlying assessment of benefits and costs indicates that the scheme should deliver 'medium' value for money as a standalone scheme. Taking into account a range of potential non-quantified direct, and wider indirect, economic benefits, the scheme could feasibly achieve a rating that is reasonably close to a 'high' value for money categorisation.
- ix. Most of the environmental and social impacts are relatively neutral, but there are some uncertainties around the impact upon air quality, noise, townscape and severance.
- x. As with the Strategic Case, the economic benefits from the scheme will be substantially reduced without the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and there are also uncertainties around the scale of benefits that will be generated by widening Station Road to two-lanes throughout its full length from the Langley Road Junction up to Langley Station rail bridge.
- xi. If considered within the wider context of the previously approved Section 1 and 2 schemes in the same corridor, then there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the overall Langley High Street Corridor Improvements package should deliver 'high' value for money.
- xii. There are some concerns over the robustness of the **Financial Case** presented. Whilst underlying construction costs are presented, with allowances for utilities, preliminaries, and professional fees, there remains a risk/contingency allowance of £1.043 million that represents over 50% of the total scheme costs. This indicates that the scheme costs are not well developed at this stage.
- xiii. The **Commercial and Management Cases** are considered to be relatively succinct, but broadly compliant with requirements. They provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the procurement approach offers value for money within the context in which the scheme must be delivered, and that there are, generally, robust measures in place to manage the delivery of the project. Since there is significant scheme development work still to completed, the programme will need to be closely monitored and there remain a number of critical milestones, including land agreements, public and stakeholder consultation, and detailed scheme costings.

Conclusions

- xiv. It is our conclusion that there is sufficient evidence presented to support the overall strategic case for investment in the scheme, but only in the context of it being part of a wider corridor programme of improvements and in the event that Hollow Hill Lane being closed. The overall economic case demonstrates that, as a standalone scheme, it may only deliver 'medium' value for money, but that the wider package of measures should deliver 'high' value for money.
- xv. There are clear limitations in the detail of the scheme costs, as currently presented, and more information is required to verify that a sound financial case exists. In addition, more certainty is required around the necessary acquisition of land to accommodate the proposed scheme design.

Recommendations

- xvi. On the basis of the strength of the strategic case we recommend the scheme for approval but with the following conditions:
 - 1) SBC to demonstrate positive discussions with the landowners that result in documented outline agreement for the acquisition of the land required to develop the scheme;
 - 2) Production of a revised, and more robust, assessment of scheme costs, post-preliminary scheme design;
 - 3) Formal confirmation (e.g. S151 Officer letter) to cover SBC funding allocation, along with confirmation that SBC will cover any potential cost overruns; and
 - 4) The scheme retains an initial Benefit Cost Ratio of at least 1.5 to 1.
- xvii. These conditions should be met at the earliest feasible date, but no later than 1st March 2021.

• Introduction **HATCH**

This report provides an independent assessment of the Full Business Case (FBC) submitted by Slough Borough Council (SBC) for the widening of Langley High Street / Station Road Corridor along the section of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley Rail Station bridge.

This scheme is an extension to the junction and rail station accessibility improvement scheme delivered at Station Road/ Waterside Drive in 2018, and the junction improvement scheme delivered at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road in March 2020. It is also an extension to the adjoining proposed junction improvements at Meadfield Road/ High Street (referred to throughout this report as '*Section 2*') and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (referred to throughout this report as '*Section 1*'), which have conditional LEP funding approval.

The report considers the evidence presented and whether it represents a robust case for the investment of Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) growth deal funds.

The independent assessment has applied criteria from TVB LEP assurance framework and the requirements for transport scheme business cases set out within the Department for Transport (DfT) Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG).

Submitted Information

- The independent assessment process for the Langley High Street (Section 3) Carriage Widening submission has been conducted on the following set of documentation submitted by SBC and their consultant team (Atkins):

Full Business Case Submission (30th October 2020)

In addition to these formal documents, Hatch Regeneris have engaged with SBC and their consultants between September and October 2020 to discuss the requirements of the business case submission and comment upon the acceptability of the proposed appraisal approach and input assumptions and parameters.

- Whilst no formal Appraisal Specification Report or Option Appraisal Report was submitted for this project, the specification was been discussed and agreed between SBC and TVB LEP, and reference to scheme optioneering is incorporated within the main pro-forma submission.

Report Structure

- This Independent Assessors Report responds to the formal submission of documentation, as well as the informal engagement process with SBC and their consultants, to provide a review of information provided, assess its suitability and robustness against TVB LEPs assurance requirements, and provide recommendations in relation to the approval of LEP funding for the proposed scheme.

- The report is structure as follows:

Business Case Submission – presents a summary of the scheme elements included within the pro-forma submission, alongside the:

Rationale for the Scheme and Strategic Fit (Strategic Case),

Value for Money (Economic and Financial Cases); and

Deliver and Risk (Commercial and Management Cases).

- It also sets out the recommendations to the LEP Local Transport Body relating to the suitability of the scheme for funding.

Business Case Submission

Overview

- The full business case submission sets out the case for investment in widening Langley High Street / Station Road Corridor between Langley Road and Langley Station rail bridge. The core scheme deliverables are:

Widening of Station Road from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge. The widening will primarily be undertaken on the western side of Station Road between Langley Road and Scholars Walk and then the eastern side of Station Road between Scholars Walk and Alderbury Road. This is to minimise the impact, as far as possible, upon Third Party Land.

At the southern extent, the scheme will introduce a two-lane approach and exit to the Station Road arm of the Station Road/ Langley Road/ High Street junction.

At the northern extent, the scheme will taper back down to one lane in each direction prior to the Langley rail station bridge. To avoid causing potential issues with turning movements into and out of the Alderbury Road side-road, to the west of Station Road, it is currently proposed that the four lanes will taper back to two lanes by this junction.

Adding a right turn filter lane at the Alderbury Road junction, to allow traffic turning right from Station Road onto Alderbury Road to do so safely and without holding up traffic on Station Road continuing southbound.

New footways will be provided on the western side of Station Road where the carriageway widening is proposed, to retain existing provision for pedestrians.

- Achieving these revisions will require land-take from the entry frontage of East Berkshire College on the western side of Station Road, however it is stated that this land is included within SBCs development control remit. It will also require a portion of the vehicular entrance to Langley Business Park on the eastern side of Station Road and a portion of the grassed frontage to the residential block just north of Scholars Walk on the western side of Station Road.
- The overall package of High Street Widening Schemes aims to help reduce north-south delays to traffic moving along the corridor. Sections 1 and 2 have both recently been approved, primarily in anticipation of significant volumes of traffic being re-routed through Langley as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. This closure is proposed to support the construction of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) currently being promoted by Network Rail.
- SBC believe that the combined effect of Sections 1, 2 and 3 will result in improved operational efficiency and flow vehicle movement along Station Road/ High Street, helping to alleviate current traffic congestion and accommodate future demand as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure. As such, SBC consider the package of schemes provides significant support the delivery of WRLtH, as well as providing additional transport capacity along the Langley High Street Corridor to assist in the delivery of future growth aspirations.
- It should also be noted that SBC have aspirations to use the additional carriageway lanes as passive provision for alternative transport to promote active travel and public transport in the future, if deemed appropriate and if there is demand. There is potential convert one of the Station Road traffic lanes, in each direction, at a future date to a cycle lane, or for conversion of one of the lanes into a bus lane.

Key Input Assumptions and Parameters

Summary of Content

- The overarching business case is considered particularly reliant upon the following key assumptions:

Outputs from LINSIG local junction models of a 'Reference Case' scenario and 'With Scheme' scenario, as follows:

'Reference Case' scenario includes the approved Langley High Street (Section 1 and 2) Schemes to signalise the junction between High Street and Meadfield Road and widen the High Street to the south of the junction

'With Scheme' scenario includes the additional Langley High Street (Section 3) Scheme with widening of the Station Road between Langley Road and the Langley Rail Station bridge.

2028 forecast traffic flows (with background growth) and with Hollow Hill Lane closed taken from strategic traffic model

Annualisation factors:

253 days per year

Scheme opening year = 2021

60-year benefits appraisal period

Costs and benefits discounted to 2010 prices

Values of time:

Business trips = £17.689

Commuting trips = £9.953

Leisure trips = £4.543

0% Optimism Bias

Independent Assessor Comment

- The use of the LINSIG model is considered appropriate for assessing the highway user impact at the southern end of the Section 3 scheme; however, the details of the model are not provided and so we are not able to verify how these models have been constructed. It is recognised that there are some limitations to the modelling tools, and that these will have some impacts upon the overall robustness of the outcomes of the assessment, that will need to be taken into account.
- There are no modelling tools available to assess the impact of the scheme at the northern end of Station Road. It is accepted that the scheme is likely to have positive impacts; however, the lack of modelling tools means this scale of this impact cannot be quantified. This is likely to mean that the overall quantified impact of the scheme is unreported, albeit it is unclear by what magnitude.
- The use of outputs from the strategic model to inform the 2028 future year scenario within the local junction modelling is considered an acceptable approach. It is, however, recognised that it does not permit a dynamic assessment of traffic re-routing on the basis of delays experienced at the junctions on the High Street. This has implications upon the ability for the local junction models to accurately assess the extent of future year delays at the model.
- It is understood that the baseline 2018 junction model has been utilised to profile the impact of the scheme. Whilst it would be standard practice to have a model that represents the opening scheme year (in this case 2021), the use of the 2018 model is considered acceptable.

The annualisation factors, the appraisal period and the discount period are all acceptable.

- The submission does not make it explicitly clear when it has been assumed that Hollow Hill Lane will close. Whilst we acknowledge that a formal date remains unknown, any assumption on the date will affect the Economic Case, as the profile of benefits will be significantly greater after it is closed, in comparison to before. This is considered further within the section on the Economic Case.
- The absence of any optimism bias within the assessment is considered non-standard practice. For a scheme at FBC stage, even when the costs and risks are fully understood and mitigation, DfT Transport Appraisal Guidance recommends 3% optimism bias to be applied. In this instance, the scheme costs are considered to remain relatively undeveloped and so we would normally expect a higher optimism bias to be applied (e.g. 15%). SBC have, however, presented some mitigating circumstances in that they have included a very significant proportion of risk and contingency within financial assessment (see '*Value for Money*' section below). This provides some justification for applying 0% optimism bias but, at the same time, increases the uncertainty around the level of value for money that the scheme will achieve.

Rationale for the Scheme and Strategic Fit (Strategic Case)

Summary of Content

- The Pro-forma document sets out the background to the scheme and an overview of the wider issues of the area. This includes the strategic importance of the WRLtH project, that this scheme will support, as well the current COVID-19 context and how the scheme can contribute to short and longer-term objectives, including passive provision for future cycle lanes and public transport provision along the corridor.
- The key **policy context** is highlighted in relation to TVB Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), the Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS), as well as local Slough Borough Council strategies and policies. The alignment of the core scheme objectives against these strategic policy documents is also set out.
- The **rationale for the scheme** is established, based upon the context of Langley Village and surrounding areas. It is set out how the scheme represents an extension of the 'original' improvement scheme developed for Langley consisting of junction improvements at Station Road/Waterside Drive, High Street/Station Road/Langley Road, and High Street/Meadfield Road (recently approved), as well as widening of the High Street between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road.
- It sets out that the scheme will provide short-term improvements to traffic conditions but also support the longer-term impact of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The impact of the proposed closures of Hollow Hill Lane (to enable the strategically important WRLtH) is set out, with traffic forecast to re-distribution to the High Street, creating additional congestion and delay through Langley. As well as addressing congestion, the scheme is also needed to alleviate safety concerns.
- Evidence to support the need is presented from an experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane in 2016. Strategic transport model outputs also demonstrates the impact of diverted traffic from the closure upon potential traffic volumes along Langley High Street.
- Specific network performance issues along the High Street / Station Road are considered utilising a local junction model. Reference is made to the analysis work using LINSIG software for the combined Station Road / Langley Road / High Street / Meadfield Road junction. This demonstrates the worsening of the underlying performance of the two junctions with the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. Whilst the delivery of Sections 1 and 2 of the corridor improvement scheme provides significant benefits, some delays remain as a result of northbound traffic having to reduce from two lane to one as the exit the Langley Road junction onto Station Road. The benefits delivered by the Section 3 scheme are presented.

- The **scheme details** are set out describing how it complements the on-going programme of work along the corridor. The widening between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge will be from one lane to two lanes in each direction. The widening will primarily be undertaken on the western side of Station Road between Langley Road and Scholars Walk and then the eastern side of Station Road between Scholars Walk and Alderbury Road. This is to minimise the impact, as far as possible, upon Third Party Land. This requires land-take from a portion of East Berkshire College entry frontage, a portion of the vehicular entrance to Langley Business Park and a portion of the grassed frontage to the residential block just north of Scholars Walk. The scheme will also create passive provision to turn one lane in each direction into a cycleway or bus lane in the future. A draft feasibility design drawing is provided.
- The extent to which the scheme will overcome **barriers to growth** is set out. This highlights the strategic importance of the Langley High Street corridor and how congestion will inhibit growth. It outlines a range of development opportunities along the corridor, as well as considering the Covid-19 recovery.
- The **alternative scheme options** are described initially in terms of alternative routings to address the closure of Hollow Hill Lane, shifting demand to public transport, as well as other capacity enhancements for the High Street. The Langley High Street / Station Road route option is concluded to be the most feasible option to accommodate the additional traffic anticipated as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure.
- A range of sub-options for Section 3 of the route along Station Road are also discussed, with the option to expand to two lanes for general traffic across the full route concluded as the preferred option.
- The consequences of a **'do-nothing' option** are presented highlighting the increased levels of congestion and the negative impact this will have upon economic and environmental outcomes.
- Slough Borough Council is identified as the sole **partner for the scheme**, but a range of other organisations are identified as key **stakeholders**. East Berkshire College, Langley Business Park and the landowner of the small parcel of land outside the residential block just north of Scholars Walk are key stakeholders as they have responsibility for the land which the scheme requires land-take. SBC have already made initial discussions with landowners/ developers to safeguard the land required for the scheme and will continue to work closely with them to ensure the scheme can be successfully delivered.

Independent Assessor Comment

The Strategic Case is considered to presents a reasonably robust overview of the issues and preferred solution for enhancing highway provision to alleviate current issues of congestion, as well as the negative impacts associated with the future closure of Hollow Hill Lane, even with the committed improvements to Sections 1 and 2 of the corridor scheme.

The **policy context** is well-established, with reference to key local policy documents (SEP and BLIS) and how the scheme outcomes will align. It is shown how the scheme supports policies to enhance access to education and improve local air quality around educational facilities, as well as help enhance strategic transport provision and unlock housing development and encourage vibrant town centres

The section on **rational for the scheme** does not specifically present evidence to document the current issues of congestion but does go on to demonstrate that, even with the Section 1 and 2 Improvements the closure of Hollow Hill Lane by 2028 will continue to cause significant traffic queues a the High Street / Langley Road / Station Road Junction. The impact of the Hollow Hill Lane closure is sufficiently evidenced through the discussion of the impact of a trial closure, plots of traffic delays, and the outputs of the local junction modelling.

The strategic importance of the Langley High Street corridor is sufficiently evidenced within the **barriers for growth** section, including the development opportunities within the local surrounds, such as the Langley Business Park (located along Section 3).

The **options assessment** process demonstrates that alternative mitigation solutions to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane have been considered at both a strategic and local level and there is sufficient rationale for the identification of the preferred route option. The sub-options consider reducing the length of the two-lane carriageway or allocating some of the additional road capacity to bus and cycle provision. The rationale for not providing bus lanes at this stage is considered sound due to the limited flow of buses along this route.

The submission acknowledges that all the identified benefits at the High Street / Langley Road / Station Road junction would be achieved by extending two lanes northbound by between 50 to 100m north of the junction. The inclusion of two-lanes along the full extent of the route up to the Langley Rail Station bridge is therefore justified on the basis of improved flow of traffic along this section before it is required to filter back down to a single lane to flow under the rail bridge. There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that some additional benefits will be derived; however, the scale of these benefits is not evidenced. This makes it challenging to determine the full extent of benefits delivered against the additional costs incurred.

The **impact of not changing** reiterates the congestion and delays that will occur and the type of impact upon local social and economic activity.

A set of four scheme **objectives** are presented, albeit there is no specific section explaining how these objectives have been developed. They are focused on relieving congestion; mitigating future impacts of air quality; improving connectivity (including to Langley Rail Station); and improving journey times and quality for road users. Whilst there are clear overlaps between three of the four objectives, each aspect is referenced throughout the rationale for the scheme and they are considered to be a reasonable set of objectives for the scheme.

Whilst there is sufficient evidence presented that the preferred scheme option will relieve congestion, improve access and reduce journey times, it is less certain that the scheme will have a positive impact upon air quality. Whilst reducing levels of standing traffic and improving the flow of vehicles could reduce noise and emissions, there is also the potential for the increased capacity to encourage more private vehicle trips along the corridor. The level of detailed modelling presented is insufficient to draw any firm conclusions on whether the 2nd objective is likely to be met.

Whilst there are no specific **measures of success** presented within this section there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that reducing delays and improving journey times through the Langley Road Junction and along Station Road will be key outcomes. This is confirmed in Table 5 where the expected benefits are stated as:

journey time savings; increased network capacity; journey quality; physical activity; air quality and noise impacts; and accidents. Clearly the closure of Hollow Hill Lane is a major driver of the predicted benefits, but has yet to occur, so it will be challenging to establish a clear reference case baseline against which to assess success.

Whilst no specific **constraints** or **interdependencies** have been identified it is clear that the overall need for the scheme is highly dependent upon the closure of Hollow Hill Lane as part of the WRLtH project. If the WRLtH were not to progress, the strategic case for this scheme will be significantly reduced. Significant land acquisition is also required for the scheme and it is understood that only initial discussion have taken place and no agreements are in place.

The list of key **stakeholders** appears reasonably comprehensive, albeit the full extent to which engagement has been undertaken, and the level of support, is less clear. The level of wider support amongst local businesses and residents is also not discussed.

Value for Money (Economic and Financial Cases)

Summary of Content

The Value for Money section describes the direct and wide outputs the scheme will deliver and presents the funding requirements.

The **economic case** is set out into terms of the anticipated **direct benefits** of the scheme in relation to journey time savings; increased network capacity, journey quality; physical activity; air quality and noise impacts; and accidents.

The scheme is also anticipated to facilitate **wider impacts** by unlocking future housing development, enhancing urban connectivity and supporting the creation of jobs and businesses. Potential outcomes are detailed in Table 6 in terms of new housing dwellings, employment space, and jobs the scheme could help facilitate.

The approach to assessing the potential **journey time savings** is set out. This describes the use of outputs from local junction traffic models and a bespoke Spreadsheet Model Tool to calculate the economic benefits generated. This includes the parameters applied.

Outputs from the **local junction modelling** are presented within an appendix showing flows and delays at the junction in 2028, AM and PM Peaks.

The approach to identifying the **housing and employment** indirectly attributable to the scheme is discussed, including the interdependencies with the other capacity enhancements already approved along the Langley High Street corridor (Sections 1 and 2).

Further wider outcomes are set out in terms of **journey quality** (moderate positive impact), physical benefits (slight to moderate positive), accidents (neutral impact), air quality and noise (neutral impact), and network capacity (moderate positive).

The **financial case** is set out, with the overall **capital cost** requirements (£2.053m) presented and the level of LGF sought (£1.643m). The remaining £410,000 will be contributed by SBC.

The **scheme costs** have been developed based upon Slough's schedule of rates and based upon the judgement of Quantity Surveying technical experts and benchmarking of other recent schemes. The requirement for a high number of utilities diversions is recognised and an allowance (35% of base construction costs) is included as Main Contractor Preliminaries, accordingly.

Cost estimates are stated to include a risk allowance of 20%. A detailed schedule of costs that this contingency will cover is presented, which includes:

Additional design costs for the refinement of the design through Preliminary and Detailed Design;
Additional base construction costs;
Third Party Land cost;
Additional time required for stakeholder engagement;
Additional utility costs; and
Provision for more general, unknown and unquantifiable cost uplifts (including COVID-19 impacts).

A breakdown of the scheme costs is provided in tabular format. This indicates a **risk / contingency allowance** of £1,043,400.

SBC has provided commitment to funding **cost overruns**.

The **profile of funding** package is presented, with all expenditure in 2020/21.

- The overall **present value of benefits**, in terms of direct **transport user benefits**, are presented. These have been calculated using the direct outputs from the junction models and a bespoke spreadsheet tool. Overall, these benefits are estimated as just over £2.182 million, in 2010 prices.
- The overall **present value of costs** are estimated at around £1.457 million, in 2010 prices but with no optimism bias, giving an overall core scenario **Net Present Value** (NPV) for the scheme of just under £0.725 million. The accompanying **Benefit to Cost Ratio** (BCR) of 1.5 to 1, indicates that the scheme should deliver 'medium' value for money from investments.
- SBC also forecast that the scheme will additionally generate £0.06 million value of benefits from imperfect market competition and £0.519 as reliability benefits. These are applied by SBC to generate an estimated 'adjusted NPV' of £1.305 million and 'adjusted BCR' of 1.9 to 1.
- There are no **sensitivity tests** presented on the quantitative economic analysis.
- It is stated that a detailed appraisal of **environmental impacts** has not been undertaken at this stage but qualitative assessments of the impact on air quality and noise (neutral), townscape (neutral), biodiversity and water environment (neutral) are considered.
- In addition to the main assessment of journey quality and accidents, additional assessment of the **social impacts** of the scheme are considered, in terms of security (neutral), access to services (moderate positive), affordability (slight positive), severance (neutral), option/non-use values (neutral), and apprenticeships (neutral).

Independent Assessor Comment

The **Economic Case** for the scheme is presented in terms of the direct transport users benefits that will be delivered, the wider development growth it will support, as well as the potential magnitude of environmental and social impact.

- Some high-level information is presented in relation to the **traffic modelling**. The principle of using of the **strategic highway model** to determine the diversionary impact of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane is considered appropriate, albeit we are not able to verify the precise process that has been undertaken.
- The principle of utilising the outputs from the strategic model to inform change of flows within **local junction modelling** is also considered an acceptable approach to assessing both the baseline need for the scheme, as well as the potential impacts upon congestion and delay.

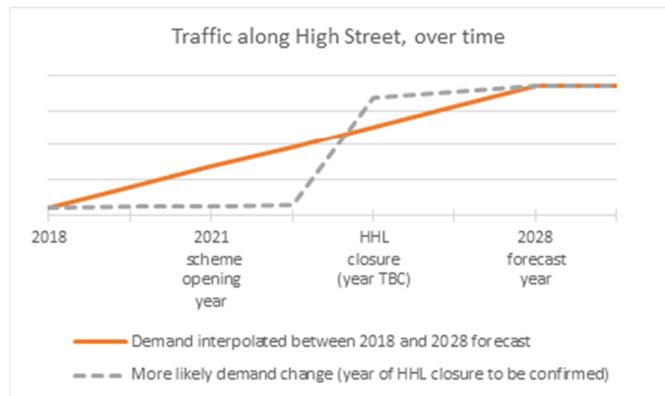
The local junction modelling data presented in Table 4 indicates that in 2028, with Hollow Hill Lane closed and with Sections 1 and 2 of the Langley High Street Improvements delivered, a notable amount of delay is forecast to occur across the Station Road / Langley Road / High Street junction in both the AM Peak (39 hours) and PM Peak (28 hours). These delays are, generally, spread across all arms of the junction.

- The introduction of the Section 3 widening scheme reduces delay in the AM Peak to 21 hours , whilst delay in the PM Peak they fall to 22 hours. This demonstrates that the majority of benefits for the scheme will be derived within the AM Peak, with all arms of the junction seeing some reduction in queues and delays. For the PM Peak, the impacts are less significant and do not appear to substantially improve the operation of the junction.
- It is understood that two model years (2018 and 2028) have been utilised for the economic analysis with the two scenarios:

Reference Case: includes the approved Langley High Street Sections 1 and 2 Scheme

'With Scheme' scenario: includes the additional Section 3 Scheme with widening of the Station Road exit from the junction

- The 2018 model utilises base model demand passing through the junction, whereas the 2028 model incorporates forecast underlying traffic growth and the impact of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.
- A linear profile has been assumed in terms of traffic growth between the two years (see orange line in diagram). In reality the increase in traffic flow will more closely correlate with the closure of Hollow Hill Lane (see dotted line).



- Given an actual date when Hollow Hill Lane will close is currently unknown, the linear profile applied is considered acceptable and should not unduly impact the analysis.

The assessment of **wider impacts** provides a useful overview of the aspirational development growth that is planned within the Langley High Street corridor and the need for transport capacity to support this development. The forecast housing, jobs, employment floorspace presented within Table 6 appear to relate to the Langley Business Park development, located adjacent to the Section 3 Station Road alignment. Whilst the extent to which the scheme will unlock the development is not set out, , since this is not claimed as a direct outcome of the scheme it does not affect the overall assessment of value for money.

- The stated positive impact of the scheme upon **journey quality** appears logical in the context of the delays forecast in the reference case scenario. With limited quantitative analysis is difficult to judge whether the impacts will be moderate (as stated within the submission) or slight. In particular, because traffic is still required to filter down into a single lane to pass under the Langley Rail Station bridge, some of the benefits of the two-lane carriageway is lost.
- The stated slight to moderate positive impact of the scheme upon **physical benefit** is based upon a perception that the widening of the carriageway will provide additional space for cyclists and encourage greater use. A counter argument would be that the scheme may also increase traffic speeds and potentially create a more threatening environment for cycling. In addition, there could be greater severance for pedestrians wishing to cross Station Road. Overall, there would appear to be inconclusive evidence around whether the scheme will encourage or discourage walking and cycling usage.
- Seven **accidents** (including 1 serious) are reported along Station Road over the last five years and so there is some potential for accident benefits to be improved. The increase in lane capacity may be a disadvantage to non-motorised users (cyclists and pedestrians) unless specific provision is made for these users. The conclusion that the scheme will have a neutral impact could be considered optimistic; however, it will depend upon the final detailed design of the scheme.
- As SBC acknowledge, a full environmental assessment has not been undertaken and so no definite conclusions can be drawn about the impact of the scheme upon **air quality and noise**. The current conclusion that impacts will be neutral appears reasonable, albeit actual impacts could be slightly negative if the scheme encourages additional traffic to use the route.

The evidence is clear that the scheme will deliver significant additional **network capacity** along the corridor, with the potential to benefits all road users, depending upon how this capacity is utilised over time.

A detailed breakdown of the schemes **base construction costs** is not presented, albeit it is acknowledged that these have been developed through standard industry practices and with SBC's schedule of rates and inputs from Quantity Surveyors. The inclusion of preliminaries, overheads and profit, and professional fees demonstrates that the development requirements for the scheme have been taken into account. Further detailed development of base construction costs still needs to occur.

It is recognised that there is a known, and substantial, risk of **utilities** works being required. It is unclear precisely what basis has been used to estimate the allowance of 35% of base construction cost for utilities works and so there may remain some risk that this value could be higher. It is not stated whether C3 utilities enquiries have been undertaken.

- The £1.043 million **risk/contingency budget** is considered to represent a substantial proportion of the budget. Whilst this would typically provide confidence that the budget is unlikely to be exceeded, it is not considered standard practice for a scheme at Full Business Case stage of development to have scheme costs with such a significant proportion allocated to contingency (around 50% of the total budget is unallocated to any specific costs). This indicates there is relatively poor understanding of scheme costs at this stage. The scale of design change indicated should not, typically, take place post submission of the full business case.

It will be important for TVB LEP to have a full understanding of how the scheme is developed going forward.

- It should be recognised that there is no reference to additional **maintenance costs** associated with the delivery of the widening scheme, but it is assumed that these would be absorbed within the SBC's annual maintenance budget.
- The **profile of the funding** package is straightforward and commits SBC to deliver the scheme within 2020/2021. A specific commitment is given from SBC to cover any **cost overruns** in the event that they occur, albeit this is not officially evidenced through a S151 Officer statement.

- The business case submission does not include standard **Transport Economic Efficiency, Public Accounts, or Analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits** tables and so it is not feasible to comment upon the details of the monetised value for money assessment. The initial assessment, which does not include any allowance for optimism bias on capital costs, indicates that the scheme may only just deliver 'medium' value for money. It is, however, recognised that quantified benefits have only been assessed at the southern end of the scheme at the junction with Station Road and Langley Road. Any potential benefits associated with the scheme towards the northern end of the link are not captured. The extent to which these will increase the value for money for the scheme is unclear, not least as much of the benefit of providing two-lane carriageway is lost due to the requirement to filter down to a single lane to pass under Langley Station rail bridge.
- The calculation of an 'adjusted BCR' considers the potential for additional benefits relating to negating 'imperfect market conditions' and improving journey time reliability. The approaches adopted to assess these benefits have applied techniques outlined within DfT TAG; however, there is little contextual information, or baseline data, presented to support the case for their inclusion. Whilst these benefits could potentially be derived, as Independent Assessor we are unable to verify the scale of the forecast benefits. Even with the inclusion of these benefits, the scheme continues to remain 'medium' value for money.
- It should be also be reiterated that the 'medium' value for money from investment is only likely to occur in circumstances where Hollow Hill Lane is closed. If, for any reason, this closure were not to occur, then we could have no certainty what outturn BCR for the scheme would be generated.

It is recognised that the scale of the scheme does not, in general terms, warrant a full **environmental assessment** and so the approach adopted by SBC is considered acceptable. In addition to air quality and noise (discussed above in Section 2.70), the evidence to support the position that there is no requirement to assess the impact upon **historic environment** is limited but there is no specific understanding of any heritage assets that will be affected by the scheme. There is also no discussion of the potential impact upon **townscape** of expanding the carriageway width, and it is considered there is a risk of potential negative impacts.

- For a scheme of this type, that will reconfigure the highway and require some land take, we would anticipate the need to consider potential impacts upon **biodiversity and water environment**. Whilst no details are presented within the business case submission, SBC's reference to an initial assessment provides some justification to their conclusion that the impact will be neutral; however, we would expect this to be assessed further as part of the detail design process.
- The qualitative approach to assessing **social impacts** is considered acceptable. It is agreed that the scheme is unlikely to have any notable impact upon **security**. On the basis of the core scenario traffic modelling, the scheme should have a positive impact upon **access to services** by motorised vehicles (including bus), but the impact upon pedestrian and cyclist accessibility is less clear. SBC have forecast a moderate positive forecast but in reality, a slight positive rating may be more appropriate. It is accepted that the scheme could have a slight positive impact upon **affordability**.
- The stated neutral impact upon **community severance** is also unclear due to the potential impacts the widening of the carriageway could have upon pedestrians and cyclists, with a risk of negative impacts for these user groups if the final scheme design is not carefully developed. It is agreed that there will be neutral impact upon **option / non-use values** and **apprenticeships**.

Deliverability and Risks (Commercial and Management Cases)

Summary of Content

- The section on deliverability and risk provides an overview of the project programme, project management arrangements, and risk.
- The business case document reiterates that 20% **local contribution** will comprise of Slough Borough Council Capital Funds.
- A high-level overview of the proposed **programme** is presented highlighting phases of preliminary design, Stakeholder and public engagement/consultation (Q1 2021), detailed design and refinement of scheme costs (Q2 2021), mobilisation and statutory consents (Q3 2021), commencement of site works (Q3/Q4 2021), and completion of site works (Q1 2022).
- Reference is made to the SBC's wealth of **experience** in managing capital infrastructure improvements, including High Street/Langley Road junction adjacent to this proposed scheme.
- Reference is made to the potential impacts of COVID-19 upon delivery and how this will be managed throughout the process, including ensuring safe on-site working.
- It is indicated that the construction works will be directly assigned to SBC's Direct Service Organisation (DSO) (Contractors), as an extension to both the High Street / Langley Road junction scheme and the original Langley Station and Access Improvements scheme. **Contracts** are also likely to mirror the structure previously used. The Council is likely to utilise the same contractor for this scheme and Sections 1 and 2 (widening of the carriageway between Langley Road and Elmhurst Road and the Meadfield Road junction improvement scheme) to maximise cost and time efficiency. This **procurement process** is stated to provide a high quality and efficient service, with resources readily available to be mobilised at short notice. SBC deems it appropriate not to engage in any new, competitive procurement process.
- The **project management arrangements** are described, including **reporting protocols**, and are stated to reflect the previous **governance** for the Langley High Street schemes that have worked effectively.
- A summary of the **key strategic risks** identified for the scheme are presented, with mitigating actions set out. As well as issues relating to COVID-19, key scheme risks relate to: utilities costs, land acquisition, any environmental issues within the land north of Scholars Walk, road safety, impact on residential properties, planning/consultation objections, cost increases, delays/cancellation to WRLtH and failure to coordinate with previous parts of the scheme.

Independent Assessor Comment

- The section on deliverability and risk, whilst relatively succinct, provides some useful confirmation of the measures in place to successfully deliver the project by the end of March 2022.
- Whilst it is generally accepted that SBC will be a reliable source of **match-funding**, no commitment from the S151 Officer is formally made with the submission.
- The **programme** provided is very high-level in nature but appears reasonable, in terms of general time periods permitted. There are clearly some potential external project risks, in terms of public and stakeholder engagement, land agreements, and utilities works, all of which could significantly affect the programme and over which the project team may have limited ability to control.
- The recent works along Langley High Street provide strong examples of SBC's **experience** in successfully delivering highway infrastructure schemes.

- It is recognised that the direct award of the contract through the SBC's DCO is the most efficient way of taking the project forward quickly and has enabled previous projects to be successfully delivered. Based upon the information presented it is challenging to conclude whether it represents the best value for money **procurement approach** but, given the timescales for delivery, it would appear to represent a prudent solution.
- The **project management arrangements**, whilst not presented in any detail, appear sensible and have successfully delivered previous projects within the same corridor.
- The **risk register** is considered to provide a sufficient amount of detail around both specific risks, as well as mitigating measures. It is recognised that this is a relatively standard highway engineering project, albeit it requires a significant element of land acquisition for which negotiations are not very developed. There is also understood to be the potential for substantial utilities works and there will be disruption to local residential properties during construction. Internal project risks include the detailed design process and development of final scheme costs. All of these elements have the potential to significantly affect the programme for delivery, as well as the cost, but these risks appear to be well understood by SBC and will be managed accordingly.
- There is limited discussion of **programme and project dependencies**.
- The details of the **communication and/or stakeholder management** processes are not described in any detail.
- There is no discussion of **benefits realisation planning or monitoring and evaluation**.

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

- The overall scheme is considered to align well with strategic priorities and there is an established need for the intervention in the future context of the predicted Hollow Hill Lane closure. The **Strategic Case** shows how the scheme will help off-set the impact of traffic diverting along the Langley High Street Corridor and, in particular, through the Station Road / Langley Road / High Street junction. In the absence of the Hollow Hill Lane closure, the strategic benefits of the scheme would be significantly reduced, albeit some local benefits will remain in terms of supporting local development.
- The preferred scheme option is demonstrated, at least in part, to meet three of the four scheme objectives (*to relieve congestion, improve connectivity, and improve journey times and quality for road users*). The evidence is less definitive on whether it will meet the fourth objective to mitigation air pollution impacts.
- The benefits of the scheme are strongly articulated for the southern end of the scheme around the Langley Road junction but there remains some uncertainty around the scale of potential impacts of widening the carriageway to two lanes through the middle and northern ends of the scheme. This is primarily due to the need for traffic to filter into single lanes to pass under the Langley Station rail bridge, creating a pinch-point for traffic movements. Whilst a long-term aspiration for the corridor would be to resolve this pinch-point, it would be a very expensive scheme and is unlikely to happen unless it is part of a wider strategy for large-scale housing development to the north.
- The benefits of the scheme for pedestrians and cyclists is also uncertain, with limited dedicated provision (other than replacement of existing crossing facilities) and potential issues of road safety and severance unless specifically addressed within the detailed design process.
- The overall **Economic Case**, whilst subject to limitations within the quantification process, presents a reasonable case for investment when considered within the context of the wider corridor improvements. The underlying assessment of benefits and costs indicates that the scheme should deliver 'medium' value for money as a standalone scheme. Taking into account a range of potential non-quantified direct, and wider indirect, economic benefits, the scheme could feasibly achieve a rating that is reasonably close to a 'high' value for money categorisation.
- Most of the environmental and social impacts are relatively neutral, but there are some uncertainties around the impact upon air quality, noise, townscape and severance.
- As with the Strategic Case, the economic benefits from the scheme will be substantially reduced without the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and there are also uncertainties around the scale of benefits that will be generated by widening Station Road to two-lanes throughout its full length from the Langley Road Junction up to Langley Station rail bridge.
- If considered within the wider context of the previously approved Section 1 and 2 schemes in the same corridor, then there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the overall Langley High Street Corridor Improvements package should deliver 'high' value for money.

There are some concerns over the robustness of the **Financial Case** presented. Whilst underlying construction costs are presented, with allowances for utilities, preliminaries, and professional fees, there remains a risk/contingency allowance of £1.043 million that represents over 50% of the total scheme costs. This indicates that the scheme costs are not well developed at this stage.

The **Commercial and Management Cases** are considered to be relatively succinct, but broadly compliant with requirements. They provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the procurement approach offers value for money within the context in which the scheme must be delivered, and that there are, generally,

robust measures in place to manage the delivery of the project. Since there is significant scheme development work still to be completed, the programme will need to be closely monitored and there remain a number of critical milestones, including land agreements, public and stakeholder consultation, and detailed scheme costings.

Conclusion

- It is our conclusion that there is sufficient evidence presented to support the overall strategic case for investment in the scheme, but only in the context of it being part of a wider corridor programme of improvements and in the event that Hollow Hill Lane being closed. The overall economic case demonstrates that, as a standalone scheme, it may only deliver 'medium' value for money, but that the wider package of measures should deliver 'high' value for money.

There are clear limitations in the detail of the scheme costs, as currently presented, and more information is required to verify that a sound financial case exists. In addition, more certainty is required around the necessary acquisition of land to accommodate the proposed scheme design.

Recommendations

- On the basis of the strength of the strategic case we recommend the scheme for approval but with the following conditions:
 - SBC to demonstrate positive discussions with the landowners that result in documented outline agreement for the acquisition of the land required to develop the scheme;
 - Production of a revised, and more robust, assessment of scheme costs, post-preliminary scheme design;
 - Formal confirmation (e.g. S151 Officer letter) to cover SBC funding allocation, along with confirmation that SBC will cover any potential cost overruns; and
 - The scheme retains an initial Benefit Cost Ratio of at least 1.5 to 1.

These conditions should be met at the earliest feasible date, but no later than 1st March 2021.

ⁱ <http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicInfrastructure/StrategicInfrastructure/BLTB/Assurance%20Framework%20for%20Berkshire%20Local%20Transport%20Body%2014%20November%202013.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.slough.gov.uk/parking-travel-and-roads/plans-for-the-future.aspx>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicInfrastructure/StrategicInfrastructure/BLTB/Assurance%20Framework%20for%20Berkshire%20Local%20Transport%20Body%2014%20November%202013.pdf>

^{iv} <http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=601&MId=5473&Ver=4>

Appendix 3

Langley High Street (Section 3) Carriageway Widening between Langley Road and Langley Rail station bridge
Full Business Case
Slough Borough Council
23 October 2020

Extension to original Langley rail station access and Harrow Market junction improvement scheme
– LEP Ref 2.21

Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely as information for Slough Borough Council and use in relation to Langley High Street (Section3) carriageway widening between Langley Road and Langley Rail station bridge Business Case.

SNC-Lavalin assumes no responsibility to any other party in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this document and/or its contents.

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How will the scheme contribute to the delivery of Thames Valley Berkshire's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)?

What is the rationale for the scheme?

What barriers to growth will it address? What is the evidence?

What other options have been considered?

What would be the consequences of a "Do Nothing" option?

Which partner organisations are involved in, and committed to, the scheme?

2. Value for money

What outputs will the scheme deliver?

How have these outputs been estimated?

What wider outcomes will be achieved in TVB? Please quantify these if possible.

To what extent are these outputs (and downstream outcomes/impacts) likely to be additional?

What is the basis for this assessment?

What is the nature of the resourcing package that is proposed (e.g. balance between private sector investment, loans and grants, etc.)?

What is the funding package through which the scheme will be delivered?

What assessment has been made of the value for money of this scheme?

How will this scheme contribute to the natural capital of Thames Valley Berkshire?

How will this scheme maximise social value for Thames Valley Berkshire?

3. Deliverability and risks

How secure are the funding contributions from your own organisation and elsewhere?

What are the key scheme milestones?

What are the proposed arrangements for project management?

What are the principal risks linked to the scheme's delivery, and what actions will be (or have been) taken to mitigate and manage these?

Introduction

The B470 Station Road / High Street (hereafter referred to as Station Road) runs through the centre of Langley village and is a key strategic link for businesses and residents, providing access to residential properties, jobs, education and amenities. Station Road runs from Langley rail station in the north to the A4 and M4 in the south and is currently a single carriageway in each direction. The scheme deliverable is the widening of the Station Road carriageway between Langley Road and a point just south of the Langley rail station bridge, from a single-lane carriageway in each direction to a two-lane carriageway in each direction. The main objective of the scheme in the short term is to reduce delay to traffic along Station Road, which currently experiences congestion particularly during the AM and PM peaks. Current traffic congestion negatively impacts journey quality for both private vehicles and bus service passengers and reduces the vibrancy of High Street and Langley village. In the longer-term, the widening of the carriageway will primarily support the anticipation of significant volumes of traffic being re-routed through Langley as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The closure will sever a key north-south route linking South Buckinghamshire with Slough/Langley, to accommodate a new rail network line to Heathrow, the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH). The rail link will significantly reduce the rail journey time to Heathrow and Slough Borough Council are acutely aware that this could negatively impact traffic flows along Station Road/ Langley High Street if not addressed.

In January 2020, a proforma application was submitted to the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership (TVB LEP) for funding of a package of interventions to ensure Station Road/ Langley High Street has sufficient capacity to accommodate an increase in traffic as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure, and the impact this will have on already congested roads. The package of interventions was split into three sub sections, as shown in Figure 1. A supplementary full business case was submitted to the TVB LEP to secure the funding for Section 2 and Section 1, in May and June 2020 respectively. The TVB LEP has since granted conditional approval for funding of these two Sections.

The TVB LEP have subsequently provisionally agreed to the funding of Section 3 subject to a more thorough business case application. This Full Business Case has been produced to present the case for the proposed widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge and the appraisal that has been undertaken.

Figure 1 - Proposed widening of High Street from Langley rail station bridge to the A4 from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction (Note: Section 3 is the focus on this business case). It should be noted that the benefits and impacts associated with the proposed scheme mirror those proposed in the January 2020 submission, which supported a package of interventions. However, the scale of the benefits should be considered as a proportion of those proposed in the original proforma. This document contains the economic appraisal for Section 3 only, to justify and support the Value for Money statement as per TVB LEP requirements.

1. **Rationale for the scheme and strategic fit**

How will the scheme contribute to the delivery of Thames Valley Berkshire's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)?

Scheme alignment with the Thames Valley Berkshire's SEP

The TVB LEP proudly promotes itself as the most productive sub-region in the UK and the key to supporting, nurturing and growing this economic powerhouse is a robust and sustainable transport infrastructure. Providing smooth and efficient movement of people and goods will not only drive growth from within Langley, Slough and the wider TVB area but will also bring outside investors into the region, thus improving economic prosperity and productivity.

The TVB LEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2015/2016 – 2022/2021 rightly states that the close proximity of Heathrow airport provides a locational advantage for the region, particularly for Slough and Langley, by ensuring residents have access to highly-skilled and high wage jobs. It also supports businesses having access to national and international markets. Although in recent months Heathrow has been hit heavily through a combination of social and economic impacts of COVID-19 and slowing progress on the designs of the Heathrow expansion, Slough Borough Council (the Council) remain optimistic that the levels of passenger demand will return to their pre-COVID levels, high levels of employment will continue, and the strategic need for the expansion will remain.

Independent of the Heathrow Expansion and its anticipated growth, the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) will provide a step change in supporting the existing employment and organic growth within Slough and Langley by providing quick and reliable access to Heathrow. The WRLtH project will implement in a 6.5km rail link between the Great Western Main Line, where existing rail services run through Slough and Langley, and London Heathrow Airport Terminal 5.

The TVB LEP's support for the WRLtH scheme is clearly articulated throughout the strategic planning documents including the SEP, the SEP Implementation Plan and the Evidence Base. This strategic support is continued through the creation of WRLtH project team and Stakeholder Steering Group, showing the TVB LEP's continued and dedicated support to the implementation of the WRLtH scheme.

Slough Borough Council appreciates the importance of this opportunity, although it is understood that improvements to the rail network should not be detrimental to other modes of transport. The WRLtH will ease congestion on the strategic road network, including the M4, M3 and M25, as road users could be more inclined to use the new rail link. However, to deliver the WRLtH alongside the existing Great Western rail network, the road tunnel (Chequers Bridge) on Hollow Hill Lane will have to be permanently closed. As a popular local commuter route, this will force traffic to use alternative routes, potentially adding a significant amount of pressure on local roads. The current level of congestion experienced along High Street is already cause for concern, but with the additional traffic anticipated as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane, Station Road and Langley

High Street could face significant operational issues and be unable to cope with the natural economic growth expected in the region in addition to the step change from closing Hollow Hill Lane. The scheme aims to support the WRLtH scheme and economic prosperity in the TVB region whilst mitigating the impact that will result from the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

As we enter a period of recession as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the robustness of both local businesses and corporate firms, and the support received from the LEP will be critical to helping businesses and employees through this unprecedented and difficult time. As businesses adapt to a new environment emerging from the pandemic, the SEP principles are important as businesses and the economy rebuild themselves. Therefore, the TVB LEP must be confident that the scheme will contribute to the delivery of the SEP in both the short and long-term. The SEP indicates that the growth of the economy is fundamentally shaped by the maturity of the transport infrastructure which will continue to encourage sustainable local transport networks that promote active travel. Slough Borough Council is confident that the scheme will help to develop the transport infrastructure assets within Langley, including the potential to use the additional carriageway lanes proposed on Station Road as passive provision for cycle lanes to promote active travel in the future if deemed appropriate by the Council and based upon demand. The potential to convert one of the Station Road traffic lanes, in each direction, at a future date to a cycle lane provides adaptability for the Council as it allows an understanding of the long-term shift towards active travel, or whether an increase in cycle space is a temporary consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, with the proposed carriageway widening, this allows for the conversion of one of the lanes to bus lane too, should the demand and desire for this exist in the future, to support shift from private to public travel.

Figure 2 below highlights the key transport infrastructure surrounding the scheme, including the Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) Phases 1 and 2 along the A4 and the M4 Highways England Smart motorway scheme to the south, Heathrow Airport, Langley Station improvements, Crossrail and the proposed WRLtH.

Figure 2 - Wider geographical area showing the key transport infrastructure.

The proposed scheme, which is an extension to the original rail station accessibility and Station Road/ High Street/ Langley Road junction improvement scheme in Langley, both of which have now been delivered on site, will complement the SEP's overall vision by ensuring that: "The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich, networks [and] our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential"

Slough Borough Council recognises that TVB is in the final stages of the current SEP delivery period, and whilst the scheme is due for completion in early 2022, there is confidence that the proposal will align with the subsequent SEP by delivering improved transport infrastructure, indirectly supporting economic growth in Langley, Slough and the wider TVB district.

In addition, this scheme extension will contribute to the delivery of the following packages within the TVB SEP:

(N.B. The text below shows how the proposed extension to the original Langley highway improvement scheme will support the delivery of the SEP in chronological order, despite the Packages not being in numerical order.)

SEP Package 2: Enhancing urban connectivity

Station Road/ High Street is the central north-south aligned road that links businesses and residents to Langley rail station and the strategic road network (A4, M4 and M25), and is a popular through route for commuters and public services. Currently, Station Road/ High Street suffers from congestion during the AM and PM peaks as it is the key link between residential areas and the wider road network as shown in Figure 2 above.

In the short-term, the scheme aims to reduce congestion along Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge and reduce the externalities such as the negative environmental impacts that are associated with the slow-moving nature of congested traffic, notably noise and air quality. Both High Street/ Langley Road and High Street/ Meadfield Road junction are heavily used and of strategic importance to the operation of traffic movements within Langley village, as they support east-west movements. Both schemes have received TVB LEP funding to improve the operational performance of the junctions (Langley Road junction improvements were completed in March 2020 and Langley Road junction improvements has conditional funding from the TVB LEP). As the proposed scheme will deliver increased capacity on both the north and south Station Road approaches to the Langley Road junction, the widening of the Station Road carriageway will compliment and supplement the existing connectivity improvements along High Street. Although the proposed scheme will increase the capacity of Station Road as an individual scheme, the combined effect of Sections 1, 2, and 3, and the Langley Road/ High Street/ Station Road scheme will result in enhanced benefits to the operational performance of the road over and above the individual schemes.

High Street/Station Road is also the primary route to access Langley rail station, linking residents and businesses to the Great Western Main Line, Crossrail and the WRLtH when built. Passengers can use Langley rail station to travel into London, the south west or connect to the wider rail network. In 2017, Langley rail station received TVB LEP funding to improve access to the station for pedestrians, cyclists and passengers with reduced mobility including step free access to the station. The proposed scheme, which is an extension of the original Langley rail station and Accessibility improvement scheme (LEP reference 2.21), will enhance the works previously undertaken at Langley rail station to improve access to the station and rail network for passengers travelling by private vehicle or bus. By increasing capacity of Station Road and reducing congestion, the scheme will also support cyclists travelling to Langley rail station, supporting residents using active travel. The widening of Station Road will help to ensure that connectivity benefits and local growth potential resulting from the rail network can be fully realised.

In the long-term, this route will become increasingly important after the proposed closure of Hollow Hill Lane. Strategic traffic modelling has shown that the closure of Hollow Hill Lane will result in a re-routing of traffic onto Station Road/ High Street in Langley and this increased number of vehicles will make Station Road even more congested. The downstream effects of this congestion

threaten to impact labour supply to local businesses, access to high-wage and high-skilled jobs and will inhibit future economic prosperity.

It is also key to consider the importance of Station Road as an access route to education facilities. Figure 3 shows the location of key education sites including Marish Primary School, Langley Hall Primary Academy and Langley College, and their close proximity to Station Road/ High Street and the proposed Section 3 scheme.

Figure 3 - Education sites located in close proximity to the proposed widening of High Street. It is vital that Station Road/ High Street continues to provide safe and efficient access to the above education facilities, supporting both Slough Borough Council's and the TVB Local Economic Partnership's investment in future generations. Inspiring the next generation and securing access to talented people is a key priority within the TVB LEP SEP document. In addition, solving traffic congestion is expected to reduce noise and air pollutant levels which particularly ameliorate the risk for children. According to TAG guidance, the locations of schools, nurseries, playgrounds, community centres, parks, open spaces and other facilities used by children, should be considered as sensitive receptors in an air quality impact analysis.

Local junction modelling has forecast that the increase in traffic on Meadfield Road, which currently uses Hollow Hill Lane, will adversely affect the flow of traffic along High Street/ Station Road, resulting in long delays for vehicles and other negative environmental impacts associated with slow moving traffic. The previously submitted business cases (May 2020) for Section 2, being the signalisation of High Street/ Meadfield Road junction, will begin to address the impact of Hollow Hill Lane in addition to Section 1 (June 2020) for the widening of the High Street carriageway between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road. Previous LEP investment was used to signalise High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road junction to add capacity and improve operational efficiency. The proposed scheme will add a two-lane southbound approach and two-lane northbound exit to the High Street/ Langley Road junction, therefore providing additional benefit to the operation of the junction and supplementing previous LEP investment.

The combined effect of Sections 1, 2 and 3 will result in improved operational efficiency and flow vehicle movement along Station Road/ High Street, helping to accommodate future demand as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure. The scheme will also enhance urban connectivity by improving access to Langley rail station and the wider road network.

Although the scheme does not include any direct improvements to bus services or Non-Motorised Users (NMU) infrastructure, it is important to note that introducing a two-lane in each direction carriageway will provide passive provision, to allow Slough Borough Council to turn one lane in each direction to either a bus lane or cycleway in the future should there be a requirement or strategic desire to do so. As evidence suggests, this will reduce risks for cyclists, and therefore have an impact on net safety as a result. This would also support the long-term capacity and strategic need for the road, encouraging active and sustainable travel modes.

SEP Package 6: Enhancing the strategic transport network

The SEP Implementation Plan recognises that the strategic road network is becoming increasingly constrained combined with minimal opportunities to create new roads. Therefore, the challenge is the maximise existing capacity and tackle pinch points across the network. The previously funded High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road junction and the proposed High Street/ Meadfield Road junction improvements will deliver enhanced operational performance at two key pinch points along the High Street. The proposed Section 3 scheme will also support the LEP funded Section 1 carriageway widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road by continuing the two-lane in each direction carriageway to the north, between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge. This will support the LEP ambition of improving existing infrastructure rather than investing in new roads. As a result of completing the Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) Phase 1 and 2 programmes , the east-west corridor through Slough has been well developed in recent years and is beginning to transform Slough, Langley and the wider TVB district. However, north-south connections through both town centres remains both a challenge and a priority to Slough Borough Council. High Street/ Station Road also provides a link for businesses to Buckinghamshire through Langley Park Road. The road is also frequently used by commuters who travel across county boundaries for employment. This key route could also see an increase in traffic if the Northern Extension housing development, which will see the creation of up to 10,000 new houses, is built in partnership with Buckinghamshire County Councilvi. The scheme aims to improve the flow of traffic along Station Road/ High Street between Langley Road and Langley rail station, supporting north-south connectivity and helping to deliver SEP Package 6.

Although the proposed scheme aims to deliver carriageway widening along Station Road, and combined with Sections 1 and 2 the northern most section of High Street, Slough Borough Council are committed to exploring additional sources of funding to develop the scheme along the entire length of High Street to the south, between Elmhurst Road and the A4. As such, the benefits of increased capacity on the road and reduced congestion will be enhanced from those described within this business case and will support the development of the wider strategic transport network. The southern half of High Street will directly link to the A4 and SMaRT network and be in close proximity to M4 junction 5. The widening of Station Road carriageway is the final link of the northern section. Combined with the southern section, they form the ‘missing link’ in upgrading the transport network within Langley, as demonstrated in the Figure 2. The investment in the scheme will help to deliver an inclusive and integrated transport network for Langley and Slough residents and businesses, as well as improved access to the strategic rail network to Heathrow and London. To some extent, the improved connectivity and traffic flow along Station Road will also benefit Bus Services 3 and 459 that currently uses Station Road as part of their route. Bus passengers are likely to see an improvement in their journey quality as bus services will be less likely to experience congestion along Station Road. As a result, a number of potential benefits associated with improving bus users journey time may potentially arise (e.g. reduction in bus travel times in the urban network, and operational speed benefits including savings on fleet size requirements, fuel and labour cost, among others). This could also result in increased bus patronage in the long-term. Within Package 6, the TVB LEP also indicates the importance of the WRLtH, and the need to provide certainty with regards to its early implementation. The strategic need for the WRLtH is a clear narrative throughout the Strategic Economic Plan, enhancing and supporting the growth of the strategic transport network, of which the scheme aims to support, particularly as the scheme is located adjacent to Langley rail station.

SEP Package 5: Foundations for future growth for housing, transport and utilities

Widening the carriageway from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction will increase the capacity of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge. In addition to supporting the increase in demand as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure, the increased road capacity will support future growth in housing, businesses and retail through providing a fit-for-purpose, resilient transport network which is a key factor for potential development investors.

By ensuring that Station Road and the Langley Road/ High Street and Meadfield Road/ High Street junctions operate more efficiently, the scheme will support the future growth in housing, businesses and retail in a sustainable manner. Although the scheme does not directly support or unlock a significant growth in housing, transport and utilities, the efficiency and robustness of a transport network, of which this scheme supports, underpins the foundations needed for effective and sustainable growth. The scheme will indirectly support the planned housing provision outlined in the Strategic Economic Plan (planned housing in Slough between 2006-2026 is 6,300 dwellings)ⁱ, including those which require up-front investments in infrastructure to achieve successful delivery. The combined effect of interventions proposed along High Street/ Station Road (Sections 1, 2 and the proposed Section 3) will future proof the carriageway for growth in housing, transport and utilities.

The efficiency of Station Road, particularly through the proposed scheme will support access for SMEs and residents to local and national infrastructure projects including Langley Business Centre, Crossrail, the Heathrow Airport Expansion and the wider strategic road network. As aforementioned, the scheme will support the improved access to Langley rail station and encourage intermodal travel. In addition, the scheme will directly support access to Langley Business Centre and its vision of building a new data centre to support a thriving technology industry within the area. The latest data centre plans include retail, leisure and residential prospects with other light industrial opportunities with a minimum of 582 jobs created ^{xvi}. Any future works at Langley Business Centre will benefit from increased carriageway capacity along Station Road, not only to cater for the additional trips generated from the development, but also Heavy Goods Vehicles required for construction.

The scheme's main priority of reducing current and future congestion along the High Street, will improve access to the local labour supply supporting businesses and the wider Thames Valley district. The scheme will also support and further improve the operational performance of the Langley Road/ High Street and Meadfield Road/High Street junctions by introducing a two-lane southbound approach and two-lane northbound exit to the Langley Road/ High Street junction. The construction works to upgrade the Langley Road/ High Street junction to a signalised junction was completed in March 2020. Slough Borough Council are committed to ensuring that the works completed for the proposed Section 3 scheme will be complementary to the Langley Road signalisation scheme.

SEP Package 1: Unlocking housing developments

The scheme will complement the ongoing transport infrastructure improvements in Langley, the combined effects of which will help to unlock new housing developments and support the TVB SEP Implementation Plan of delivering 21,060 jobs and 10,702 houses by 2021 across the wider TVB area . This includes the collaboration between the Borough of Slough and South Buckinghamshire District Council to develop proposals for the Northern Extension . The permanent closure of Hollow Hill Lane could prove detrimental to the Northern Extension business case if local roads prove unable to cope with additional vehicles.

If the Northern Extension be deemed unfeasible, the Council will seek to continue to deliver additional housing in the coming years. Thus, Slough Borough Council is taking a proactive approach to ensure that the roads remain efficient, for both short term benefits of closing Hollow Hill Lane and future developments such as the Northern Extension. The proposed widening of High Street from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction, between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge, will prove valuable to the efficient movement of vehicles and wider housing developments.

SEP Package 3: Encouraging vibrant town centres

High Streets across the UK are undergoing a radical change, primarily driven through a large shift towards online shopping. In addition, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is adding further strain on High Streets as retailers struggle to cope with the rapidly changing demands of social distancing and consumer confidence in shopping in store rather than online. As a result, the customer experience and public perception and ambience of High Street shopping and services, now more than ever, is vital to ensure their success in the future.

It is unlikely that a heavily congested High Street will attract and retain both businesses and consumers, thus the scheme will play an important role in ensuring the ambience of Langley remains inviting. The widened carriageway will retain the current speed limit to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists along Station Road, including pedestrian crossing points. Consideration will be taken to incorporate streetscape improvements as the design progresses, if feasible, to improve the 'sense of place' along Station Road.

The current feasibility design for the proposed scheme can be found in Appendix B.
Alignment with other local and regional policies

Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS) March 2019 (Framework document for consultation)
Local Enterprise Partnerships had been tasked with producing Local Industrial Strategies to seek to boost economic competitiveness. Thames Valley Berkshire LEP had framed the BLIS around three locally defined imperatives, as set out in section 2 of the document. The BLIS sets out an agenda for action under five distinct Priorities. Within this framework, the proposed scheme will contribute to the delivery of the following priorities:

Priority 1: Enhancing productivity within Berkshire's enterprises

The BLIS document suggests that levels of investment within Berkshire have stalled over recent years and could continue to plateau as the UK enters a period of recession as a result of COVID-19. The importance of ensuring businesses are as productive as possible will be vital to ensuring long

term success. Labour workers stuck in congested traffic, particularly in the AM and PM peaks as witnessed along High Street/ Station Road, will hinder productivity for both Langley and the wider Slough borough. Similarly, if the movement of goods is negatively affected by congestion on the local roads, businesses could lose their competitiveness and present additional costs to transport goods. By reducing congestion along Station Road, and consequently adding capacity, the scheme will support Priority 1, helping to sustain and improve productivity.

Priority 3: International trade, connections, collaborations and investment

International trade, connections, collaborations and investment recognises the importance of Berkshire's location in relation to Heathrow Airport and national transport infrastructure (particularly the M4 and Great Western Railway) in maintaining its economic prosperity. However, it also cites congestion and maintaining attractive places as barriers to attracting investors and innovation-focussed industries that would ensure long-term growth. The BLIS therefore supports the TVB LEP's view for the strategic need for the WRLtH – giving improved access to Heathrow– but highlights the need for congestion mitigation and placemaking measures to ensure the potential benefits are fully realised. The proposed widening of Station Road from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction will support the economic prosperity of the local economy by alleviating congestion and reducing average delay which facilitates connectivity and investments. This is particularly pertinent for the proposed Section 3, between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge as Station Road runs adjacent to the station and thus important for accessing the rail network. The widening of Station Road will also support cross county connections between South Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

Priority 4: Vibrant places and a supportive infrastructure

Vibrant places and a supportive infrastructure highlight the importance of sites close to railway stations and motorway junctions, and in strategic transport corridors to achieve these aims. It is anticipated that, as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure, Station Road will become overly congested with the redirected traffic. As the location of Station Road is within such close proximity to the M25 and M4, large volumes of commuter traffic could use the Station Road/ High Street as a shortcut, particularly if long queues are witnessed on the SRN. In addition, Station Road, is the primary access route to Langley rail station for residents and businesses, including access to Crossrail. This scheme will support the BLIS framework by improving the flow of traffic along Station Road. Streetscape improvements will be considered to be incorporated within the scheme, if feasible, to enhance the liveability of the surrounding environment.

Slough's Five Year Plan (2020 – 2025)

The Five Year Plan document outlines the Council's vision for Slough, the priority outcomes and the milestones towards delivering it. The Plan focuses on five priority outcomes, of which the scheme will help to deliver the following:

Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs

The Five Year plan describes poor levels of physical activity as a key issue leading to particular challenges around preventable diseases such as cardiovascular health and diabetes which put pressure on the health and social care services. Whilst there are no pedestrian or cycle improvements specifically related to Section 3, the road widening is expected to provide passive

provision for the introduction of segregated cycle infrastructure along Station Road in the future, should there be the demand and strategic direction to do so. The scheme will also maintain existing levels of pedestrian crossings to ensure the safety of students using High Street/ Station Road to access education facilities nearby, and supporting residents wishing to pursue an active and healthy lifestyle.

Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay

This priority highlights the need to invest in infrastructure to enhance the visual appeal of the public realm, improve air pollution and promote community events to achieve the regeneration of Slough and the associated positive impacts for the community. By reducing congestion along the High Street, it will become a more attractive place to live, work and shop. As a result, opportunities exist to increase physical activity and improve air quality through the scheme development. It will also reduce congestion associated with large-scale events including Slough Canal Festival and the Horticultural Show in Bloom and Lascelland Parks nearby. As the design of the scheme progresses, consideration will be given to including streetscape/ public realm enhancements as part of the package of works, to ensure Station Road provides an attractive environment to its users.

Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes

As recognised in the plan, the opportunity for new housing developments in Slough is severely limited in terms of space and the capacity of the network. Increasing the capacity of the road network in Langley would enable future housing developments to be realised, including attracting new investors into the area. The combined effect of the Station Road/ High Street widening schemes and junction improvement schemes (Sections 1, 2, and 3) will support this strategic outcome however, due to the size of the scheme, it is unlikely to unlock major housing development by itself.

Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

As part of this priority, the Council aims to make the most of the benefits of the Heathrow expansion and WRLtH to maximise the growth potential of Slough and Langley. The proposed scheme supports the WRLtH by implementing measures to ensure the smooth operation of traffic through Langley as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and impact of redistributed traffic through Langley.

Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 (Adopted December 2008)

The Core Strategy is the central strategic policy document in the Local Development Framework. It highlights the key issues Slough will encounter over the next 20 years, and the Council's plan to proactively address for development across the Borough. The primary themes are to enhance the transport network and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport within the community.

In order to deliver the policies, a number of Strategic Objectives have been proposed in the strategy, of which the scheme will help to deliver the following:

Strategic Objective A: To focus development in the most accessible locations such as the town centre, district and neighbourhood centres and public transport hubs and make the best use of existing buildings, previously developed land and existing and proposed infrastructure. The Framework recognises that focusing on improving the town centre and existing infrastructure will be essential for regeneration of Slough. The proposed widening of High Street from one lane to two lanes in each direction will support this objective of improving the Langley town centre and existing road infrastructure.

Strategic Objective E: To encourage investment and regeneration of employment areas and existing town, district and neighbourhood shopping centres to increase their viability, vitality, variety and distinctiveness. The strategy identifies congestion as a key issue that needs to be addressed because it limits development and erodes the character of town centres and residential areas. Improving congestion issues on Station Road will help to ease pressure on the wider road network to help to deliver this objective.

Strategic Objective I: To reduce the need to travel and create a transport system that encourages sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport. The Framework recognises the importance of local bus services for tackling congestion. With reduced congestion along the High Street and Station Road, passengers using Bus Services 7 (Heathrow – Slough Town Centre), 459 (Poyle/ Iver – Heathrow), and 583 (Hedgerley – Slough) will benefit from shorter, more reliable journey times that will increase the attractiveness of the bus service.

Slough's Third Local Transport plan 2011 – 2026

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Slough outlines the fifteen-year plan for the local transport network, describing how Slough Borough Council will maintain and improve transport in the borough, to align with both national and local objectives. The proposed scheme will support the following objectives outlined in the Slough LTP:

Table 1 - Alignment of the High Street widening with objectives of Slough's Third Local Transport Plan.

Local Transport Plan Objective	Alignment with the proposed scheme
To minimise the noise generated by the transport network, and its impacts.	Noise exposure leads to annoyance and impairment of quality of life. By reducing localised congestion, noise levels on High Street and Station Road are expected to be reduced. However, by increasing the capacity of the road, there may also be some increase in noise exposure to surrounding receptors.
To achieve better links between neighbourhoods and access to the natural environment.	Connectivity for public transport users will be enhanced as bus services will operate with improved journey time reliability and customer experience. Likewise, supporting the WRLtH will improve connectivity across the wider TVB area.
To improve the journey experience of transport users across Slough's transport networks.	Private vehicles and bus services will experience lower travel times as a result of reduced congestion. This will improve journey experience of transport users.
To reduce transport CO2 emissions and make the transport network resilient to the effects of climate change.	Reducing the start-stop nature of congested traffic will support the reduction in transport CO2 emissions and other pollutants.
To ensure that the transport system helps Slough sustain its economic competitiveness and retain its position as an economic hub of the South East.	Proposed widening of Station Road from one lane to two lanes in each direction will ease the current levels of congestion while enabling more reliable journey times.
To facilitate the development of new housing in accordance with the LDF.	New commercial and housing development will generate new demands for travel. The scheme will increase the capacity of the road network, enabling it to better support future development.

Emerging Local Plan for Slough

The emerging Local Plan for Slough aims to address key challenges Slough and Langley will encounter during the 2016-2036 delivery period, and importantly how to tackle congestion on the road network. The new Local Plan will update the existing core strategy, site allocations, and local plan saved policies. The Planning Policy Team are currently working on the Emerging Local Plan and the preferred Spatial Strategy and its publication and adoption is still to be confirmed due to the uncertainty surrounding the proposed third runway at Heathrow Airport. In any case, the road widening, which is the focus of this funding application, aligns with both the current and emerging Local Plan to help address the issue of future congestion on Slough's roads.

Overview of Strategic Alignment

Table 2 below presents an overview of how the widening of Langley High Street, from a single to two-lane carriageway between Langley Road and Langley rail station, aligns with the policies and plans detailed in the preceding sections.

Table 2 - Alignment of the scheme with local and regional policies.

Main Scheme Objectives

Strategic policy	Relieve localised congestion and provide potential additional capacity within the network	Mitigate future impact of air pollution on Station Road including links to the rail network and wider highway network.	Improve connectivity, Improved journey time and quality for road users
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Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS)	?		?
Slough's Five Year Plan	?	?	?
Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy		?	?
Slough's Local Transport Plan	?	?	?
Emerging Local Plan for Slough	?	?	

What is the rationale for the scheme?

Scheme extension location

Langley is a large village within The Borough of Slough, approximately two miles east of central Slough. Whilst primarily residential, Langley also includes light industrial, commercial, retail and leisure use. Key sites within Langley include the Langley Hall Primary Academy & Langley College, Langley Park Memorial Recreation Ground, Langley Business Centre & Waterside Drive Business Park, Harrow Market and Langley rail station (which is on the Great Western Main Line to London Paddington and which will soon be on Crossrail, providing connectivity into London)

Langley High Street/ Station Road (B470) is currently single carriageway, with one lane in each direction. It is north-south aligned, running from the A4 Junction 5 in the south to Langley rail station in the north, and through the heart of Langley in the centre. The B470 Station Road continues northbound as Langley Park Road towards Iver and South Buckinghamshire. It is subject to 20mph and 30mph speed limits along its extent.

To the immediate east of and running parallel to High Street is Mansion Lane / Hollow Hill Lane / Market Lane. This connects traffic from Iver in the north to Sutton Lane / M4 Junction 5 in the south and is a route used by thousands of commuters each day. Traffic surveys undertaken by Network Rail in 2015 recorded an average weekday (24 hours) flow of 7,767 vehicles (two-way). The high volume of vehicles using Hollow Hill Lane, of which a large proportion is expected to divert onto High Street and, in particular, Station Road, as a result of the WRLtH proposal, is a key driving factor for the rationale for the proposed widening of Station Road from one lane in each direction

to two lanes in each direction. Figure 4 below shows the location of the scheme, alongside key geographical landmarks reported above.

This scheme is an extension to the 'original' improvement scheme developed for Langley (LEP Ref 2.21), consisting of:

1. Junction upgrade at Station Road/ Waterside Drive and accessibility improvements to Langley rail station (scheme delivered in 2018) shown in Figure 4.
2. In addition to the above original scheme, junction improvements (conversion of a mini roundabout to signalised junction with pedestrian crossings) at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road (completed on site in March 2020), shown in Figure 4.
3. In May 2020, Slough Borough Council submitted a business case application to the TVB LEP to signalise the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction as the junction was considered high priority in mitigating the impacts of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The TVB LEP have confirmed conditional funding for the implementation of the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction.
4. Subsequently in June 2020, Slough Borough Council submitted a business case application to the TVB LEP for widening of the High Street from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road, and introduce a central median between the northbound and southbound lanes to include small trees (subject to feasibility and safety considerations to be established during the next phase of design) to improve streetscape along proposed stretch of widened carriageway. The TVB LEP have confirmed conditional funding for the implementation of the High Street widening direction between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road.

Figure 4 – Location of the proposed scheme, Langley Village and surrounding landmarks.

Scheme rationale

As aforementioned, this scheme is an extension to the original improvement scheme in Langley (LEP Ref 2.21) and is primarily in response to the expected re-distribution of traffic from Hollow Hill Lane to High Street, as a result of Hollow Hill lane being permanently closed. The Section 3 scheme also complements the Section 1 (widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road) and Section 2 (High Street/ Meadfield Road signalisation) schemes which currently have LEP conditional funding approval, with the aim to provide increased capacity and improved flow of traffic along Station Road and High Street in Langley. The scheme will also provide additional improvement to the operation of the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction, by adding an additional approach and exit lane on the Station Road arm. It is therefore designed to reduce additional congestion and delay through Langley, that is expected to otherwise occur due to the planned closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

In the short-term, the scheme will help to alleviate the current traffic congestion witnessed along High Street and Station Road, and the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street and Meadfield Road/ High Street junctions (beyond that which will be delivered through the Section 1 and 2 schemes). As High Street/ Station Road will continue to be a key road within Langley, it is likely that

the number of vehicles using the road will increase organically in line with anticipated economic growth predicted in the strategic documents reported above. As such, the scheme will help to ease congestion issues along High Street/ Station Road in line with gradual growth in vehicle numbers.

As aforementioned, in the longer-term, the widening of the carriageway will primarily support the anticipation of significant volumes of traffic being re-routed through Langley, via Station Road, as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

Slough Borough Council understands the importance of the WRLtH and the significant benefits it will bring in terms of employment, connectivity and improved economic prosperity for both Langley, Slough and the wider Thames Valley area. However, the benefits associated with the WRLtH could be overshadowed by the possible negative effects of overly congested roads, environmental disbenefits associated with queueing/ stationary vehicular traffic, reduced vibrancy of Langley town centre and negative public opinion accompanying such conditions. Thus, a strategic objective of this scheme is to support Network Rail and the WRLtH by increasing capacity and reducing congestion on a key stretch of carriageway, whilst also striving to improve liveability in the urban environment.

There have been multiple independent studies commissioned to assess the impact of closing Hollow Hill Lane and the potential redistribution of traffic on surrounding local roads. The results of these studies support the strategic fit and provide evidence for a compelling case for change. The following four studies are discussed in further detail below:

- Experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane and resulting traffic flow analysis, Slough Borough Council and Buckinghamshire County Council (2016);
- Western Rail Link to Heathrow modelling outputs, Network Rail (January 2020);
- Strategic traffic modelling using SATURN, Atkins (February 2019); and
- Local traffic modelling using LINSIG, Atkins (Spring, 2020).

Experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane (Slough Borough Council and Buckinghamshire County Council)

In 2016, a six-month experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane was conducted to better understand the effects upon the local highway network. This is the most robust example of impact analysis possible and strongly complements the strategic modelling undertaken by Network Rail and Atkins, along with the local modelling undertaken by Atkins reported in further detail below. Whilst the focus of the traffic impact study was on Iver, given that the investigation was commissioned by Buckinghamshire County Council, the Study Area also covered Langley Park Road which leads directly to Station Road and the extent of this Section 3 scheme. The Study reported the following key impacts upon Langley:

- 24 Hour: An additional 1,389 northbound and 2,836 southbound vehicles on Langley Park Road, which continues south onto Station Road through Langley and the proposed scheme;
- AM Peak flows between 08:00-09:00 show that approximately 60% of vehicles previously using Hollow Hill Lane as part of their journey route now use Langley Park Road; and
- PM peak flows between 17:00-18:00 observed a 48% increase in vehicles using Langley Park Road who would have previously used Hollow Hill Lane.

Although the study gives no indication to the percentage of vehicles that subsequently travel from Langley High Street to Station Road, as the major north-south road connector with relatively minor side roads along this stretch, we can confidently assume that a significant proportion of this re-distributed traffic carried through to Station Road. These modelling results show a similar pattern to the strategic traffic modelling undertaken separately by Network Rail and Atkins, reported on the following pages.

The Study found that a majority (67% based on 24 hour) of re-distributed traffic uses Langley Park Lane (and onwards to Station Road/ High Street through Langley) rather than the other most feasible alternate route being Thorney Lane North (25%) through Iver. This supports Station Road/ High Street as being an important location for the focus of remedial measures. As Station Road/ High Street is already frequently subject to congestion and queuing traffic during the AM and PM peaks, the anticipated increase in traffic volume stated above will place pressure on the network and adversely impact the passenger experience of using the road.

The Study concluded that the increased levels of traffic observed during the Study will serve to exacerbate the existing congestion and environmental functions of the roads within the Study Area. The Section 3 scheme will complement the Section 1 and Section 2 scheme which have already received conditional LEP funding to address the aforementioned issues. The proposed widening of the Station Road (between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge) to two lanes in each direction will provide additional capacity for this expected increase in traffic and is therefore required as a strategic step towards mitigating the impacts of the WRLtH. The Section 3 scheme will also reduce delay at the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction. Slough Borough Council will continue to seek a wider package of works to implement before Hollow Hill Lane is permanently closed which will allow the High Street to continue to operate as a strategic through route and Langley to function as a centre for housing, employment, education and local commerce. This includes a further extension of the proposed highway widening scheme in the south from Elmhurst Road to the A4. The completion of carriageway widening along the entire length of High Street/ Station Road will significantly increase the capacity of the road and will support the organic and step change growth in vehicle numbers expected.

Western Rail Link to Heathrow modelling outputs (Network Rail)

In January 2020, to support their DCO submission and case for change to implement the Western Rail Link to Heathrow, Network Rail released the outputs of their highway modelling which assessed the impacts of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane on the surrounding local road network, including Langley High Street. The results of the modelling shown in Figure 5, are for absolute change in PCUs in the AM and PM peaks in a 2028 weekday scenario from 'without scheme' to 'with scheme', where the 'with scheme' includes the implementation of the WRLtH and the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

Figure 5 - Western Rail Link to Heathrow modelling outputs (Change in PCUs: without scheme/with scheme).

In line with the outcomes of the Buckinghamshire County Council Iver study reported above, the results of the Network Rail modelling analysis show a high absolute change in the number of PCUs

using Langley Park Road and subsequently Station Road as an alternative route upon the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The report continues to focus on individual junctions within the study area rather than the impact on stretches of road as proposed by this scheme. However, the junction flow diagrams above indicate that Langley Park Road/ Station Road will have a significant increase in the number of vehicles using the road during the AM and PM peaks, mirroring the trend observed during the experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

One of the junctions identified by Network Rail as having a significant increase in traffic as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane is the Station Road/Waterside Drive junction, located immediately north of the Langley rail station bridge, and adjacent to the scheme. The modelling showed an average additional 210 vehicles in 2022 and 190 vehicles in 2028 ‘with scheme’ scenarios, during the AM and PM peaks. The full results of the Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Network Rail strategic modelling – traffic flows at Station Road/ Waterside Drive with and without Hollow Hill Lane closure.

Peaks	2022 without scheme*		2022 with scheme		2028 without scheme		2028 with scheme	
Station Road (northbound)								
AM	576	779 (+203)	562	763 (+201)				
PM	501	720 (+219)	522	723 (+201)				
Station Road (southbound)								
AM	592	800 (+208)	632	795 (+163)				
PM	608	817 (+208)	608	803 (+195)				

* The ‘scheme’ being the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and implementation of the WRLtH.

Whilst the Network Rail model results do not provide the expected increase in traffic south of Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction and along the extent of the Section 3 scheme, the only options for traffic to turn off of Station Road before reaching the scheme extents are Waterside Drive and the Langley rail station access road. These minor side roads have a combined peak hour average total flow of 312 vehicles in 2022 and 282 vehicles in 2028, in the ‘with scheme’ scenario. Thus, it can be safely assumed that a high proportion of this increase in traffic will also apply to Station Road along the Section 3 scheme extents. This provides a case for widening Station Road from one lane in each direction to two-lanes in each direction, and the benefit of providing the additional capacity required.

Strategic modelling to understand the wider area impact of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane (Atkins)

As aforementioned, Network Rail is proposing to create a high-speed rail link from Langley to Heathrow T5 (WRLtH), which would require the permanent closure of Hollow Hill Lane. Strategic modelling has also been undertaken by Atkins, in SATURN, a highway assignment model, and has demonstrated that the impact of this closure would be the re-routing/ re-distribution of a significant amount of Hollow Hill Lane traffic onto Station Road/ High Street, through Langley.

Figure 6 below captures the forecast change in traffic flows by the model in future year 2028, as a direct result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. It is evident that the model is forecasting a re-distribution of traffic from Mansion Lane/ Hollow Hill Lane/ Market Lane onto High Street, as vehicles are using the route through Langley as the most feasible alternative, supporting the findings of the two studies above.

Figure 6 - Changes in traffic flow associated with the closure of Hollow Hill Lane (output from the strategic model, where blue represents a reduction in traffic and green represents an increase in traffic).

Specifically, the model is forecasting an increase in traffic on Station Road/ High Street, north of Harrow Market in the centre of Langley, of between 140 and 190 vehicles in each direction, during the peak hours. This is an increase of approximately 15-30% in traffic in both directions along Station Road/ High Street, in relation to today's flows. The consequence of this, without the increased highway capacity which this scheme is designed to provide, is increased delay and queuing through Langley, and in particular Station Road south of Langley rail station bridge, leading to adverse environmental impacts as a result of stationary or slow-moving traffic (increased noise and reduced air quality).

Local junction modelling, to understand the direct impact upon Station Road/ High Street, due to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane (Atkins)

It is important to note the context of the Section 3 scheme, being that it is a direct extension to the improvements already delivered to Station Road and High Street, in addition to the planned improvements to the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction (Section 2) and carriageway widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (Section 1) which have both secured conditional LEP funding.

As part of the Full Business Case for Section 1 and Section 2, local junction modelling within LINSIG was undertaken during Spring 2020 to understand:

- a) the impact of the Hollow Hill Lane closure on the junction and likely performance in the future (2028), without intervention.
- b) the benefit of the Section 2 scheme, being the signalisation of the junction, which has since received conditional approval for LEP funding.
- c) the benefit of the Section 1 scheme, being widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road which has since received conditional approval for LEP funding.

Based on the local junction modelling it was established that, firstly a significant worsening in operation due to the increased flows through the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction and High Street without any intervention; and secondly that the Section 1 and Section 2 scheme provided notable improvement to junction operations, with reduced levels of delay to traffic. It is pertinent to note that in undertaking this modelling, prior to the Business Case, it was discussed between the designers and modellers how having an additional exit lane on Station Road would provide further benefit to the junctions.

To quantifiably assess the benefit of the Section 3 scheme, two modelling approaches were discussed between Atkins, Slough Borough Council and the LEP. These were:

- a. To use the Atkins strategic model to assess the benefit gained along the Station Road in terms of delay.
- b. To use the Atkins local model for the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street and Meadfield Road/ High Street junctions, to assess the benefit gained at these junctions as a result of the Station Road widening and, in particular, the addition of an approach and exit lane on the Station Road arm of the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction. This benefit can be captured with regards to delay, queuing and junction performance.

Following further discussions, it was agreed by all parties that the benefit of Section 3 scheme should be derived by using the existing local junction model. The reasons for this were:

- The strategic model is more suitable for assessing wider area impacts rather than ‘section of road’ impacts as required for this scheme and Business Case. The results could therefore be considered less reliable at this scale of assessment, than using local junction modelling.
- The local junction model would therefore provide a greater level of clarity with regards to benefits than the strategic model.
- Using the local junction model would provide a consistent approach to scheme assessment as undertaken for the Section 1 and 2 Business Cases.

Subsequently, for this Section 3 scheme, further local junction modelling was undertaken in August 2020, using the existing LINSIG model for Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street and Meadfield Road/ High Street, to establish the further benefit generated by widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge.

To ensure the model was consistent in approach and delivery with the Section 1 and 2 Business Cases, one future year was forecast (2028) which included the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. To ensure that the benefits of Section 3 scheme alone were captured, the ‘existing’ scenario in the model was assumed to be the existing layout plus the Section 1 and Section 2 improvement schemes, and the ‘proposed’ scenario was the existing layout, plus the Section 1 and Section 2 improvement schemes, plus the additional two lane northbound and southbound approach on Station Road as part of the proposed Section 3 scheme. The comparison between the ‘existing’ and ‘proposed’ results would therefore provide the change in delay, queuing and operation that the Section 3 scheme alone has.

It should be noted that the design of Meadfield Road/ High Street junction is not exactly as it was for the Section 1 and Section 2 Business Cases (outline design) and has been updated to reflect the tweaks as it has progressed through Preliminary Design. The Section 1 and Section 2 Business Cases (outline design) details Meadfield Road/ High Street junction with two lane approach on Meadfield Road with 3 stage staggered crossing (3 islands on Meadfield Rd arm), while during the Preliminary Design stage, the design was updated to one lane approach on Meadfield Road with a straight ahead crossing. The updated design in the Preliminary Design stage has been used to test the Section 3 scheme benefits.

The local junction model results are shown in Table 4 below. They show that the addition of the Section 3 scheme results in delay savings to all arms of the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction, with 18 PCU/hr combined saving in the AM peak (note: results are rounded to nearest second). There is a smaller scale time delay saving of 6 PCU/hr in the PM peak. The introduction of Section 3 is seen to have a negligible impact upon overall performance of the Meadfield Road/ High Street, with a small amount of delay savings in the AM peak offset by similar levels of additional delay in the PM peak. The delay savings at the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction are due to the Section 3 scheme adding an additional entry and exit lane on the Station Road arm, which allows for improved junction performance and throughput of traffic. Whilst not captured within the Economic Case (which uses the delay metrics of the model outputs only), the model results also show that the Section 3 scheme allows all arms of the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction to be under practical capacity (85% or less Degree of Saturation) in the AM peak, whereas with just the Section 1 and 2 schemes all three arms of the junction are between 85% and 100% Degree of Saturation (DoS) suggesting the junction is approaching theoretical capacity (100% DoS) by 2028. This demonstrates that Section 3 has an improvement in overall operation and the combined effects of all three Sections are more beneficial than the effects of individual schemes.

Table 4 – Junction model results – impact of Section 3

Within the Section 1 and 2 Business Cases, it was established that those schemes offer significant improvement to the operation of both junctions, to allow them to operate within theoretical capacity (under 100% DoS) in 2028 with reduced delay and queuing. This was found to mitigate the impact of Hollow Hill Lane closure. The Section 3 model results show that further delay savings can be made to help mitigate the expected increase in traffic through the junctions, particularly Station Road/ High Street/ Langley Road. It supports the case for also including the Section 3 scheme to the Section 1 and 2 schemes to provide a full package of improvements along Station Road/ High Street, as the combined improvement of all Schemes will be greater than that of the individual schemes.

It is pertinent to note that this modelling exercise only captures the benefit of the Section 3 scheme with regard to the operation of the Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction i.e. only the southern extent of the scheme itself. It is expected that further traffic flow improvement will be gained by having two lanes in each direction along the whole extent of the scheme, from the junction to the Langley rail station bridge, however this cannot be captured within the local model. It is difficult to quantify the benefit of the northern section of the scheme (widening towards the rail bridge) as there are no junctions in the northern section to derive delay benefit from.

The added capacity on the overall stretch is expected to improve the general flow of traffic, as traffic will utilise two lanes rather than one, which will reduce any fluctuations in speed and therefore delay. Given the expected increase in traffic on Station Road due to the Harrow Hill Lane closure, two lanes in each direction will provide the capacity required to accommodate the amount of traffic forecast by the strategic model and enable it to travel in a free-flow manner. In addition, at the junction with Alderbury Road, having two southbound lanes will provide the added benefit of allowing vehicles to continue to travel southbound on Station Road, whilst another vehicle is waiting to turn right onto Alderbury Road, which at present is not possible.

Hence, although the benefits on the northern section of the scheme have not been quantified, the increased highway capacity along the entire stretch is expected to result in more free flowing traffic and should be taken into account as a benefit of the scheme. As well as general traffic, the scheme will support both frequent and new users of Station Road, bus service passengers and cyclists who will all benefit from increased capacity along Station Road. These users will also benefit from the downstream effects of reduced congestion, improved air quality and reduced noise pollution.

Scheme details

The proposed Section 3 scheme is to request funding for an extension of the original Langley Station scheme, to deliver improvements to Station Road/ Langley High Street by widening the carriageway between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge. As previously mentioned, the overall aim of the proposed scheme is to increase road capacity to alleviate current congestion witnessed along Station Road/ High Street and better accommodate the additional traffic expected as a result of the potential closure of Hollow Hill Lane to the east of Station Road/ High Street.

The Section 3 scheme is an extension to the junction and rail station accessibility improvement scheme delivered at Station Road/ Waterside Drive in 2018, and the junction improvement scheme delivered at High Street/ Station Road/ Langley Road in March 2020. It is also an extension to the adjoining proposed junction improvements at Meadfield Road/ High Street (Section 2) and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (Section 1) which have conditional LEP funding approval.

For the purposes of this assessment, we have used the modelled differences in delay at the Station Road/ High Street/ Langley Road junction as a measure of how the scheme can benefit traffic along Station Road and meet the expected increase in traffic due to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. This local traffic modelling has shown that the scheme will complement the Section 1 and 2 schemes by further reducing delays, predominantly in the AM peak. Further information can be found in Appendix A.

The proposed scheme will therefore implement the following deliverables:

- Widening of Station Road from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge. The widening will primarily be undertaken on the western side of Station Road between Langley Road and Scholars Walk and then the eastern side of Station Road between Scholars Walk and Alderbury Road. This is to minimise the impact, as far as possible, upon Third Party Land.
- At the southern extent, the scheme will introduce a two-lane approach and exit to the Station Road arm of the Station Road/ Langley Road/ High Street junction.
- At the northern extent, the scheme will taper back down to one lane in each direction prior to the Langley rail station bridge. To avoid causing potential issues with turning movements into and out of the Alderbury Road side road, to the west of Station Road, it is currently proposed that the four lanes will taper back to two lanes by this junction.
- Adding a right turn filter lane at the Alderbury Road junction, to allow traffic turning right from Station Road onto Alderbury Road to do so safely and without holding up traffic on Station Road continuing southbound.

-
- New footways will be provided on the western side of Station Road where the carriageway widening is proposed, to retain existing provision for pedestrians.
 - There will be no impact upon on street parking along the extent of the scheme.
 - There is no requirement, based upon the current design, to signalise any junctions along the Section 3 extents to deliver the scheme.
 - Retention of bus stops location along Station Road along the extents of the scheme.

These interventions will help to deliver improved operational performance through the centre of Langley and will be complimentary to the ongoing works along the High Street mentioned above.

As a result of the carriageway widening, delivery of Section 3 will require the following Third-Party land:

- A portion of East Berkshire College entry frontage, on the western side of Station Road, including the grassed verge between the college car park and the carriageway. This land is included within Slough Borough Council's development control remit.
- A portion of the vehicular entrance to Langley Business Park, on the eastern side of Station Road. There are plans for the redevelopment of the Business Park to a Data Centre with supporting residential and light retail opportunities. This is currently at outline planning stage and went to planning committee in July 2020. Early engagement has already taken place between Slough Borough Council and the Developer to outline the Section 3 proposals to ensure that the redevelopment of the site is fully compatible with the scheme. Slough Borough Council has outlined to the Developer the land required to deliver the scheme and will continue to work together to safeguard the land required for the carriageway widening. It is expected that a new access be designed for the site, which ties into the Section 3 proposals.
- A portion of the grassed frontage to the residential block just north of Scholars Walk, on the western side of Station Road. Slough Borough Council's development control team have started the initial process of engaging with the landowners and will continue to develop agreements/ arrangements to safeguard the land required to deliver the scheme.

Although no specific measures are being proposed to improve the facilities and safety for pedestrians and cyclists, the creation of four lanes (two in each direction) will create passive provision to turn one lane in each direction to a cycleway or bus lane in the future if deemed suitable based upon demand (i.e. should travel patterns significantly change and be sustained post COVID-19).

Whilst there is no opportunity to widen the carriageway further and introduce a central median between the opposing lanes of traffic, due to physical constraints i.e. buildings, opportunities will be sought as the design progresses to introduce public realm/ streetscape improvements as part of the scheme.

An outline design drawing for the proposed scheme can be found in Appendix B.

What barriers to growth will it address? What is the evidence?

Langley High Street/ Station Road is a key strategic route running from Langley Station to the A4 and is essential to supporting the vibrant and prosperous Langley and wider TVB economy. This important stretch of road currently suffers from traffic congestion during peak hours causing negative downstream impacts on the efficiency and productivity of businesses within the area.

Future growth in business, housing activity in addition to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane will likely result in further pressure along this corridor. Slough Borough Council recognises that this is a proactive response to a problem that, if not fixed in the short-term, will cause significant barriers to growth in the long-term. Research has shown that congestion reduces the effective productivity of capital and labour. As such, increased congestion on this road will inhibit the economic growth predicted for the local area and the TVB LEP, limit the attractiveness of the area to outside investment and may cause labour supply issues to businesses located on the High Street and surrounding Slough district. This is particularly important as we navigate the uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and our ability to strengthen the economy during a recession. Slough recognises that congestion issues put pressure on the local workforce and businesses, degrades the air quality and threatens the public health. These factors need to be addressed in order to foster 'smart' growth from investment that will support a strong pipeline of high-quality employment. The BLISviii identifies congestion as a key issue that will limit the delivery of future housing development, the delivery of which needs to be accelerated to achieve social and equality objectives.

The emerging Local Plan places emphasis on how Slough will support and benefit from the expansion at Heathrow, which includes the WRLtH tied into the wider rationale for the project. In 2010, there were a reported 4,090 on-airport Slough employees, which equates to 6.8% of the local area workforce. Slough Borough Council aim to support the delivery of the emerging Local Plan by improving residents' access to Heathrow.

The original scheme will prepare Langley for potential future investments including the Northern Extension situated to the north of Langley Station and, the development of Langley Business Park which has submitted multiple planning proposals. These include a data centre with retail, leisure and residential opportunities and other light industrial opportunities, with a minimum of 582 jobs created. As the proposed scheme focuses on the widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge, rather than the package of interventions proposed in January 2020, a proportionate approach has been taken to calculate the number of houses, jobs and employment floorspace the scheme will help to unlock. Further details can be found in Table 6.

The Northern Extension, Langley Business Park and future developments will all benefit from increased capacity, and thus reduced congestion, on the High Street. The scheme will not only support vehicles from the Hollow Hill Lane closure but will also cater for the additional trips generated from development, including Heavy Goods Vehicles required during construction. Although the proposed scheme will start to address the impacts of the WRLtH within Langley, Slough Borough Council recognises that this is only the beginning and further mitigation measures will be needed to fully address the impacts of the WRLtH.

In the short term, the scheme will support Langley High Street/ Station Road in transitioning to a new normal as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, helping the High Street/ Station Road to return its previously vibrant nature. As communities are being encouraged to stay local, through walking and cycling, the effect of reduced congestion along High Street/ Station Road and on the surrounding network will reduce noise and air pollution associated with the start-stop nature of congested traffic, benefitting those using active travel to access the High Street and its amenities. The widening of Station Road will also include passive provision to convert one lane in each direction into a cycle lane and/or bus lane in the future, if there is sufficient demand and a reasonable case to do so to support active travel/ use of public transport.

What other options have been considered?

Alternative options to re-distribute traffic are limited due to a lack of north-south network links, particularly as Langley High Street/ Station Road is a popular commuter route to the A4, M4 and M25. Alternate north-south routes to the east through Iver and South Buckinghamshire and to the west through Middle Green will significantly increase journey time, vehicle operating costs and may have long-term adverse environmental impacts. Indeed, the temporary experimental closure of Hollow Hill Lane demonstrated that the majority of traffic would choose to use High Street/ Station Road in Langley rather than Thorney Lane north through Iver. This is partly due to the strategic location of High Street/ Station Road and its importance in providing access to local amenities as well as for commuters.

A different strategic option would be to consider building a new north-south road to accommodate the anticipated surge in demand on the High Street as a result of the WRLtH. However, as the TVB LEP SEP Implementation Plan states, the challenge for the wider TVB area is to maximise the capacity of existing infrastructure, as the options to develop new infrastructure are limited and costly. The wider Slough borough is characterised as a dense urban environment bounded by green belt, limiting its ability to expand. The local area surrounding Langley is primarily used for residential, light industrial and retail purposes, with the majority of land already heavily developed. The only feasible route to create a new road capable of accommodating a sufficient volume of traffic to mitigate the impact of the WRLtH, is to the East of Hollow Hill Lane/ Market Lane through Richings Park. However, this will also require crossing the WRLtH track and thus presents an issue of building a new and costly bridge which is not considered a feasible option at this stage. This option would also result in a permanent loss of land from Richings Park, a negative impact on the local environment and would likely be rejected by the local community.

As part of their modelling analysis and DCO preparation for the WRLtH, Network Rail have considered the possibility of constructing a new north-south road bridge across the rail tracks. However, this is not considered a feasible option as the road bridge would require a six-metre height clearance from the railway tracks. To achieve such clearance, long approach structures would be required which will cut off access to adjacent cottages and farmland and be a costly alternative.

Other options that promote a shift towards public transport to reduce the dependency on private vehicles, have already been recognised through the Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) Phase 1 and 2 programmes and improved access to Langley station. The SMaRT programme has introduced highway infrastructure measures to improve the provision of bus services along the A4 between Slough Trading Estate, Slough Town Centre and High Street Langley/ M4 junction 5. One of the primary objectives of the SMaRT scheme is to increase public transport modal split. The proposed scheme of widening Station Road to two lanes in each direction will complement the SMaRT programmes by improving the reliability of bus services in Langley by reducing congestion. However, reduced dependency on private vehicles achieved through a long-term modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport is unlikely to make any significant impact on the congestion issues of High Street, particularly when combined with the anticipated surge in traffic from the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

Additional options include the widening of the High Street carriageway from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction for the entire length of the High Street (between Langley Station rail bridge and the A4) have also been considered. It is believed that this will provide the maximum increase in capacity and enhance the benefits proposed as part of this scheme. The proposed scheme, widening the carriageway from Langley Road to Langley rail station bridge is the

final section of the northern High Street to apply for funding from the TVB LEP. The Council is keen to progress the widening of the northern section of the High Street, Elmhurst Road to Langley rail station bridge (Sections 1 and 3), and improvements to High Street/ Meadfield Road junction (Section 2) in close succession to maximise time and cost savings during planning and construction. Further sub-options for the Section 3 scheme were identified and discounted. The details are provided below:

- Option 1: 2-lanes north and southbound for general traffic between Langley Road and the rail bridge (SBC Scheme)
- Option 2: 2-lanes north and southbound for general traffic between Langley Road and a point 50-100m north of the junction
- Option 3: 2-lanes northbound for general traffic between Langley Road and a point 50-100m north of the junction and 2-lanes southbound for general traffic between the rail bridge and Langley Road
- Option 4: 2-lanes northbound for general traffic between Langley Road and a point 50-100m north of the junction, with a bus/cycle lane from this point to the rail bridge, and 2-lanes southbound for general traffic between the rail bridge and Langley Road.

Option 2 may well be a viable option as it will reduce Section 3 scheme costs and increase BCR. However, we would lose out on the additional, non-quantifiable, benefits to traffic operation mentioned under Option 1. These additional benefits, we believe, are important to meet the core aim of the scheme which is to address the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and the disbenefit that it will have upon traffic operation and accessibility in Langley. The same commentary applies to Option 3. At present there is not a strong case for having a bus lane as part of the Section 3 scheme due to insufficient demand for it based on current services and it does not address the immediate aim of the scheme which is to improve traffic operation due to Hollow Hill Lane closure. The passive provision for bus/cycle lanes will be there though should there be a desire and strategic case to implement them in future. In the case of a cycle lane for the short section from 100m north of the junction to the rail bridge, again the survey data does not suggest high demand along High Street/ Station Rd at present and it would also be a short and disjointed facility which may not be well utilised. A cycle lane would be better deployed along the entire stretch of Station Rd/ High St, which the scheme would provide passive provision for in the future should there be sufficient demand/ case for installing one (taking into account the disbenefit this would cause to general traffic).

Slough Borough Council will continue to seek further funding opportunities in the future to develop and implement the southern section of the scheme, widening of the carriageway between Elmhurst Road and the A4. However, Slough Borough Council is mindful that widening the full High Street is costly and disruptive to road users.

In summary, the widening of Station Road, delivered alongside the widening of High Street and Meadfield Road junction improvements (Sections 1 and 2), appears to be the most feasible option to address the rapid growth of traffic and to begin to accommodate the additional traffic anticipated as a result of the Hollow Hill Lane closure.

What would be the consequences of a “Do Nothing” option?

Doing nothing will result in higher traffic congestion on High Street/ Station Road as a result of background traffic growth in the region, with a notable rise following the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. This anticipated growth will put pressure on the highway network, compounding the

congestion already witnessed along High Street/ Station Road during peak times of the day. As aforementioned, the Council is also keen to progress with the full widening of the High Street from Langley rail station bridge in the north, to the A4 in the south, further preparing Langley Village for the closure of Hollow Hill Lane and future growth in traffic volumes.

The increased congestion may result in labour supply issues to the wider Slough district and potential adverse environmental impacts (increased noise and reduced air quality). Doing nothing may also lead to accessibility and connectivity issues to car users as higher levels of congestion may make it more difficult for car users in the north of the Borough to access Slough and employment opportunities via the A4 and surrounding motorways. These arguments are extended to bus passengers who will be impacted if bus services experiences delays, particularly during peak hours. The effects of reduced journey time reliability will produce a negative passenger experience and could lead to reduced patronage and negative perceptions towards public transport. This is particularly important for providing accessible and affordable transport for those who do not have access to a private vehicle.

The economic impact of the “Do Nothing” option would directly affect Langley High Street/ Station Road where, as a result of continuous congestion along the corridor, individuals will be discouraged to use the services and amenities along High Street/ Station Road due to its unappealing nature. This may result in the public choosing to shop elsewhere and a lack of investment from local businesses. This will diminish the vibrancy of the town centre and reduce the economic vitality of the High Street, affecting the delivery of the TVB SEP Packages described above. In addition, the lack of vibrancy could also lead to more residents driving away to access services and amenities, adding further congestion to High Street/ Station Road. This is particularly pertinent in the current climate where, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, High Streets are facing an even bigger challenge of convincing shoppers to purchase items locally in store rather than online or travelling to other retail destinations.

Currently, the quantitative evaluation of journey time benefits associated with the Section 3 scheme calculate a £2.18 million saving in journey time, in present value, discounted to 2010. The consequence of a “Do Nothing” scenario will result in no journey time savings for vehicles using High Street/ Station Road, and potentially will create further disbenefit through increased congestion as a result of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. In addition, the qualitative discussion of other benefits described below including accidents, journey quality and air quality will be diminished in a “Do Nothing” scenario. Further details on the economic evaluation can be found in the subsequent pages.

Which partner organisations are involved in, and committed to, the scheme?

Slough Borough Council will be the sole partner for the scheme. As a result of previous infrastructure projects in Langley including the signalised junction improvements along the proposed route, Slough Borough Council will continue to have a close relationship with necessary supporters of the scheme including Langley Hall Primary Academy & Langley College, Langley Business Centre & Waterside Drive Business Park, Harrow Market Great Western Rail and Network Rail. Network Rail and Heathrow Airport are considered to be key organisations and although they are not directly contributing to the proposed scheme, they have been involved in the continuous discussion surrounding the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

The scheme requires land take from East Berkshire College, Langley Business Park and a small parcel of land outside the residential block just north of Scholars Walk. As aforementioned, Slough Borough Council have already made initial discussions with land owners/ Developers to safe guard

the land required for the scheme and will continue to work closely with them to ensure the scheme can be successfully delivered. The extra capacity on Station Road will help to accommodate the Heavy Goods Vehicles required during the redevelopment of Langley Business Park and additional traffic that could result from the new Data Centre.

Slough Borough Council is working closely with the LEP to ensure infrastructure investments are delivered in line with its visions and objectives, particularly by addressing the opportunities associated with the expansion of Heathrow.

2. Value for money

What outputs will the scheme deliver?

Section 3 of High Street is a busy stretch of road with a constant stream of traffic during the AM and PM peak periods. In addition, the strategic model has shown that the future closure of Hollow Hill Lane will result in a re-distribution of traffic from Hollow Hill Lane to High Street, Meadfield Road, and Station Road. This re-routing of traffic is not expected to be absorbed by the existing road capacity of High Street/ Station Road, which is increasingly unable to operate satisfactorily during peak times even without this increase in traffic.

It is, therefore, prudent to plan for future potential congestion and provide additional benefits to the operational performance of adjacent junctions (High Street/Langley Road and High Street/ Meadfield Road). The proposed road widening of the Station Road carriageway between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge is anticipated to reduce congestion on a key link, whilst also delivering decongestion benefits and a reduction in externalities (e.g. air pollution, accidents and noise).

Table 5 summarises the main expected benefits of the proposed scheme. These benefits are linked to relevant scheme objectives identified in the rationale for the scheme and strategic fit section.

Table 5 - Scheme expected benefits.

Expected benefit	Description	Scheme objectives
Journey time savings (decongestion and vehicle operating costs)	Benefits resulting from decreases in journey times have been inferred from the forecast reductions in delays as a result of the Station Road widening. Reductions in vehicle operating costs are also expected as a result of the scheme. Based on reduced congestion for car and bus users as well as cyclists, it is anticipated that fewer disruptions will be experienced by road traffic, thus resulting in improved reliability. The journey time savings for bus users and cyclists have not be quantified.	Relieve localised congestion and improve connectivity within Langley, including links to the rail network through Langley station and the wider highway network.

Increase Network capacity

The scheme will help to reduce congestion on a key link and will increase network capacity by supporting higher traffic flows derived from the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The road widening is expected to provide additional benefits to the operational performance of adjacent junctions (High Street/Langley Road and High Street/ Meadfield Road).

Relieve localised congestion and provide potential additional capacity within the network

Journey quality

The proposed intervention is expected to improve journey quality factors, resulting in a better user experience for car users. As the scheme improves the overall connectivity, the journey quality for pedestrians will also improve due to improved footways.

Improved journey time and quality for road users

Physical Activity

Whilst there are no pedestrian or cycle improvements specifically related to Section 3, the road widening is expected to provide passive provision for the introduction of cycle infrastructure along Station Road in the future, should there be the demand and strategic direction to do so. Improved journey time and quality for road users

Air Quality and noise impacts

As the intervention will result in changes in traffic flows and speeds, environmental improvements in terms of a reduction to noise pollution and emissions are anticipated. Mitigate future impact of air pollution on Station Road.

Accidents

Proposed widening of High Street from one lane to two lanes in each direction could provide more safety to cyclists than the current one lane carriageway. The widening will provide safer cycling facilities and could potentially lead to reduction of personal injury accidents.

Improved journey time and quality for road users

In addition, the scheme will support the TVB SEP by facilitating the unlocking of future housing development, enhancing urban connectivity and supporting the creation of jobs and businesses. In this context, Table 6 estimates the outputs that the scheme will deliver, including details from the original Langley Station business case. The Section 3 will provide additional capacity along Station Road which provides access to several businesses, Harrow market and Langley Business Centre. Due to the scale and nature of the scheme, the Section 3 will provide greater benefit to supplement the Section 1 and 2 schemes in terms of unlocking land for new housing dwellings and supporting the creation of jobs and businesses. Estimates predicted in the Table 6 show that the proposal will facilitate the delivery of new 356 houses in total and provide additional support to the creation of 286 jobs that will yield 1967 square meters of employment area.

Table 6 - Scheme expected outputs in terms of new housing dwellings, retail space, jobs and businesses created.

Outputs	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Later Total					
Houses (units) LGF/Growth Deal					
Other public sector (specify which)					246 246
Private sector		80	30	110	
Total		80	30	246	356
Jobs LGF/Growth Deal					
Other public sector (specify which)					
Private sector	74		212	286	
Total	74		212	286	
Employment floorspace (sq m) LGF/Growth Deal					
Other public sector (specify which)					
Private sector			1,967	1,967	
Total			1,967		
Businesses created LGF/Growth Deal					
Other public sector (specify which)					

Private sector
 Total
 Business assists LGF/Growth Deal
 Other public sector (specify which)
 Private sector
 Total
 Other (specify) LGF/Growth Deal
 Other public sector (specify which)
 Private sector
 Total

How have these outputs been estimated?

TAG Unit A4.1 recommends monetisation of specific key impacts in order to appreciate their scale relative to other outcomes and to allow robust values to be presented in the appraisal. In accordance to the guidance, where individual impacts are considered to be of lesser importance or where sufficient data or valuations are unavailable to undertake a quantitative approach, it is more amenable to appraise such impacts in a qualitative manner. For this Business Case, only user benefits for car users (journey time savings) are quantified and monetised, using an approach which is proportionate to the size and cost of the scheme. In the interest of proportionality, an assessment on the qualitative a seven-point scale has been undertaken for other identified benefits attributable to the scheme (see Table 5).

The methodology for the assessment of journey time benefits mirrors the approach adopted for the economic appraisal of the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction (Section 2 - completed in May 2020, agreed with the LEP reviewer in June 2020) and widening of High Street (Section 1 - completed in June 2020, agreed with the LEP reviewer in July 2020). It compares the relative benefits of the Do Something (DS) scenario option against the Do Minimum (DM) scenario.

- DM: Existing layout with the addition of the Section 1 and 2 schemes which have received conditional funding approval from LEP. These are signalisation of the High Street/Meadfield Road junction (Section 2 scheme) and High Street widening between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (Section 1 scheme), further details of DM modelling results are shown below; and
- DS: Includes as above, but with the addition of Section 3 scheme (Station Road widening between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge).

The DM was established as part of the modelling carried out for the Section 1 and 2 Business Cases, undertaken in Spring 2020. The results of the DM modelling show:

- Whilst the Section 1 and 2 schemes significantly improve the operation of the High Street/ Meadfield Road and High Street/ Langley Road/ Station Road junctions, Section 3 provides further delay savings than can be achieved through Section 1 and 2 alone (Langley Road/ Station Road/ High Street junction has a 18 PCU/hr overall combined saving in the AM peak).
- By 2028, the Section 3 scheme reduces the number of approaches to the High Street/ Langley Road/ Station Road junction that would otherwise be approaching theoretical capacity (100%+ Degree of Saturation) and potentially under operational stress.
- Through delivering Section 3, along with Sections 1 and 2, both junctions are expected to have low levels of queuing and delay on all arms by 2028.

-
- Outside of the modelling exercise, it is considered that the DM scenario of retaining single lanes between the High Street/ Langley Road/ Station Road junction and Langley rail station bridge may result in general delay and congestion to traffic travelling along this stretch of road.

The impacts of the scheme on journey times for car users have been assessed based on the delay outputs during the AM and PM peak hours, as modelled in LINSIG. Further details of the LINSIG modelling outputs can be found alongside the scheme rationale in Chapter 1 and Appendix A. The models have considered the traffic flows along Station Road with the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The future year flows also account for changes in flows due to background growth and introduction of other planned schemes in the wider area. The increase in flows on this road however are primarily due to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane.

Traffic flows and delays in seconds per PCU were estimated for both modelled years and for two peak hours: AM and PM in each year. In accordance with TAG Unit 1.3, the calculation of user benefits is based on the conventional consumer surplus theory, defined as the benefit which a consumer enjoys (i.e. reduction in travel time as a result of delay savings). The assessment of consumer surplus only incorporates changes in travel time and does not account for changes in vehicle operating costs or user charges. The difference between the total delay registered in the network in the DM and DS scenarios indicates the daily delay savings experienced on the route. Annual benefits were calculated on the assumption being that they are evenly accrued for 253 working days a year. Using this methodology, benefits were calculated for highway users, disaggregated by user type, with separate values of time for business and non-business users. This is because, as indicated in the guidance, the surplus associated with making a journey will not be the same for everybody and depends on the benefit each individual derives from making that journey.

To summarise, for the purpose of the economic analysis, the following assumptions have been made:

- For the purposes of this appraisal, the journey time savings have been inferred from the forecast changes in delays between the DM and DS;
- The impacts of the scheme have been assessed over a 60-year appraisal period, in line with TAG guidance, with an assumed opening year for the scheme of 2021;
- All costs and benefits in the economic appraisal are discounted to 2010 market prices in accordance with TAG Unit A1.1;
- Scheme costs have been converted from factor costs into market prices using the indirect tax uplift factor of 19%;
- It was discussed and agreed with the LEP Reviewer on 18th May 2020 that no Optimism Bias will be included in the PVC calculations;
- Different values of time were assumed for business drivers and passengers and for commuting and leisure trips (£17.689, £9.953, and £4.543, per hour, 2010 prices). This data has been taken from the TAG data book (May 2019 v1.12) table A1.3.1;
- Average values for the proportion of travel in work and non-working time were assumed.

This data has been taken from the TAG data book table A1.3.4.

An economic assessment was undertaken over a 60-year appraisal period using a bespoke Spreadsheet Model Tool based upon the delay outputs of the LINSIG model in line with TAG requirements to calculate the economic benefits generated by the proposed scheme. The aim of

economic assessment was to assess the performance of the Section 3 scheme in terms of the relative benefits generated by the scheme against the associated scheme costs. The economic assessment compares the monetised costs and benefits of the proposed scheme (DS) against the alternative without-scheme scenario (DM). These benefits were monetised to give a Present Value of Benefit (PVB) and compared against the present value of costs (PVC) to calculate a benefit cost ratio which demonstrates the scheme's value for money. Sensitivity analysis was carried out to assess if the value for money category is likely to change based on small changes in key elements of the value for money assessment. In accordance with requirements set out in 'The Value for Money Framework' published by the Department for Transport, this is a crucial step in mitigating uncertainty in the value for money assessment and increasing the level of confidence of decision-makers.

Along with the Section 1 and Section 2, the Section 3 scheme is also expected to support the Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) by facilitating the unlocking of future housing development, enhancing urban connectivity and supporting the creation of jobs and businesses. Thus, as a standard assumption that markets are not perfectly competitive, 10% of business user benefits as wider impact of this scheme has been considered. As this Section 3 scheme will significantly improve the journey quality and capacity of the northern end of the scheme, reliability benefits over a 60-year appraisal period from the scheme was also assessed using a TAG compliant bespoke Appraisal Spreadsheet Tool (using the urban roads method from TAG A1-3).

This approach uses an established relationship based on empirical data between journey distance time in the DM and DS scenarios, reflecting existing levels of variable delay in the urban environment compared to free-flowing traffic and how this varies as a result of a scheme being implemented. This relationship is used to derive the change in standard deviation of journey time which that scheme generates. A reduced standard deviation implies less day-to-day variation in travel times for the same trip. This day-to-day variability excludes the predictable levels of delay which occur in the DM and DS scenarios, changes to which have been captured within the standard journey time savings. A benefit calculation has been performed for each zone to zone pair in each of the forecast years and time periods.

Reliability improvements are valued by highway users at 40% of an equivalent improvement in average journey time savings, allowing the impacts to be monetised and captured as part of the present value benefit (PVB) of the scheme. This value is additional to the benefits of reduced average journey times and is included in the 'adjusted PVB'.

On the other hand, the outputs reported in Table 6 above focus on planning applications and forecasts from Slough Borough Council's Planning Department. The original scheme (submitted to the LEP in January 2020) reported the indirect delivery of 1,500 dwellings however this has been scaled down to an estimated of 32 houses (public sector) as the original scheme is near completion, and this funding application is only focused on a short section of road (defined as 'Section 3' in the proforma application submitted in January 2020 – see Figure 1).

The other estimates predicted in the table for 2023/2024 include preliminary figures for a data centre at Langley Business Park (originally creating 4,000 sqm of space and 60 residential dwellings and retaining 432 jobs once completed), and current lease of the business park as a temporary filming studio. Likewise, these figures have been scaled down based on costs estimates to reflect the proportionate share to this scheme. In addition, estimates have also considered the cumulative impacts that will result from delivering all the three sub sections of the package of interventions

(see Figure 1). Thus, a corresponding percentage reduction has been applied to reflect the fact that this funding application is only focused on widening of Station Road (Section 3). It should be noted that this assessment is based on professional judgement, using knowledge in practice and critical reflection.

Although interdependencies between the different sections of the original scheme in terms of unlocking housing developments or additional jobs expected to be created are not straightforward to interpret; the estimate is considered conservative in comparison to the potential maximum outcomes to be achieved. These figures are based on publicly available documents and are indicative at this stage as it has not been possible to model the direct link between the new scheme and the benefits relating to housing, retail and employment growth.

It is also understood that in times of COVID-19 crisis and economic recession, the importance of investing in infrastructure, such as the proposed scheme, is vital to reviving the economy, boosting employment rates and economic prosperity.

What wider outcomes will be achieved in TVB? Please quantify these if possible.

As shown in Table 5 above, in addition to journey time benefits, other impacts are expected to arise including decreased externalities such as congestion, noise and air pollution and increased liveability and social vibrancy through better urban design. A quantification of such benefits was not undertaken at this stage, but a proportionate qualitative assessment on a seven-point scale was conducted. Results relative to the DM scenario are discussed below.

Journey quality

Moderate positive – Journey quality is generally understood as the cumulative travelling experiences of the quality and ambience of a journey . It represents a measure of the real and perceived physical and social environment experienced while travelling and includes factors such as perceptions of safety, information provision and comfort . Journey quality impacts cover a wide range of indicators and can be sub-divided into three categories: Traveller care (based on the general transport environment and facilities), Traveller views (the visual amenity provided by the site and impact on the surrounding visual environment) and Traveller stress (drawing on the perception of safety, security and confusion over onward travel or route choice).

As recognised in the literature and in TAG Unit A4.1, there is limited evidence on monetary valuations of journey quality in relation to highway projects. It is however prudent to conclude that the real and perceived physical environment experienced while travelling is expected to improve as a result of the proposed intervention. For car users, the reduction in travel time in DS scenario as compared to DM scenario can result in a moderate beneficial impact as a result of reduced frustration and stress. Car users are also likely to get benefit from saving in vehicle operating cost. Furthermore, the proposed widening of High Street from Langley Rail station bridge to the A4 from one lane in each direction to two lanes in each direction will reduce the frustration and fear of accidents for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the scheme is expected to improve streetscape and to create a more walkable environment which leads to the livable environment of a city. Overall, the Section 3 scheme will have a moderate beneficial impact in terms of journey quality.

Physical Benefits

Slightly to moderate positive – TAG Unit 4.1 notes that transport and the physical environment of urban areas both play a major role in the amount of physical activity that people are engaged in on a day-to-day basis. There is a longstanding recognition of the interrelationship between transport, the environment and health.

Whilst there are no pedestrian or cycle improvements specifically related to Section 3, the road widening is expected to provide passive provision for the introduction of segregated cycle infrastructure along Station Road in the future, should there be the demand and strategic direction to do so. The scheme will also maintain existing levels of pedestrian crossings to ensure the safety of students using High Street/ Station Road to access education facilities nearby, and supporting residents wishing to pursue an active and healthy lifestyle. Therefore, the immediate impact of the scheme to physical activity is considered to be slightly positive and moderately positive if the widened carriageway is going to be used for creation of passive provision to turn one lane in each direction to a cycleway in the future if deemed suitable based upon demand.

Accidents

Neutral – Historic collision data has indicated seven casualties on Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge over the last 5-year period (6 slight and 1 serious incidents). Therefore, there is scope to improve safety on Station Road and reduce the current collision rates. It should also be noted that historic collision data available does not reflect the effects of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. The potential closure of this road could result in a rerouting of traffic through the road stretch and therefore the base year for the analysis might show more collisions as compared with the observed data.

The literature reveals that the number and width of traffic lanes are key factors influencing cycling. Some authors have suggested that the vast majority of cyclists prefer to cycle on streets with two lanes rather than on wider roads (with 4 lanes) . This is because, drivers tend to pay more attention to other vehicles than to cyclists on wider roads, leaving them more exposed to accidents. On the other hand, the scheme is likely to derive in cumulative impacts and to provide additional benefit to the operation of adjacent junctions, which are expected to reduce pedestrians and cyclists' frustration and fear of accidents. Overall, it is likely that the effect of the scheme on accidents will be slight, as increases in the fear of potential accidents might be broadly balanced by relief of accidents derived from adjacent schemes (i.e. Sections 1 and 2). The impact of the scheme on safety is therefore expected to be neutral.

Air quality and noise

Neutral – A quantitative appraisal of the environmental impacts of the scheme has not been undertaken. A proportionate qualitative assessment was carried out to identify whether significant beneficial or adverse environmental effects are likely to arise. As a result of the scheme, a slight reduction in traffic delay and start/stop driving is predicted, which would decrease congestion-related impacts such as air and noise pollution levels. However, with the increased speed (due to reduced delays) those benefits might not be able to be achieved due to changes in driving patterns compared to congested conditions.

As indicated in the guidance (TAG Unit 4.2) air quality impacts are likely to occur where an intervention results in significant changes to traffic flows or speed, or where the physical gap between people and traffic is altered. As a consequence, noise and local air quality levels are not likely to be impacted as the scheme is not expected to significantly affect traffic flow or speeds. The anticipated impact on local air quality and noise is thought to be negligible.

Increase Network Capacity

Moderate positive – The scheme was designed as a long-term solution to reduce congestion now, allow for future traffic growth, and avoid new congestion problems arising in the future derived from the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. In addition, as the scheme is part of a package of interventions (see Figure 1), efficiencies and cumulative impacts are anticipated. In particular, the road widening

is expected to provide additional benefits to the operational performance of the Station Road and adjacent junctions (High Street/Langley Road and High Street/ Meadfield Road). This will help to expand the transport capacity to respond to future growth in demand.

On the other hand, connectivity for public transport users will also be enhanced through improved bus journey time reliability and customer experience. Moreover, cyclists will also benefit from increased capacity along High Street/ Station Road. Therefore, the impact of the scheme on network capacity/connectivity is considered to be moderate positive.

**To what extent are these outputs (and downstream outcomes/impacts) likely to be additional?
What is the basis for this assessment?**

The proposed road widening, together with the continuing transport network improvements across Slough and Langley will contribute towards reducing congestion and allow the town centres to remain vibrant places to live and work. This is likely to have downstream outcomes with improved access to labour supply, reliable journey times, and sustainable economic growth through increased productivity levels. In addition, positive impacts such as an increase in journey quality and an increase in network capacity and other efficiencies along the corridor are derived from the Do-Something scenario.

This supports the TVB LEP aims of investing in infrastructure that would unlock future opportunities to enhance cross boundary connectivity. A reliable transport network will also unlock the full potential for future housing developments and business investments, including the Northern Extension. The overall scheme deliverables and benefits also support other relevant strategies such as the delivery of the Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS) and the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Further details are provided in the Chapter 1 of this funding application. What is the nature of the resourcing package that is proposed (e.g. balance between private sector investment, loans and grants, etc.)?

The Council is now proposing an extension to the existing Langley scheme (ref 2.21), which will cost an additional £2,053,000 in total. Of this, £1,643,000 is requested as a grant from the Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Development Fund to support the delivery of widening Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station. The remaining £410,000 (20%) will be contributed by Slough Borough Council, consistent with the minimum requirement as part of the total funding for any scheme extension agreed during this round of Growth Development Fund bidding.

Scheme costs have been developed based upon Slough's schedule of rates. The cost estimates for the individual elements of the scheme have been estimated by Quantity Surveying professionals, also using benchmarking against similar schemes including the recently implemented scheme at High Street/ Langley Road junction. The cost estimates are based upon the outline design and is expected to be refined as the design progresses to Preliminary Design stage.

The cost estimates above include an additional 35% of base construction cost for Main Contractor Preliminaries, which includes provision for the protection or diversion of utility services, which are anticipated to be heavily affected by the widening works in this area. A C2 utility search was carried out as part of the High Street/ Langley Road scheme design and therefore the design team already have sight of likely implications on utilities. Some design engineering has already been undertaken as part of the feasibility design, to limit impact (and cost) on utilities. The design team will ensure that the designs for the widening of Station Road to two lanes in each direction will be complementary to the High Street/ Meadfield Road junction improvement scheme and widening of High Street between Langley Road and Elmhurst Road.

The cost estimates also include a 20% risk contingency to support the risks identified in Table 14 below. This is based upon DfT guidelines for preparing scheme cost estimates at this feasibility stage of design, as well as professional judgement/ experience of delivering similar highway schemes in the past. Whilst recognising that a notable contingency has been allowed for within the scheme estimate, this is typical and prudent at this stage of highway design. A quantified risk register could be developed as the schemes progresses through additional stages of design, generating a more accurate representation of the risks presented below. The potential risk contingencies costs in the proposed scheme which have been accounted for include:

- Additional design costs for the refinement of the design through Preliminary and Detailed Design, as experienced on the Langley Road junction scheme.
- Additional base construction costs which are established through the Preliminary and Detailed Design process. This may include additional full depth carriageway construction, or additional signal pits and ducts, than assumed at this stage.
- Any Third Party Land cost which may occur, which was not included within the base construction costs as it is currently unknown.
- Additional time required for stakeholder engagement and buy in, including discussions/ negotiations with Third Party land owners and the Developer of the Langley Business Park.
- Additional utility costs. We have built into the capital costs a provision for utility works, as we know this is a certain. However, given the length of the scheme is significantly longer than that of Section 1 and 2 schemes, there is risk that the number of utility services affected (and resulting cost) will be larger than anticipated within the current costs, at this stage of design.
- There is also the risk (and experience thereof) that trial holes uncover additional buried equipment not accounted for in desktop plans, which require diversion. Utility costs are notoriously expensive and can therefore significantly impact upon overall delivery costs, should further works be required than assumed at this initial design stage.
- Provision for more general, unknown and unquantifiable cost uplifts which may affect the scheme:
 - ☐ Unforeseen cost overruns due to errors, omissions or abortive work as the design progresses (although this will be best managed to reduce likelihood of occurrence).
 - ☐ Degree of complexity involved in stakeholder/ public engagement/ approvals.
 - ☐ Overrun of outline programme – potential COVID-19 impact upon resources, ability for site surveys/ intrusive works i.e. trial holes, etc.

The level of risk contingency applied to the scheme estimate is in line with the DfT recommendation at this stage of design. Whilst it may appear high, there are a number of scheme cost risks as noted above, that need to be taken account of. The most notable of these are utility costs. Statutory Undertaking costs are better known for Sections 1 & 2 only, as these are at a more progressed (Preliminary) stage of design and have had C2 and C3 searches carried out. Section 3 is still at outline/ feasibility design stage and therefore it is not practical to carry out these searches yet. From our experience with Sections 1 & 2 cost estimates, when C3 searches were carried out in August 2020, the cost estimates provided by utility companies was indeed higher than originally estimated, and therefore the full amount of risk/ contingency applied was used up to cover this. This demonstrates that it is prudent to have a high amount of risk/ contingency applied, to best avoid risk of significant overspend, and indeed inability to deliver the scheme, as the design progresses.

A summary of the estimated cost of the scheme (in 2020 factor prices) can be found below in Table 7. The table also outlines additional assumptions applied to the construction costs around overheads and other professional costs. Slough Borough Council will regularly review the costs presented each stage of the design as they become a more accurate representation of the construction costs.

Table 7 – Section 3 cost estimate

Cost Item	Cost
Base construction costs	£479,050
Main Contractor Preliminaries	£167,5600
Overheads and profit	£55,000
Risk/ Contingency	£1,043,400
Professional Fees incl. Surveys	£307,950
Scheme cost estimate (rounded)	£2,053,000

Slough Borough Council is committed to funding any cost overruns; however, these are deemed unlikely if supported by careful financial management throughout the entire project lifetime by the Council's experienced project delivery team. Regular cost updates will be reported to the Project Manager to identify any potential risks that could impact the overall cost of the project.

What is the funding package through which the scheme will be delivered?

Slough Borough Council proposes to distribute the funds across the following financial years to assist with the development of further detailed designs and scheme mobilisation before commencing construction onsite in December 2020:

Table 8 - Funding profile for the widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge

Source Year	2019/20	2020/21	Later years	Total
Business rates retention pilot				
Growth Deal or other Government Grant	Capital	1,643,000		1,643,000
Revenue				
Other public sector	SBC Capital Funds	410,000		410,000
Private sector				
Total (rounded)				2,053,000

What assessment has been made of the value for money of this scheme?

Results of the value for money assessment prepared for the scheme are discussed in this section – see Table 9 for High level summary of costs and benefits for the Section 3 scheme. The following key economic statistics will be used to demonstrate whether the Do Something option achieves value for money:

- The Present Value of Benefits (PVB), representing monetised journey time savings, discounted to 2010 prices and values;
- The Present Value of Costs (PVC), representing the total project investment costs presented in Table 7, discounted to 2010 prices and values;
- The Net Present Value (NPV), representing the absolute difference between the PVB and PVC; and
- The ratio of PVB to PVC representing the high-level Value for Money of the scheme.

In addition to the above leading to an Initial BCR, benefits from imperfect market competition and journey time reliability were also accounted for and presented to provide an Adjusted BCR in the economic appraisal.

As The economic analysis is summarised in Table 9 below and suggests that the Section 3 scheme will generate an initial PVB of £2,182,000 from journey time savings (and initial NPV of £725,000), providing a BCR of 1.50. The scheme will additionally also generate £60,200 value of benefits from imperfect market competition and £519,000 as reliability benefits leading to adjusted PVB of £2,762,000 (adjusted NPV of £1,305,000) and adjusted BCR of 1.9 which implies a Medium Value for Money (VfM) as per DfT VfM categories .

Table 9 below presents a summary of the forecast PVBs and PVCs for implementing the proposed Section 3 scheme.

Table 9 - High level summary of costs and benefits for the Section 3 scheme

Analysis of monetised costs and benefits (2010 market prices, discounted to 2010)	Present value (£) – Rounded
Present value of journey time benefits	£2,182,000
Present Value of Total Benefits (PVB)	£2,182,000
Present Value of Costs (PVC)	£1,457,000
Net present value	£725,000
Initial BCR	1.5
Present value of benefits from imperfect market competition	£60,200
Present value of reliability benefits	£519,000
Adjusted PVB	£2,762,000
Adjusted NPV	£1,305,000
Adjusted BCR	1.9

How will this scheme contribute to the natural capital of Thames Valley Berkshire?

No quantification of environmental impacts has been undertaken as part of the economic analysis. Instead, a proportionate qualitative assessment was carried out in order to assess the environmental effects likely to arise as a result of the Station Road widening scheme in accordance with TAG Unit A3 – Environmental Impact Appraisal. This section provides a closer overview of how the scheme is expected to contribute to the natural capital of Thames Valley Berkshire.

In many areas, vehicle emissions have become the dominant source of air pollutants, including carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO₂), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) or hydrocarbons (HCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and particulate matter (PM) . Likewise, in Langley and Slough, a common source of air and noise pollution is stationary or slow-moving road traffic. The increasing severity and duration of traffic congestion are recognised to have the potential to greatly increase pollutant emissions and to degrade air quality . The rationale behind the claim of lowering emissions is that congestion causes vehicles to function at sub-optimal speeds and accelerations, leading to incomplete combustion and additional emissions of NO_x, CO, etc .

As the scheme aims to reduce the start-stop nature from slow moving traffic associated with the Station Road/ High Street, vehicle emissions are likely to decrease, consistent with previous studies. However, the Hollow Hill Lane closure is expected to increase the volume of traffic using the High Street and lead to potential higher air and noise pollution levels, if no mitigation measures are applied.

When aligned with the objectives of Slough's Low Emission Strategy and the above assumptions, the anticipated impact of the scheme on air quality and noise pollution is therefore considered to be neutral.

The historic environment has been scoped out for further assessment as the potential for affecting the key historic environmental resources and assets is considered relatively low. There are five Grade II listed buildings located in close proximity to the Langley Road/ High Street/ Station Road junction, primarily on Langley Road, however these buildings are unlikely to be impacted by the works. A high-level environmental constraints appraisal has found that the route does not run through any sensitive areas in terms of biodiversity. Likewise, in terms of drainage and the water environment, an initial assessment has found that the impacts of construction and operation of the scheme will be negligible. These findings are in line with the original Langley Station improvement scheme business case. As a result, it is expected that the impact on biodiversity and water environment will be neutral.

How will this scheme maximise social value for Thames Valley Berkshire?

Despite specific social impacts which are considered to be an important element of a scheme proposal, a detailed approach to the appraisal of social impacts has not been scoped at this stage. Instead, a proportionate approach to deliver a high-level social impact assessment has been used in accordance with requirements set out in TAG Unit A4.1. Final results are presented in a seven-point scale of beneficial, neutral or adverse. Key points are as follows:

- Journey Quality and Accidents have been previously assessed as wider outcomes to be achieved in TVB (see Page 33-34);
- Security, Access to services, Affordability, Severance, and Option and non-use values will be assessed in a qualitative manner based on professional judgement. Results will be presented in this section.

Security

Neutral – Transport interventions may impact the level of security for transport users. TAG Unit A4.1 states that security concerns are greater on roads where motorists are required to slow or stop their vehicle, such as at the approaches to signals or congested conditions. The numerical results of the modelling in previous pages describe the effects that the road widening have in terms of delays reduction on the route, reducing the instances where vehicles will be slowed or stopped. Road users are expected to be less vulnerable to crime in such circumstances, particularly when considering the overall effect of the widening of the High Street between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge, and the combined effect of all three Sections of the northern High Street. A more detailed analysis of recorded criminal acts and incidents of antisocial behaviour should be undertaken to support a final qualitative assessment. This analysis should be accompanied by a full appraisal of the different security indicators in line with TAG Unit A4.1. As this assessment has not been undertaken due to the size and scope of the scheme, the impact on security is considered to be neutral, however, this is considered to be a conservative evaluation.

Access to services

Moderately positive – Accessibility is defined as people's ability to reach desired goods, services and activities. Accessibility benefits can be similar to transport user benefits as the changes in journey time and operating costs reduce the generalised cost associated with travel and hence make transport more affordable. Reduced journey times, operating costs and transit delays also increase the range of services that can be accessed for the same cost. Modelling results have shown positive improvements to average journey time from the Do Minimum model scenario (measured

in delay in seconds). As a result, accessibility is anticipated to increase to some extent for both car and public transport users. The overall impact on accessibility is appraised as a moderate positive benefit.

Personal Affordability

Slightly positive – Affordability of transportation is primarily a distributional issue as it can be a major barrier to the mobility of certain groups. As mentioned in the TAG Unit 4.2, the most significant impacts of the costs of travel are on young and old people, and low-income households who have reduced access to a private vehicle and particularly when travelling to employment or education. As potential changes in the cost of travel have not been evaluated, the assessment presented in this section provides a ‘light touch’ qualitative consideration of affordability from a wider perspective. The results of this high-level analysis should be confirmed by the TUBA software or an equivalent process. For the proposed scheme, as sufficient data or valuations were unavailable to undertake a quantitative approach, it was considered more amenable to appraise this impact in a qualitative manner.

Following guidance in TAG Unit 4.1, positive affordability impacts may arise as an indirect consequence of an intervention if the intervention is implemented to improve transport efficiency, accessibility and/or safety. As widening is expected to reduce congestion along the route and improve efficiency, leading to reduced vehicles idling, braking and accelerating, a reduction in vehicle operating costs is anticipated. In some cases, minor affordability disbenefits can be found, likely caused by increased vehicle speeds leading to increased fuel consumption. However, the decreased vehicle operating costs are expected to outweigh these affordability disbenefits. Marginal safety benefits could be attributed to the scheme as a result of a reduction in the start-stop nature of congested traffic. Therefore, the overall impact of the scheme to personal affordability is appraised as slight beneficial.

Community Severance

Neutral – Community severance is defined in TAG Unit A4.1 as the separation of residents from facilities and services they use within their community caused by substantial changes in transport infrastructure, or by changes in traffic flows. This impact is of particular importance for certain social groups, including people without access to a car, children, older people, and people with disabilities and parents with pushchairs. As no significant traffic volume change is expected as a result of the scheme, the impact is likely to be neutral. In addition, the scheme is not expected to introduce or remove barriers to pedestrian movement and will continue to support existing pedestrian crossing facilities to access education sites close to the proposed scheme, including Langley College. The scheme’s neutral impact on community severance is important during the current COVID-19 pandemic where communities are encouraged to stay local which could result in an increased number of pedestrians walking in Langley Village.

Option and non-use values

Neutral – Option values and non-use values relate to the implementation or withdrawal of a public transport service. TAG Unit A4.1 requires that option values and non-use values are assessed if the scheme being appraised includes measures that will substantially change the availability of transport services within the study area. As the scheme does not include any changes to public transport routes or services provided in the area, no further appraisal is required for this indicator.

Apprenticeships

Neutral – The development phase (project management and design) of this scheme will not directly produce any apprenticeships. However, Slough Borough Council will work closely with the Slough

Academy to promote any opportunities that arise for apprentices during this scheme. The Council will also look to consider the use of apprentices as a criterion when procuring construction services.

3. Deliverability and risks

How secure are the funding contributions from your own organisation and elsewhere?

The 20% local contribution will comprise of Slough Borough Council capital funds and are considered a reliable source of funding.

A further extension to the scheme, which will deliver highway widening of a similar nature along the southern section of Langley High Street from Elmhurst Road to the A4, is not proposed for funding within the current Growth Deal. However, Slough Borough Council is exploring additional sources of funding to support the completion of this additional scheme.

What are the key scheme milestones?

The key milestones of the proposed scheme are presented below:

Table 11 - Key project milestones for the widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge scheme.

Date	Project Milestone
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January 2020 (already completed)	Feasibility design and initial cost estimate for Section 3 scheme.
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July 2020 (already completed)	Initial engagement between Slough Borough Council's Development Control Team and Third Party Land Owners/ Developers. Investigations into requirements for Third Party Land. (To be ongoing through programme).
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August/ September 2020	Additional local junction traffic modelling of Station Road/ High Street/ Langley Road and High Street/ Meadfield Road junctions to incorporate a two lane approach and exit to the Station Road arm (Section 3 scheme), to demonstrate the benefit of the scheme. Development of Full Business Case for Section 3.
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November 2020	Financial (LEP) approval.
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December 2020 – January 2021	Preliminary Design.
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Refinement and update of scheme cost.

Q1 2021	Stakeholder and public engagement/ consultation
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Q2 2021	Detailed Design.
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Refinement and update of scheme cost.

Q3 2021	Mobilisation and Statutory consents.
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Q3/Q4 2021	Commencement of site works.
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Q1 2022	Completion of site works.
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Slough Borough Council is confident that the proposed scheme can be successfully completed on time and in budget. The internal Council management structure has a wealth of experience in managing capital infrastructure improvements including close monitoring of cost and project progress. The recent delivery of the Station Road/ High Street/ Langley Road junction in March 2020, following Business Case submission in May 2019 demonstrates Slough Borough Council's competency in the timely management of transport infrastructure improvements.

Consideration has also been taken for the effects of COVID-19 on the proposed programme outlined above. At the time of writing (August 2020), the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions are continuing to ease and thus, the Council remain optimistic that the pandemic will have minimal impact on the delivery of the scheme. Slough Borough Council are confident that the next steps in the delivery of the proposed scheme, primarily feasibility/preliminary design and public engagement, can be successfully completed through computer and web-based work with minimal face to face interactions, eliminating the risks to individuals or the delivery of the project. The Council continue to closely monitor the restrictions surrounding COVID-19 and will take appropriate precautions during the development and delivery of the proposed scheme in line with Government guidelines.

Construction works will be assigned to Slough Borough Council's Direct Service Organisation (DSO) (Contractors), as an extension to the original scheme works recently completed on site at the High Street/ Langley Road junction and the original Langley Station and Access Improvements scheme. Slough Borough Council will continue to use the procurement process already in place for the previous schemes which has proven to provide a high quality and efficient service. In addition, resources are readily available from the original scheme and are ready to be mobilised at short notice. The Council will consider using the same contractor for this scheme and Sections 1 and 2 (widening of the carriageway between Langley Road and Elmhurst Road and the Meadfield Road junction improvement scheme), as previously submitted to the TVB LEP, to maximise cost and time efficiency. Therefore, Slough Borough Council deems it appropriate not to engage in any new, competitive procurement process.

What are the proposed arrangements for project management?

The Project Team in Slough Borough Council will be responsible for ensuring that the scheme follows the identified programme and will maintain overall responsibility for the delivery of the project. Each workstream will report quarterly to the Project Team on progress and expenditure. This method of governance has been effective for previous transport network improvements including the original Langley Station and Accessibility improvements and SMaRT Phase 1 and will be scaled appropriately for a scheme of this size. A consistent project team will be used in Slough Borough Council for the delivery of the proposed scheme, Section 1 widening of High Street between Langley Road and Elmhurst Road and Section 2 High Street/ Meadfield Road junction improvements which have secured LEP conditional funding approval. This will ensure that all three schemes are harmonious, and the Council will seek to use value engineering to deliver a more efficient construction programme, including reduced disruption to road users where possible. Responsibility for accurate, timely and appropriate communications within the project team rests with the Slough Borough Council Project Manager, who will also ensure that the Project Board is kept up to date with programme developments. Project team meetings are held on a monthly basis with regular updates provided to the LEP Board via the Berkshire Strategic Transport (BSTF) forums (officers and members). Throughout the project, the risk register will be maintained and updated as necessary, with mitigating and contingency measures used appropriately throughout the scheme delivery, including the risks associated with COVID-19. The Council will seek to allocate risks to the appropriate party to ensure the impacts associated with each risk are spread across the entire project team and thus mitigating the overall risk of the scheme.

Construction works will be assigned to SBC's DSO (Contractors), as an extension to the original scheme works completed on site at the High Street/ Langley Road junction in March 2020. Contracts will likely mirror the structure of the High Street/ Langley Road scheme. Slough Borough

Council anticipate that the same construction works contractor will be used for the proposed scheme, as for the Section 1 and 2 schemes which have secured conditional LEP funding approval.

What are the principal risks linked to the scheme’s delivery, and what actions will be (or have been) taken to mitigate and manage these?

A summary of the key strategic risks identified during this study can be found in the Table 12 below, including the risk COVID-19 presents to the delivery of the scheme.

Risks will continue to be reviewed as the project develops and progresses through feasibility/ detailed design stages. Mitigation actions have also been identified and described below.

Table 12 - Risk register for the widening of Station Road between Langley Road and Langley rail station bridge scheme.

Risk Likelihood

(H / M / L) Severity

(H / M / L) Mitigating actions

Increased cost due to need to protect/ relocate statutory undertakers equipment. M M

- ☐ C2 utility searches were carried out for Section 1 and 2 schemes prior to the development of Section 3, as they are at a more advanced stage of design. C2/ C3 searches have not yet been undertaken for Section 3 yet, although it is known that there will be a number of utility impacts, based on utility knowledge either side of the Section 3 scheme.
- ☐ C2/C3 NRSWA searches will be undertaken at the outset of Preliminary Design, so design engineering can be undertaken to best reduce impact on utilities.
- ☐ Early engagement with statutory undertakers at the outset of detailed design (C4), as experience shows that utility works are often the critical path through delivery.

Impact of COVID-19 delaying consultation and scheme delivery. M L

- ☐ Slough Borough Council will proactively monitor the COVID-19 pandemic situation with regards to public/stakeholder consultations and will seek alternative arrangements to ensure the safety of consultation attendees. For the Section 1 and 2 schemes, consultation was undertaken through virtual workshops which proves a successful alternative.
- ☐ If by the time of construction, pandemic continues to require social distancing measures, Slough Borough Council will take appropriate measures, guided by the central Government, to ensure the safety of construction workers.

Third Party Land M M - The carriageway widening as part of the proposed scheme requires the following Third-Party land:

- o A portion of East Berkshire College entry frontage, on the western side of Station Road, including the grassed verge between the college car park and the carriageway. This land is included within Slough Borough Council’s development control remit.
- o A portion of the vehicular entrance to Langley Business Park, on the eastern side of Station Road. There are plans for the redevelopment of the Business Park to a Data Centre with supporting residential and light retail opportunities. Early engagement has already taken place between Slough Borough Council and the Developer to outline the Section 3 proposals to ensure that the redevelopment of the site is fully compatible with the scheme.
- o A portion of the grassed frontage to the residential block just north of Scholars Walk, on the western side of Station Road.

-
- Slough Borough Council's development control team have already started the process of engaging with the landowners/ Developers and will continue to develop agreements/ arrangements to safeguard the land required to deliver the scheme. As most of the land required has already been identified as being within Slough's permitted development control, the risk is reduced.
 - ☐ Slough Borough Council will continue discussions with Third Party Landowners/ Developer of the Business Park site throughout the design process in order to secure the land required at the earliest opportunity.
 - ☐ Should there be any issues with the acquisition of land required, the design team will endeavour to review and adjust the alignment of the carriageway widening so far as is feasible, so that the scheme can still be progressed.
- Environmental issues L L ☐ The scheme requires a small section of grassed land, acting as frontage to the residential block just north of Scholars Walk. This is not expected to result in any environmental issues of significance.
- ☐ It is anticipated that Slough Borough Council will undertake a full Noise and Air Quality assessment of the scheme determine if there are any adverse impacts of the widening in relation to closer proximity of traffic to residential receptors. However, as no significant increase in traffic as a result of the scheme is expected, this risk is considered to be low.
 - ☐ It is likely that the Noise and Air Quality assessment may find both beneficial and adverse impacts: potential benefit being the reduction in slow moving/ stationary traffic and potential disbenefit being moving traffic closer to residential receptors on the western side of Station Road only.
- Road safety M L ☐ The most likely potential road safety issues identified to date is the ability for traffic to turn out of the three side roads on the western side of Station Road, given the increase in carriageway lanes on Station Road.
- ☐ The design has already taken the above into account for Alderbury Road and is proposing to filter from four lanes to two lanes by the Station Road/ Alderbury Road junction, so there is no change to the turning arrangements as currently exist on site. To improve the right turn into Alderbury Road from Station Road, a right turn filter lane is proposed which will provide improvement for this movement over the existing layout.
 - ☐ The scheme will undergo an independent Road Safety Audit to determine if there are any road safety issues which may be caused by the scheme.
 - ☐ Any road safety issues identified by the Road Safety Audit will be address by the scheme Designer to mitigate them, as far as reasonably practicable.
- Objections through planning /consultation process L M ☐ Targeted public consultation and close working with Ward Members and key stakeholders to achieve early 'buy in'.
- ☐ Undertake an assessment so that the benefit of the scheme can be clearly communicated with the public and stakeholders.
- Impact on residential properties located on High Street/ Station Road L M ☐
- There are a number of residential properties located on High Street/ Station Road who will be temporarily disrupted during construction of the scheme. As the impacts on these residential properties is expected to be short term and temporary during the construction of Section 3 , a detailed assessment of the number of properties affected, or the severity of the impact, has not been undertaken.

☐ Slough Borough Council will undertake public consultation on the scheme to obtain feedback from residents on the proposals and look to amend the design where feasible to address any significant concerns/ issues.

Increase in construction costs L M ☐ Scheme to be delivered using the Council's term contractor using an agreed schedule of rates.

☐ Appropriate levels of contingency have been built into the initial cost estimates. Design engineering also to be undertaken to reduce overall scheme cost, including the potential to save time and cost by implementing Sections 1, 2 and 3 together.

☐ Reasonable level of confidence in initial scheme costing, based on actual scheme cost of junction improvement scheme delivered in 2019/20 for the High Street/ Langley Road junction.

☐ Scheme costs will be refined through Preliminary Design to provide increased level of confidence. C3 utility searches will be considered to be carried out during Preliminary Design to better assess utility costs.

☐ SBC to issue S151 letter to formally support delivery of the scheme should construction costs overrun.

Delay in construction or cancellation of the WRLtH L M ☐ Should the construction of the WRLtH be delayed or project completely cancelled, the anticipated step change in traffic demand along High Street and Meadfield Road will not occur, as Hollow Hill Lane will remain open to traffic. However, with peak hour congestion already witnessed along Station Road/ High Street, the strategic need for the scheme will remain the same. Reducing congestion will enhance the transport network to support and accommodate future growth in employment and housing. The scheme will also still offer an extension to the adjacent High Street/ Langley Road junction improvements delivered in March 2020, plus the Section 1 and 2 improvements which have secured LEP conditional funding approval.

Failure to coordinate with previous parts of the scheme / highway works on High Street L L

☐ The proposed scheme has already been designed to feasibility design stage to account for and tie into the junction improvement scheme at High Street/ Meadfield Road (Section 2) and the widening of the High Street between Elmhurst Road and Langley Road (Section 1), to ensure they are harmonious.

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB

Item 9: Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre – “The Deck”

Purpose of Report

1. To consider giving financial approval to Bracknell’s ‘The Deck’ town centre scheme, which includes partial demolition/strip out and subsequent redevelopment of the former Bental’s Department Store and former McDonald’s in the town centre.
2. The proposed redevelopment will include:
 - 3,207 sqm of Food and beverage uses (use class A3/A4/A5);
 - 2,148 sqm of Assembly and leisure uses (use class D2);
 - Public event area;
 - Roof covering;
 - Public realm improvements; and
 - Associated highway works.
3. Whilst the scheme was originally developed by the private sector, changing market conditions have resulted in the developer stating that they are no longer able to fund the demolition and construction of the Deck as a result of uncertainties around the return on investment. This demonstration of market failure affects the overall viability of the scheme for the private sector and evidences the need for public sector investment.
4. The strategic case demonstrates alignment with national, regional and local strategic priorities and provides underlying evidence of the need for ‘The Deck’ scheme as part of the on-going regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre.

Recommendation

5. You are recommended to give Bracknell’s The Deck conditional financial approval in the sum of £955,882 in 2020/21 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 below and subject to the following condition:
 - 5.1. Confirmation from a LEP appointed solicitor the scheme conforms to State Aid requirements.

Other Implications

Financial

6. Notification was received on 18 September 2020 that scheme 2.05 Newbury: Sandleford Park would not be able to complete the scheme as originally specified and that £900k of the £2.9m Local Growth Deal funding allocated for the project would be returned.
7. Combined with existing unallocated Local Growth Fund (LGF) monies of £55,882, the total figure of unallocated Local Growth Fund monies is £955,882.
8. The LEP is currently in the sixth and final year of the LGF, with all money to be expended by March 2021.
9. As the existing BLTB pipeline of projects has recently been exhausted, and with a requirement to spend by March 2021, the LEP Board recommends to the BLTB that schemes from the recent Getting

Building Fund (GBF) pipeline are considered for funding. However, key for any scheme wanting to utilise LGF funding will be the ability to obtain an approved business case and complete any project by March 2021.

10. The process for identifying projects for the GBF created a pipeline of 27 projects, of which 6 have been funded. Of the remaining projects on the prioritised pipeline, only “The Deck” scheme for Bracknell Town Centre regeneration will be able to be fully delivered by Q1 2021.
11. The funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 sets out the roles and responsibilities, reporting and auditing arrangements, timing and triggers for payments, contributions from other funders, consequences of delay, consequences of failure, claw back, and evaluation requirements at one and five years on.

Risk Management

12. The risk management arrangements already put in place by the Local Transport Body are as follows:
 - The [Assurance Framework](#)ⁱ has been drafted following DfT guidance and has been approved by the DfT for use in allocating capital funds for transport schemes
 - Hatch Regeneris have been appointed as Independent Assessors and have provided a full written report (see Appendix 1) on the full business case for the scheme
 - The funding agreement set out at paragraph 11, step 5 makes clear that the financial risk associated with implementation of the scheme rests with the scheme promoter.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

13. The scheme promoter is a local authority and they have to act within the law. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB, should any questions arise.

Supporting Information

14. The scheme will be carried out for Bracknell Forest Council.
15. The full details of the scheme are available from the [Bracknell Forest website](#)ⁱⁱ. A summary of the key points is given below:

Task	Timescale
Procurement	Via the Council’s Term Contractor
Contractor appointed	As above
Start on site (demolition)	January 2021
Demolition complete	June 2021
Deck construction starts	June 2021
Completion of construction	August 2022

Activity	Funder	Cost (approx)
Scheme development and construction	Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP)	£19,119,000
Demolition works	Berkshire Local Transport Body	£955,882
Total		£20,074,882

16. The table below sets out the details of this scheme’s compliance with steps1-5 of paragraph 14 of [Assurance Framework](#)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Assurance Framework Check list	Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre – “The Deck”	
Step 1: Unapproved or Long List of schemes.	The GBF assessment process was used and the scheme was given 16 points and ranked 2nd of 26 schemes submitted.	
	Factor	Raw score
	Value for money	3
	Deliverability	4
	Strategic objectives	6
	Relevance of type of investment	3
	Total	16
Step 2: Programme Entry: evolution of the scheme from outline proposal to full business case, external view on the business case, and independent assessment (See paragraphs 15 and 16)	<p>Programme Entry status will be requested at the BLTB on 12 November 2020.</p> <p>The Bracknell Forest website^{iv} holds the latest details of the full business case, including the VfM statement certified by the senior responsible officer.</p> <p>Any comments or observations on the scheme received by either TVB LEP or Bracknell Forest Borough Council have been fully considered during the development of the scheme.</p> <p>The report of the Independent Assessor is attached at Appendix 1. The Independent Assessor was asked to report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness – has the promoter prepared a complete Full Business Case submission, when judged against the prevailing advice from the DfT • Accuracy – has the promoter performed the relevant calculations and assessments accurately and without error • Relevance – has the Full Business Case considered all relevant matters, including use of appropriate forecasting models and planning assumptions, and has it included any irrelevant considerations such unduly-optimistic assumptions or out of date modelling data • Value for Money – does the scheme promoter’s Value for Money assessment comply with the prevailing DfT guidance • Evaluation arrangements – has the scheme promoter made provision for appropriate post-implementation evaluation of the scheme. • Remedies – where the independent assessment reveals a gap between the FBC supplied and the standard anticipated by the DfT guidance, then the advice for the LTB should include recommendations for remedial actions required – e.g., collection of further data, sensitivity tests on particular assumptions etc. 	
Step 3: Financial Approval	The Independent Assessor has recommended that in this case Full Financial Approval is appropriate – with a request that professional advice is taken in regard to State Aid to confirm the scheme is appropriate for public sector investment.	
Step 4: Recommendation of Financial Approval	The Independent Assessor for the LEP, Hatch Regeneris, has reviewed this business case and has recommended that the Bracknell Town Centre, Lexicon – “The Deck” scheme is approved, and represents “Very High Value” with a	

Assurance Framework Check list	Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre – “The Deck”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High Value for Money - Support of the Independent assessor 	<p>BCR of 8.8:1</p> <p>DfT has set thresholds of 2.00 (High VfM) and 4.00 (Very High VfM) and schemes with BCRs above these thresholds can be described as having High or Very High Value for Money.</p>
<p>Step 5: Formal Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - roles - responsibilities - implementation - reporting - auditing - timing and triggers for payments, - contributions from other funders, - consequences of delay, - consequences of failure, - claw back, - evaluation one and five years on 	<p>The capital grant of £955,882 is a maximum figure which cannot be increased but may be reduced if savings are achieved during implementation. In the event that Bracknell Forest Council wishes to alter the profile of the grant payments, it must seek prior written permission from TVB LEP, having first raised the matter with the BLTB.</p> <p>The grant is made subject to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Roles</u>: TVB LEP is a part funder of the scheme. Bracknell Forest Council is the scheme promoter and is the relevant highway and planning authority. 2. <u>Responsibilities</u>: TVB LEP is responsible for allocating the capital finance in accordance with its Assurance Framework. Bracknell Forest Council is responsible for all aspects of the design, risk management, insurance, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including its responsibilities as highway and planning authority, any other statutory duties, and any financial or other liabilities arising from the scheme. 3. <u>Implementation</u>: In addition to any reporting requirements within Bracknell Forest Council, the scheme promoter will use the proforma supplied by TVB LEP to make reports on progress of the implementation of the capital scheme to each meeting of the BLTB until the build is complete. In particular, Bracknell Forest Council will report on any further change in the size, scope or specification of the scheme; and on any substantial savings against the scheme budget whether achieved by such changes to the size, scope or specification of the scheme, or through procurement, or through the efficient implementation of the scheme. 4. <u>Reporting</u>: The scheme promoter must provide accurate, timely, verified and quality assured quarterly monitoring and forecast data, which relate to defined output and outcome indicators agreed between TVB LEP and government as a condition of the Growth Deal. This scheme will not be required to participate in an evaluation as set out in the Growth Deal Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. 5. <u>Auditing</u>: Bracknell Forest Council will keep financial records such that the expenditure on the scheme is readily identifiable, and if and when BEIS, DfT or other government department or the Accountable Body for TVB LEP requests access to financial or other records for the purposes of an audit of the accounts, Bracknell Forest Council will co-operate fully. 6. <u>Timing and Triggers for payments</u>: See the Claim Proforma at Appendix 1 of the Capital Grant Letter – available on request.

Assurance Framework Check list	Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre – “The Deck”
	<p>7. <u>Contributions from Other Funders</u>: Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) will contribute £19,119,000 to the scheme over the period until the scheme opens in August 2022. In the event that the scheme experiences or it is anticipated that the scheme will experience a shortfall in these contributions, Bracknell Forest Council will be required to notify TVB LEP of these developments. The provisions of clauses 8, Consequences of Delay; 9, Consequences of Change to the Design or Specification of the Scheme; or 10, Consequences of Failure will then be applied.</p> <p>8. <u>Consequences of Delay</u>: In the event that the scheme experiences minor delays to its overall Business Case programme (no more than 10 weeks), Bracknell Forest Council will report these delays and the reasons for them, and the proposed remedial action to the next available meeting of the BLTB. In the event that the scheme experiences major delays to its overall Business Case programme (11 weeks or longer) Bracknell Forest Council will be required to seek permission from TVB LEP to reschedule any payments that are due, or may be delayed in falling due because of the delay to the overall Business Case programme.</p> <p>9. <u>Consequences of Change to the Design or Specification of the Scheme</u>: In the event that Bracknell Forest Council wishes to change the design or specification of the scheme such the scheme delivered will vary in any material aspect from the description given in the overall business case, Bracknell Forest Council will be required to seek prior written consent from TVB LEP. Failing this permission, no further monies will be paid to Bracknell Forest Council after the change becomes apparent to TVB LEP. In addition, consideration will be given to recovering any monies paid to Bracknell Forest Council in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>10. <u>Consequences of Failure</u>: The current completion date for this scheme has been agreed as an exception as 30 June 2021, which is beyond the end of the current LGF programme. As soon as it becomes apparent to Bracknell Forest Council that it will not be possible to deliver the scheme within this date, written notice shall be given to the Accountable Body for TVB LEP. No further monies will be paid to Bracknell Forest Council after this point. In addition, consideration will be given to recovering any monies paid to Bracknell Forest Council in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>11. <u>Claw back</u>: If the overall scheme achieves savings against budget, these savings will be shared by TVB LEP and the other funders noted above in proportion to the amounts set out in the Financial Profile. The Accountable Body for TVB LEP reserves the right to claw back any amounts of grant that have been spent on purposes other than the scheme as approved and any repayments due as a consequence of changes to the design or specification of the scheme or scheme failure.</p> <p>12. <u>Evaluation One and Five Years On</u>: Bracknell Forest Council will produce</p>

Assurance Framework Check list	Financial Approval 2.47 Bracknell: Town Centre – “The Deck”
	<p>scheme evaluations One and Five years after practical completion that comply with DfT guidance.</p> <p><u>Other Conditions of Local Growth Funds:</u> Bracknell Forest Council will acknowledge the financial contribution made to this scheme through Local Growth Funds and follow the “Growth Deal Identity Guidelines”^v It will also give due regard to the Public Services (Social Value) Act^{vi}, particularly through the employment of apprentices across the scheme supply chain.</p>

Conclusion

17. It is the conclusion of the Independent Assessor that Bracknell’s Town Centre “The Deck”, scheme offers a strong case for investment in the project, with clear strategic and economic benefits, and a detailed process for financing and delivering the scheme.

Appendix 1

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Independent Assessment Summary Addendum Report:

“The Deck”

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Park

- Independent Assessment Summary Report: 'The Deck' Bracknell Town Centre

02 November 2020

www.hatch.co.uk

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Review Findings

Conclusions

The **strategic case** demonstrates alignment with national, regional and local strategic priorities and provides underlying evidence of the need for ‘The Deck’ scheme as part of the on-going regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre. This is particularly in terms of creating a western ‘gateway’ into the core centre, enhancing the connectivity and permeability of the centre, and diversifying the retail and leisure offer by expanding the evening and night-time economy offer.

There is a demonstration of the market failure caused by the requirement to demolish the old Bentall’s building prior to commencement of construction work, which affects the overall viability of the scheme for the private sector and the need for public sector investment. None-the-less, it is advised that professional advice is taken in regard to State Aid to confirm the scheme is appropriate for public sector investment.

The approach to assessing the **economic benefits** is generally robust and demonstrates the scheme should deliver ‘very high’ value for money through the direct generation of employment within the completed development, as well as providing wider support for jobs across the core town centre. The analysis is supported through a range of sensitivity tests that indicate benefits should remain high under a variety of potential future scenarios.

The **financial case** appears sound, with a detailed Cost Plan provided by the developer BRP. Whilst the levels of risk contingency is relatively low (6.5%), the scheme is well developed, and any cost overruns will be the responsibility of the BRP to manage. The commitment of BRP to substantially fund (£12.164 million) and deliver the project is outlined within the BRP Board Meeting minutes from October 2020. The £6 million contribution from Bracknell Forest Council is also secured within the Council’s reserves as part of a Development Agreement with BRP and has been approved as part of the council’s capital budget for the 2020/2021.

The **commercial and management cases** are generally robust, albeit some information is limited in nature as it relates directly to BRP processes. Nearly all of the delivery risks are allocated to the private sector, with the exception of some non-specific risks that are shared between the public and private sector. The main risks identified relate to the construction process itself and the interface with adjacent uses to the site, but these risks are considered to be well managed.

Recommendations

It is our **conclusion** that overall case for investment in the scheme appears strong, with clear strategic and economic benefits, and a detailed process for financing and delivering the scheme.

On this basis, we recommend the scheme for approval.

Introduction

This report provides an independent assessment of the Full Business Case (FBC) submitted by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) for the continuing development of Bracknell Town Centre at the area called ‘The Deck’.

The site, formerly occupied by Bentall’s Department Store and a separate McDonald’s unit, is currently vacant and requires partial demolition and strip out prior to redevelopment into a range of retail and leisure uses, alongside the creation of a roof-covered public event space.



This report considers the evidence presented by BFC and whether the schemes represents a robust case for the investment of Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) funding.

The independent assessment has applied criteria from TVB LEP assurance framework and the requirements for business cases set out within the HM Treasury Green Book appraisal guidance.

Submitted Information

The independent assessment process for ‘The Deck’ submission has been conducted on the following set of documentation submitted by BFC and their consultant team (WSP):

- i. Full Business Case Report (29th October 2020)

Due to restrictions in the time available to produce the business case, no formal Appraisal Specification Report or Option Appraisal Report was submitted by the Applicant. Instead the overall approach to be adopted was discussed at a meeting with BFC and WSP on 15th October 2020.

Report Structure

This Independent Assessors Report responds to the formal submission of documentation, as well as the informal engagement process with BFC and their consultants, to provide a review of information provided, assess its suitability and robustness against TVB LEPs assurance requirements, and provide recommendations in relation to the approval of LEP funding for the proposed scheme.

The report outlines all of the scheme elements included within the Full Business Case submission, alongside the details presented within each of the five 'cases' (Strategic, Economic, Financial, Commercial, Management).

It also sets out the recommendations to the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) relating to the suitability of the scheme for funding.



Full Business Case

Overview

The full business case submission sets out the case for investment in ‘The Deck’ scheme, which includes partial demolition/strip out and subsequent redevelopment of the former Bentall’s Department Store and former McDonald’s in the town centre.

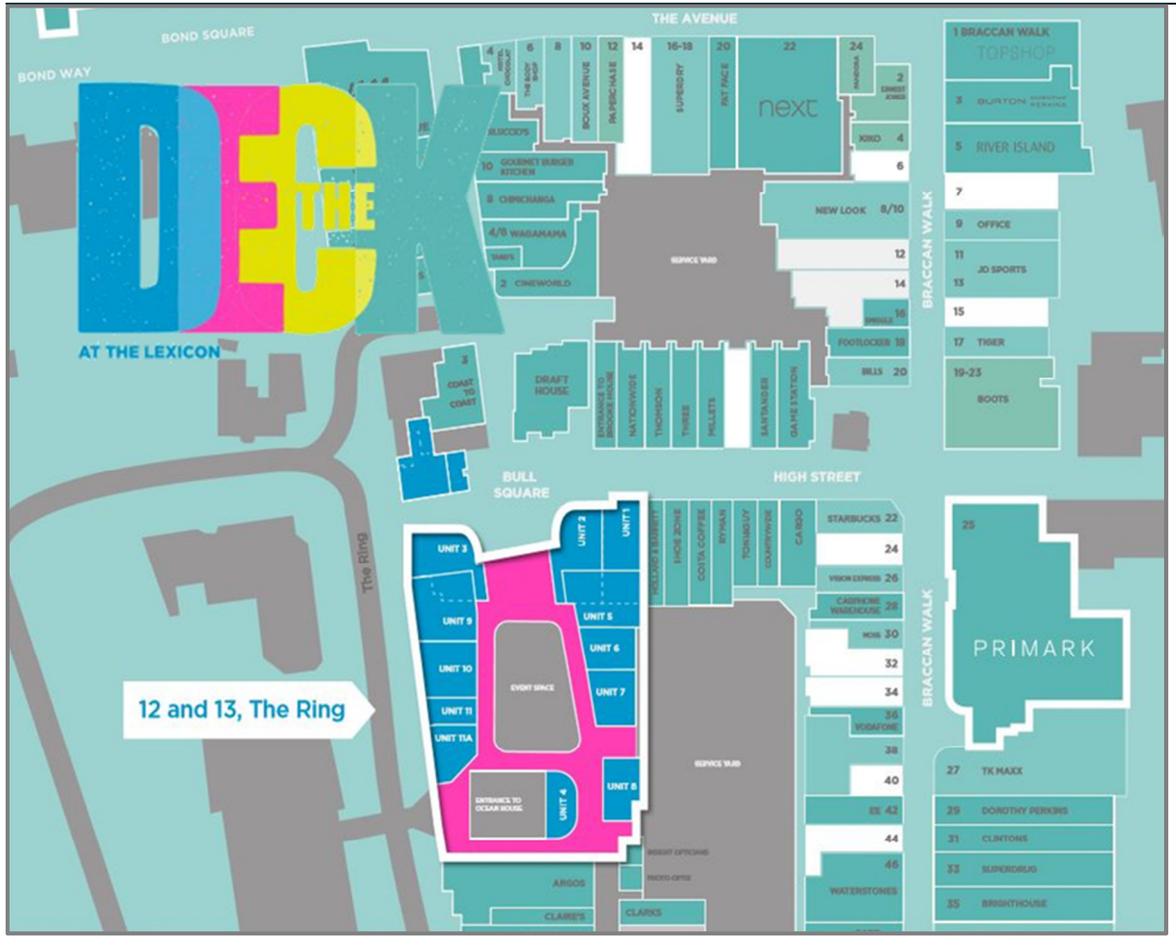
The proposed redevelopment will include:

- ii. 3,207 sqm of Food and beverage uses (use class A3/A4/A5);
- iii. 2,148 sqm of Assembly and leisure uses (use class D2);
- iv. Night club (sui generis);
- v. Public event area;
- vi. Roof covering;
- vii. Public realm improvements; and
- viii. Associated highway works.

Figure 2.1 provides an overview of the proposed configuration and location of the scheme.

Proposed Configuration of The Deck Scheme

A grey rectangular box representing the location of Figure 2.1, which is a diagram showing the proposed configuration and location of the 'The Deck' scheme.



Full planning permission (ref: 16/01252/FUL) was granted on 24 April 2017, with a subsequent Section 73 application (ref: 19/00507/FUL) also approved on 18 July 2019 for a range of minor variations to the scheme.

Whilst the scheme was originally developed by the private sector, changing market conditions has resulted in the developer stating that they are no longer able to fund the demolition and construction of the Deck as a result of uncertainties around the return on investment.

Key Input Assumption and Parameters

Summary of Content

The overarching business case is based upon a range of key assumptions and data sources that underpin the appraisal process:



- ix. Assumed profile of occupancy of food and beverage units:
 - 2022 = 60%
 - 2023 = 80%
 - 2024 = 100%
- x. Occupation of bowling alley from 2023
- xi. 10-year appraisal period
- xii. Additionality impacts:
 - Leakage = 25% (Medium Impact)
 - Displacement = 50% (Medium Impact)
 - Multiplier = 1.26
- xiii. Town centre retail and leisure employment:
 - 345 current jobs within Princess Square area
 - Underlying 3% year-on-year fall in employment
- xiv. GVA per worker = £93,395
- xv. Business rates
 - £68 per square metre for food/beverage and bowling alley
 - 0.512 multiplier rate
- xvi. 12% Optimisms Bias

Independent Assessor Comment

The profile of occupancy for the food and beverage units and the bowling alley appear reasonable and the 10-year appraisal period for benefits is typical for a scheme of this nature.

The additionality impacts are considered to be acceptable, as a central case, and it is noted that sensitivity tests have been undertaken to determine the impact of variations in leakage and levels of displacement.

The assumption that retail and leisure jobs are falling at a rate of 3% is based upon robust research from 2019 Q3 data British Retail Consortium (BRC) Retail Employment Monitor. Whilst the extent to which this applies to Bracknell Town Centre is not directly discussed within the business case documentation, there are no reasons to believe that Bracknell has significantly diverged from national averages.

It is understood that the GVA per worker value has been calculated by taking the Regional Gross Value Added by Industry for Bracknell Forest (£5,478 million) and dividing this the total estimated



workforce across Bracknell Forest (61,000), before adjusting from 2018 to 2020 prices. As such, it represents an average GVA per worker across all sectors of Bracknell. Whilst, ideally, a sector specific value would have been applied, this is a broadly acceptable approach, albeit the value appears quite high for the retail and leisure sector. The potential impact of the value is discussed further within the Economic Case below.

The assumptions around business rates appear reasonable.

The application of 12% optimism bias is considered to be acceptable, given the developed nature of the scheme. It is also noted that sensitivity tests have been undertaken with both higher and lower levels of optimism bias applied.

Strategic Case

Summary of Content

The Strategic Case provides an overview of the strategic context of the scheme, the problems that it seeks to address, along with the aims and objectives.

The **collaborative partnership** between BFC and the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) to bring forward the regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre is described and how 'the Deck' scheme forms part of the next phase in the process.

A range of national, regional and local policies and strategies are presented and the extent to which the scheme responds, and aligns, to **key policy requirements**.

A detailed section is presented that highlights the **problems identified**, focusing upon seven core areas:

- xvii. Falling Footfall and occupancy in recent months;
- xviii. Covid-19;
- xix. The Deck scheme is not viable without funding;
- xx. Lack of an 'evening economy';
- xxi. Lack of connectivity;
- xxii. Western Gateway Entrance to the town centre; and
- xxiii. Housing pressures.

From these, six clear **opportunities** are presented, as follows:

Ensure the retention of shoppers and leisure users of the town centre

Reduce the private sector financial risk and unlock the development

Promote the evening and night-time economy

Complete the 'figure of 8' pedestrian circuit to open up the town centre retail and leisure offer



Create a new west 'gateway' to the town centre

Supporting wider housing growth and affordable housing across the town centre

The **impact of not changing** is described in relation to constraints on local growth and the potential impact on jobs and vacant retail units.

The high-level strategic outcomes and **objectives** of the scheme are presented and detail some of the specific elements of the scheme, as well as the wider impacts in terms of jobs and town centre vibrancy.

A set of **measures for success** are presented that include details of how each element will be measured to determine the impact of the scheme.

The detailed **scope** of the project is then outlined, alongside recognised **constraints** in delivering the project. As the project has already received planning approval, the only **interdependencies** identified for the scheme relate only to funding requirements.

A list of key **stakeholders** is presented, along with a statement on the level of community involvement with the project to-date.

A discussion of the **scheme option** development process is outlined, albeit there are no distinct variations in options. Instead the scheme has been developed and refined over a three-year period. It is stated that the primary focus of the development has always been to maximise opportunities for the evening economy and leisure market.

Independent Assessor Comments

The Strategic Case is considered to present a strong overview of the need for the scheme and the outcomes that it will deliver.

The **policy context** provides a clear demonstration that the project supports national, regional and local objectives to support town centre regeneration and promote growth.

The **problems identified** are clearly set out and demonstrate a range of challenges facing Bracknell Town Centre retail and leisure offer in terms of comparative performance with other regional centres, levels of vacancy rates, as well as the latest impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is clear evidence of the current limitations of the evening and night-time economy, as well as the wider pedestrian connectivity constraints around the core town centre that the scheme could alleviate. Strong evidence is also presented on the poor quality of frontage currently provided on the approach to the town centre from the west and the need to create a new 'gateway' to enhance the 'sense of place' and improve perceptions of the town centre. Whilst the link to alleviating housing pressures is less direct, it is acknowledged that the scheme forms part of a comprehensive mixed-use masterplan for the town centre.

The specific **market failure** resulting from the need for significant on-site demolition works, and the forecast achievable rental values, is considered to provide sufficient evidence for the need for public sector intervention, albeit specific legal advice should be taken in relation to any necessary **State Aid** considerations.



The majority of the **opportunities** outlined within the submission are considered to be legitimate and appropriate and represent clear goals for the scheme.

The **impact of not changing**, whilst relatively high level, provides a useful assessment of the potential for gradual decline across the town centre without the completion of 'The Deck' project. Whilst the full extent of the impact is difficult to ascertain, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that it represents a realistic risk.

A total of 10 **objectives** are presented, some of which are specific in nature, whilst others are more generic. They are considered to provide sufficient focus for the project and, alongside the **measures for success**, provide a clear mechanism for determining the outcomes that would represent the successful delivery of the project.

The **scope** of the project is well understood and very clearly defined. Having already achieved planning consent, the **constraints** and **interdependencies** for the project focus upon other elements of deliverability, including environmental, funding and market conditions. These are outlined in sufficient detail within the submission to provide confidence that they are well understood.

A clear list of key **stakeholders** is presented alongside information on the level of support for this scheme. The statement of community involvement provides clear evidence of a range of consultation throughout the scheme development process and that the project has responded to the needs of the local community.

Whilst a defined set of alternative **scheme options** is not presented, the process for developing the preferred scheme is outlined in sufficient detail to demonstrate that a range of sub-options have been considered for the site.

Economic Case

Summary of Content

The Economic Case identifies and appraises the scheme impacts to determine its overall value for money from public sector investment.

The submission sets out two **options for appraisal**: a 'do-nothing' scenario where the former Bentall's store remains empty and unused; and a 'do-something' scenario where 'The Deck' scheme is delivered with 5,355 sqm of new leisure, food and beverage floorspace, alongside some minor highway and public realm improvements.

The **direct jobs**, and associated Gross Value Added (GVA), created by the scheme are set out in relation to the retail and leisure uses created. This includes i) direct on-site employment and ii) indirect and induced employment through supply chain expenditure.

The **jobs safeguarded** by the scheme are also forecast. The submissions forecasts that 'The Deck' scheme will negate the on-going 3% annual loss in retail and leisure employment estimated to currently occur across the Princess Square retail area.



The additional **business rates** generated by new retail and leisure activity resulting from the scheme is estimated within the submission.

A range of **non-monetised impacts** are also identified, in terms of: supporting future development; social impacts (apprenticeships and construction jobs); and environmental impacts (heritage, energy usage and noise).

The underlying **scheme costs** are presented as £18.518 million, including risk allowance. These have then been adjusted to take into account **real cost increases**. A central case level of optimism bias of 12% has then been applied, although sensitivity tests for 2% and 24% are also included. The overall **Present Value of Costs** are estimated as £19.07 million, of which £7.47 million is allocated for public sector funding and £11.6 million as private sector contributions.

The gross jobs created on-site are estimated as 203, which then taking into account additionality reduces to 76 net jobs. This is estimated to equate to a GVA of £52.6 million. A further 20 net jobs from indirect or induced impacts are forecast, with a GVA of £13. Million.

The number of jobs safeguarded (80), and the associated GVA (£11.0 million), is also estimated.

The overall Present Value of Benefits generated from job creation and retention is estimated as £77.4 million. Once the costs of the private sector contribution are removed from this value, the overall **adjusted Present value of Benefits** equates to £65.7 million.

The **Analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits** (AMCB) is presented in terms of the estimated Net Present Value of the scheme (£58.3 million) and the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) = 8.8 to 1.

The level of potential **business rates** that the retail and leisure units could generate in Bracknell are also estimated.

The submission states that 'The Deck' will play an important role in the development of a strong retail centre with a diverse and resilient economy. This will help **support the delivery of planned housing, leisure and business developments** outlined in the 2032 vision.

The **social impacts** generated through construction jobs and apprenticeships are outlined, along with the wider positive impacts of constructions through the local supply chains across Bracknell.

Two grade II listed **heritage** assets are identified as being affected by the development, but the analysis concludes that the impacts will be negligible.

The development has adopted an **energy** strategy, with 9.4% of energy requirements to be sources from renewables and attains part compliance with Bracknell Forest Core Strategy Policy CS12.

Noise and vibration from construction activities are forecast to have negligible to occasional moderate adverse residual effects.

A range of **sensitivity tests** have been undertaken to assess the impact that alternative parameters for additionality and optimism bias could have upon the outturn impacts. The estimated BCR remains 'very high' under all tests, with the exception of the 'high' displacement test (75% of jobs displaced from other localities across the UK) where the estimated BCR falls into the 'high' category (3.6 to 1).



An overall ***Value for Money Statement*** is provided that demonstrates that the scheme offers very high levels of benefits from the public sector financial contribution with 'very high' value for money anticipated.



Independent Assessor Comment

The overarching approach adopted within the Economic Case is considered robust.

Whilst the *options assessment* process is limited to a 'do-nothing' and the preferred scheme option, there is evidence presented within the Strategic Case to demonstrate how the preferred scheme option was identified over a 3-year period of development and refinement.

The approach to assessing *direct, indirect and induced jobs* created by the development is considered to follow relevance HM Treasury Green Book guidance, including the assumptions around additionality. The GVA value of jobs created are all based upon the average GVA per worker of £93,395. As discussed in 'Key Input Assumption and Parameters' sections above, this appears to be a generic value across sectors for Bracknell and could be seen to be high for the retail and leisure sector. The impact of applying a lower value is discussed further in paragraph 2.64 below.

The estimated level of *jobs safeguarded* by the scheme is dependant upon two factors: i) that 345 retail and leisure tenanted units in Princess Square are subject to national trends in the reduction of high street retail activity and ii) that the delivery of 'The Deck' scheme will be sufficient to off-set any loss in employment within these 345 Princess Square units. Whilst there is no direct data linking the national trends to recent activity in Princess Square, it is considered a reasonable assumption to apply the national data in this context. The evidence that 'The Deck' scheme can fully off-set the forecast job losses is, again, not fully demonstrated. Whilst we acknowledge that there is a reasonable probability that this outcome could result, we would recommend this assumption is subject to sensitivity testing. This is discussed further below in paragraph 2.59.

The inclusion of the impact of the scheme upon *business rates* provides a useful understanding of how the scheme will generate public sector returns within Bracknell. Given that this is a by-product of the GVA created through the new retail and leisure activity, it is not considered additive to the overall economic case, but is none-the-less informative to the overall business case. The approach adopted to assessing the level of business rate generation from the scheme is considered acceptable and, since BFC have not incorporated it within the final assessment of Net Present Value, they have correctly avoided any double counting of benefits.

The *Present Value of Scheme Costs* are clearly presented for the public and private sectors and are considered to have been correctly applied uplifts for price inflation and for optimism bias, as well as standard discounts rates.

The *Present value of Benefits* demonstrates the economic impact of the net jobs (after additionality has been taken into account) created by the scheme, as well as those safeguarded. This indicates that 68% of the benefits (£52.6m) is estimated to derive directly from the jobs created on-site at retail and leisure activity at 'The Deck', with a further 18% (£13.7m) from the wider supply chain for these businesses. The remaining 14% (£11.0 million) is from safeguarding other jobs in Princess Square. It can be seen that even if the number of safeguarded jobs is halved, the impact upon the total level of benefits estimated from the scheme is relatively small (-7%).

The *analysis of monetised costs and benefits* is considered to provide a robust assessment of the Net Present Value and Benefit Cost Ratio for the scheme and demonstrates that it is forecast to deliver strong returns from public sector investment.



The **non-monetised impacts** that have been identified are all considered to be comprehensive and all relevant to the scheme. The analysis of **social impact** adequately demonstrates the construction of the scheme will derive local benefits, albeit the scale of these impacts are unclear.

A range of **environmental** impacts are presented, albeit the level of detail is relatively limited. It is sufficiently shown that the impact upon heritage, energy, and noise should have relatively minimal impacts during both the construction and operational phases of the scheme.

The **sensitivity analysis** is considered to provide a robust assessment of the impact of different additionality scenarios and levels of optimism bias. It demonstrates that the scheme is forecast to deliver strong value for money across a range of scenarios.

As outlined in paragraph 2.55 above, the GVA value per job applied within the analysis (£93,395) could be considered high. We have therefore conducted a sensitivity test applying half of this value. In the central case, this could reduce the Present Value of Benefits to £28.9 million and the BCR to 3.9 to 1, still very nearly representing 'very high' value for money.

Whilst not presented by BFC, even under a combined worst case scenario of low GVA per worker (50%), high displacement (75%), only 50% of the jobs safeguarded at Princess Square, and high optimism bias (24%), the BCR for the scheme is still estimated at 2.3 to 1, demonstrating 'high' value for money.

On the basis of the evidence presented, we can conclude that there is a reasonable likelihood that the scheme could deliver 'very high' **value for money** from public sector investment and even under more challenging future scenarios, with higher scheme costs or lower benefits, it should still achieve 'high' value for money.

Financial Case

Summary of Content

The Financial Case provides an overview of scheme capital costs, cost profiles and funding sources, and determines its affordability

A **cost plan** for the scheme is presented that includes preliminaries, demolition, construction, externals, and risk. The expenditure to-date is outlined, and outturn price adjustments are made to account for **inflation**.

The **profile of spend** is presented, as follows:

xxiv.	2020/21	=	£ 2.441 million
xxv.	2021/22	=	£12.988 million
xxvi.	2022/23	=	£ 3.690 million

The section on **whole life costs** identifies that the scheme will require on-going operating and maintenance but that the direct liabilities will be the responsibility of BRP, with some minor elements of public realm and highway maintenance for BFC.



The overall affordability and funding is set out, with a **profile of funding** demonstrating the following allocations: BFC (31%), TVB LEP (5%) and the private sector – BRP (62%). The BFC funding is secured from Council reserves as part of a Development Agreement with BRP and approved as part of the Council’s capital budget for the 2020/2021 year. The minutes from the BRP Board Meeting in October 2020 demonstrate BRP’s commitment to funding and delivering the scheme, subject to the LEP and BFC financial contributions.

Any risks of additional costs are fully covered by BRP and their contractors.

Independent Assessor Comment

The **cost plan** provided within the appendices provides a full breakdown of the scheme costs, providing confidence of the detailed approach that has been undertaken in estimating the capital cost requirements of the scheme.

Suitable adjustments from the original 2018 cost estimates into future year **outturn costs** have been applied.

Whilst the levels of **risk contingency** is relatively low (6.5%), this is not unusual for a scheme of this nature and one that is at a detailed stage of development. In addition, there is demonstration that any cost overruns will be the sole responsibility for BRP, and their contractors, to manage accordingly, and so there is no additional risk to the public sector.

Whilst the level of on-going **operating and maintenance costs** is not outlined in detail, sufficient information is provided to understand that these will mostly fall to BRP to cover. The only exception would be aspects that fall within the public highway and would be covered by BFC.

The sources of **match-funding** are clearly outlined and a commitment from BRP to substantially fund (£12.164 million) and deliver the project is verified within the BRP Board Meeting minutes. There is also clear confirmation of the £6 million contribution from BFC.

Commercial Case

Summary of Content

The Commercial Case outlines the procurement strategy for the scheme and provides information on sourcing options and risk allocation.

An **output-based specification** for ‘The Deck’ development is outlined, including the necessary demolition works.

A discussion of the **procurement strategy** is provided, highlighting two primary options considered by BRP for construction: single-stage design and build; or two-stage design and build, with the strengths and weaknesses of each option set out. The assessment process concludes that the single-stage design and build is the most appropriate.



The **sourcing options** for suppliers is detailed, with a list of five contractors identified for different elements of the demolition and construction process, including specialist elements like the deck roof.

A discussion of **risk allocation** is presented, with all defined risks allocated to the private sector to mitigate and manage, with only a sub-set of non-specific project risks requiring potential shared mitigation and management between the private sector and BFC.



Independent Assessor Comment

Overall, the Commercial Case establishes that BRP have developed robust processes to procure the contractors to successfully, and efficiently, deliver the scheme.

The **outputs-based specification** provides full details of the expected deliverables from the scheme and what contractors are required to deliver through the procurement process.

The **procurement strategy** provides clear evidence of the alternative approaches that have been considered for delivering the project and how the preferred approach has been identified. Sufficient evidence is provided to give confidence that the optimum approach is being adopted.

The approach to identifying **sourcing options** is well set out and demonstrates a mix of existing approaches from other elements of the Bracknell Town Centre regeneration scheme, as well as bringing in specialist to deliver bespoke elements of the design, including the main deck.

Whilst the section on **risk allocation** is not presented in detail, it provides the necessary confirmation that nearly all of the risk will be the responsibility of BRP and their contractors to mitigate and manage. Whilst those risks that may be shared between the private and public sector are not outlined in detail, it is anticipated that the any public sector risks will relate to elements of the scheme that fall within the public highway and so would need to be the responsibility of BFC. These are neither considered to be high risk elements nor a substantial element of the scheme and so do not represent any significant concern.

Management Case

Summary of Content

The Management Case sets out the processes and controls in place to manage the implementation of the scheme, and track and realise future benefits.

A range of **similar projects** delivered by BRP (who are delivering the regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre) are set out, including the Lexicon element of the programme.

The overall **governance arrangements** for delivering the scheme are described, with specific reference to the Project Board and its responsibilities. A project consultant team diagram, detailing the Developer and Consultant team organisational structure, is provided.

It is indicated that there are no **project dependencies** with the scheme able to be delivered independently of any other projects.

A **project programme** is presented, with a set of key programme dates / milestones listed. The demolition of the Bentall's building will begin in January 2021, with construction of The Deck commencing in June 2021, and completion scheduled for August 2022.

The **risk management arrangements** for the project are set out, including risk identification, risk quantification, and risk management. The 'risk register' is highlighted as a 'live' document.



The ***assurance and approval plan*** is stated to follow a ‘gateway’ process to assess the project at critical stages in its lifecycle.

The ***stakeholder management process*** is briefly outlined, as are ***change and contract management arrangements***.

The ***benefits realisation arrangements*** are described in relation to the plan and register.

Contingency planning arrangements are also presented, including alternative uses for the development if the primary food and beverage market does not improve over the next few years.

Independent Assessor Comment

The management case, in general, presents sufficient information to provide assurance around the delivery arrangements in place for the project

The evidence of delivering ***previous projects*** showcases the expertise of the private sector delivery partners and highlights the successful delivery of the Lexicon scheme in Bracknell as an earlier phase of the town centre regeneration project.

The section of ***governance*** is considered reasonably detailed, with clear details of the role of the BRP Board, as well as specific individuals listed within key delivery roles for the project.

The submission states that the project is ***not directly dependant*** upon on other prior works or projects and so can be delivered in isolation. There is no reason for us to believe that this is not the case.

A detailed ***project programme*** is provided within an appendix and the key milestones identified in the report. Whilst the full programme provides a useful breakdown of the component parts of the project, it is not clear whether it is fully up-to-date and does not fully align with the milestone within the report. The information in the report, however, does demonstrate an overarching programme for delivery.

The ***risk management arrangements*** provide a useful overview of the approach that will be adopted by BRP to managing risks on the project. A risk register is also attached in an appendix, which, although not detailed in nature, provides an overview of key type of risks and the mitigation that is in place. This provides confidence that risks are being suitably assessed and managed on the project.

The ***assurance and approval plans*** provides an acceptable overview of processes in place for quality assurance and funding assurance.

The ***stakeholder management process*** is outlined and provides evidence that key stakeholders and local residents have already had a range of opportunities to express their views on the scheme and that this has influenced the design process.

The ***benefits realisation arrangements*** focuses mainly upon the monitoring and evaluation aspects of the project, to determine how the scheme meets it objectives. As such, the submissions does not directly comment upon any mechanisms to ensure that the identified benefits of the scheme will be delivered and maximised.

The ***monitoring and evaluation process*** is outlined in terms of the approach and key sources of information. Cross-reference is also made to the ‘measures of success’ outlined within the Strategic



Case. Table 2-7 in the Strategic Case does provide some specific targets for individual objectives, against which the success of the project can be monitored and evaluated.

The section on ***contingency planning*** provides useful evidence of how BRP will respond to any external impacts of uncertainties, such as COVID-19, including alternative uses for the development units to ensure the development still create economic activity.



Summary and Conclusions

Summary

The review of the five cases has identified a series of key summary points:

- xxvii. The **strategic case** demonstrates how the scheme supports a range of national, regional and local policies focused upon the regeneration of retail town centres. A range of key issues and opportunities are outlined that highlight the underlying pressures of maintaining and attracting retail and leisure activity, particularly in relation to COVID-19.

The submission demonstrates how 'The Deck' scheme will help to diversify the retail offer within the town centre, creating more evening and night-time economic activities, and will also enhance the overall 'sense of place' by creating new permeability for pedestrians around the town and enhanced access from the west.

There is sufficient evidence of market failure within the current economic climate to support the case for public sector investment in the scheme to ensure that it progresses, subject to any State Aid considerations.

A clear set of objectives for the scheme are established, alongside specific measures for success that can be utilised in the future to determine whether the scheme has delivered against its overarching aims.

- xxviii. The overall **economic case** assessment has been conducted in an appropriate manner. There is strong evidence that the scheme will deliver direct on-site jobs within new retail and leisure activities, along with indirect and induced jobs within the wider supply chain. The approach to capturing these benefits, in economic terms, is considered broadly acceptable, albeit some of the input parameters may be subject to variation.

The assessment has also captured benefits in terms of safeguarding jobs within the wider Princess Square retail area. Again, whilst the principle of the approach adopted is acceptable, the scale of benefits may be subject to variation.

Even allowing for variations in input parameters, and sensitivity tests, the scheme is considered likely to deliver at least 'high' value for money under a wide range of outcomes and, in many cases, should deliver 'very high' value from public sector investment.

- xxix. The overall **financial case** for the scheme is considered robust with a full cost plan and sufficient consideration of risk and contingency for the type of scheme and its level of development.

On-going operating and maintenance costs are recognised, albeit not quantified at this stage, and will be the responsibility of BRP, with the exception of elements of the public highway that will be maintained by BFC.

The sources of match-funding are clearly outlined and the commitment of BRP to substantially fund and deliver the project is verified. There is also clear confirmation of the £6 million contribution from BFC.



xxx. The **commercial case** is well presented and provides a clear outputs-based specification, along with a well-developed procurement strategy. There is clear evidence that alternative procurement options have been considered, with the reasons for the preferred option outlined.

Whilst the section on risk allocation is not presented in detail, it provides the necessary confirmation that nearly all of the risk will be the responsibility of BRP and their contractors to mitigate and manage, with very limited risks for BFC to help manage in relation to the public highway elements of the scheme.

xxxi. The **management case** provides a comprehensive range of information around management and delivery protocols. Whilst a detail project programme is provided, there are some limitations in the information included, but, overall, there is sufficient evidence of a robust delivery plan. The 'risk register' whilst not detailed in nature, provides an overview of key type of risks and the mitigation that is in place. There is clear evidence of on-going stakeholder and public engagement throughout the development of the scheme.

Conclusions

The **strategic case** demonstrates alignment with national, regional and local strategic priorities and provides underlying evidence of the need for 'The Deck' scheme as part of the on-going regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre. This is particularly in terms of creating a western 'gateway' into the core centre, enhancing the connectivity and permeability of the centre, and diversifying the retail and leisure offer by expanding the evening and night-time economy offer.

There is a demonstration of the market failure caused by the requirement to demolish the old Bental's building prior to commencement of construction work, which affects the overall viability of the scheme for the private sector and the need for public sector investment. None-the-less, it is advised that professional advice is taken in regard to State Aid to confirm the scheme is appropriate for public sector investment.

The approach to assessing the **economic benefits** is generally robust and demonstrates the scheme should deliver 'very high' value for money through the direct generation of employment within the completed development, as well as providing wider support for jobs across the core town centre. The analysis is supported through a range of sensitivity tests that indicate benefits should remain high under a variety of potential future scenarios.

The **financial case** appears sound, with a detailed Cost Plan provided by the developer BRP. Whilst the levels of risk contingency is relatively low (6.5%), the scheme is well developed, and any cost overruns will be the responsibility of the BRP to manage. The commitment of BRP to substantially fund (£12.164 million) and deliver the project is outlined within the BRP Board Meeting minutes from October 2020. The £6 million contribution from Bracknell Forest Council is also secured within the Council's reserves as part of a Development Agreement with BRP and has been approved as part of the council's capital budget for the 2020/2021.

The **commercial and management cases** are generally robust, albeit some information is limited in nature as it relates directly to BRP processes. Nearly all of the delivery risks are allocated to the private sector, with the exception of some non-specific risks that are shared between the public and



private sector. The main risks identified relate to the construction process itself and the interface with adjacent uses to the site, but these risks are considered to be well managed.

It is our ***conclusion*** that overall case for investment in the scheme appears strong, with clear strategic and economic benefits, and a detailed process for financing and delivering the scheme.

On this basis, we ***recommend the scheme for approval.***

Appendix 2



Bracknell Forest Council





Bracknell Forest Council

'THE DECK'

Full Business Case

TYPE OF DOCUMENT (VERSION) CONFIDENTIAL

PROJECT NO. 70078532

DATE: OCTOBER 2020

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Bracknell Forest Council

'THE DECK'

Full Business Case

QUALITY CONTROL

Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1	Revision 2
Remarks	Incomplete DRAFT for comments	DRAFT for comments	Final Draft
Date	25/10/2020	28/10/2020	28/10/2020
Prepared by	Lamarr Bonaparte-Myers, Ed Giles, Josh Simmonds	Lamarr Bonaparte-Myers, Ed Giles, Josh Simmonds	Lamarr Bonaparte-Myers, Ed Giles, Josh Simmonds
Signature			
Checked by	Josh Simmonds	Josh Simmonds	Josh Simmonds
Signature			
Authorised by	Fintan Geraghty	Fintan Geraghty	Fintan Geraghty
Signature			
Project number	70078532	70078532	70078532
Report number	V0.11 DRAFT	V0.15 DRAFT	V1.0 FINAL

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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This document contains the Full Business Case (FBC) for The Deck (“the scheme”). It has been prepared on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) for consideration by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP). The form of and content of the business case adheres to Government business case guidance¹.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME

Bracknell is a New Town with the town centre at the heart of its employment areas and residential neighbourhoods. Bracknell town centre has historically had a well-defined shopping area, marked by the ring road highlighted on the map in Figure 0-1.

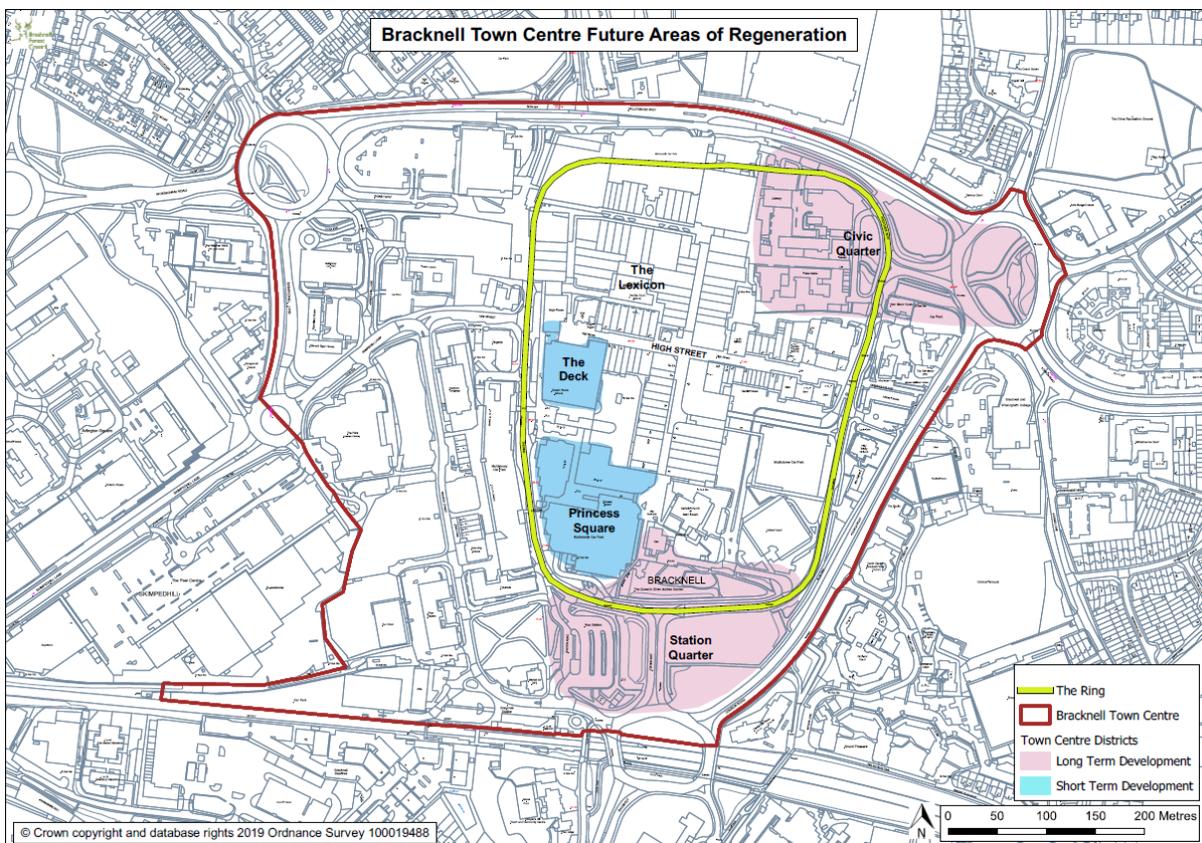


Figure 0-1 - Bracknell Town Centre

Bracknell is very well located and accessible with the M3, M4 and M25 all within less than 20 minutes' driving

time. Heathrow Airport can be reached within a 25-minute drive. The town centre also has a train station on the Reading to London Waterloo route. There is currently an excess of car parking, with six public car parks located in the town centre boundary and the capacity for 3,788 cars. Bracknell's size means that most of the people living or working in the town are less than three kilometres from the town centre.

Over the last decade, parts of Bracknell town centre have undergone significant public and private investment to create a greatly expanded choice of retail, leisure and commercial floor space. It is now an exciting, vibrant destination for the people of Bracknell Forest and the wider Thames Valley area. The first phase of development was completed in 2011 when a new £6 million Waitrose store opened on Bond Way. Phase 2 was the comprehensive redevelopment of Bracknell town centre known as The Lexicon Shopping Centre and this opened in September 2017.

The development included:

¹ Guide to Developing the Project Business Case, HM Treasury, 2018

- 70 new retail and food and beverage outlets, including two 80,000 sq ft stores housing Fenwick and Marks and Spencer, and a 12-screen cinema;
- 3,800 car parking spaces were provided in new or upgraded car parks;
- 8 core buildings and 6 place making squares for events and activities;
- £6.5 million extra investment in the highway infrastructure from Bracknell Forest Council; and
- Apprenticeship and recruitment services were also developed to support the construction project, workers and the staff for new occupiers. Approximately 3,500 new job opportunities were created.

The Lexicon was developed by the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP), a 50:50 Joint Venture between Legal & General Property and the Schroder UK Property Fund. BRP are working in partnership with BFC to deliver this scheme after successfully delivering the earlier phases of the regeneration. In 2019, a legal agreement between BFC and BRP was signed to bring forward The Deck scheme.

The first two phases of the regeneration project have been a success and in the first year of phase 2 completion, more than 16 million people visited the scheme, increasing from circa 5 million in 2013. This helped propel the Lexicon from the 255th to the 26th top shopping destination in the UK, according to Trevor Wood Associates. This higher than Reading (i.e. the Oracle) which is 32nd. It has won major industry awards which include:

- REVO 2017 Re:new Award (December 2017);
- REVO 2017 Best of the Best Award (December 2017);
- 2018 iESE Transformation Gold Award, Community Regeneration Category (March 2018);
- 2018 iESE Transformation Best of the Best Award (March 2018);
- Thames Valley Property Awards 2018 – Development of the Year (May 2018);
- REVO Purple Apple Marketing Awards 2018 – Strategic Marketing ‘Winning Back Local Hearts and Minds’ (May 2018); and
- RICS Awards South East – Regeneration Category (May 2019).

As part of the next phase of the development, the Council is continuing to develop Princess Square and the area around the old Bentall's store (The Deck). The site where the Deck is proposed to be located is approximately 0.95 hectares in size and was formerly occupied by Bentalls Department Store and a separate McDonald's unit. The positioning of the site in relation to the rest of the centre can be seen in Figure 0-2.

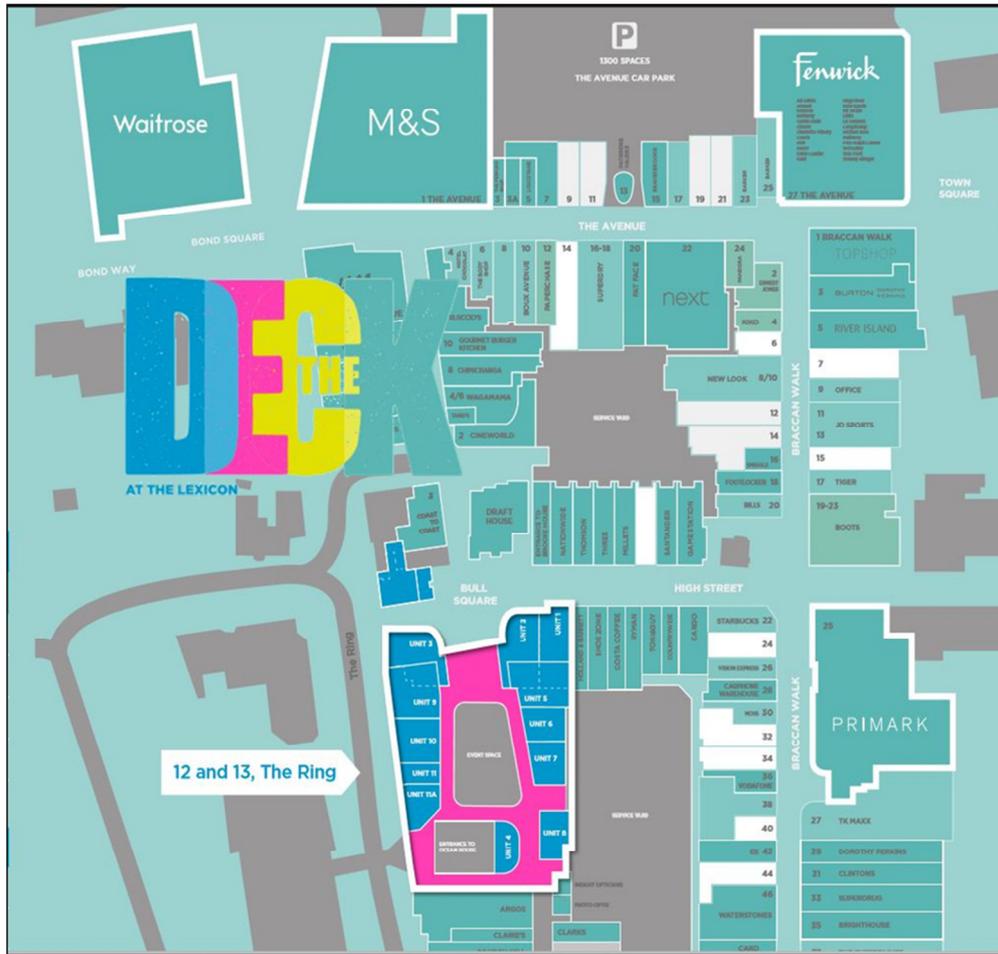


Figure 0-2 - The Deck Site

In late 2017, Bentalls relocated to a new unit which forms part of The Lexicon Shopping Centre. Bentalls has been rebranded as Fenwick, and the new Fenwick Department Store was opened in September 2017.

McDonald's lease of the unit expired in September 2018, following which the food outlet relocated to The Lexicon. The closure and relocation of the former Bentalls and McDonald's has left the site unoccupied. Ocean House is an existing 13 storey office building which is located above the former Bentalls store within the southern area of the site. Ocean House is not proposed to be redeveloped and it is only the storage area underneath (which was previously associated with Bentalls) that is proposed to be redeveloped.

Full planning permission (ref: 16/01252/FUL) was granted on 24 April 2017 for the redevelopment of the former Bentalls Department Store and former McDonald's (Unit 14), i.e. The Deck Scheme, to include:

“Partial demolition and strip out of Bentalls Department Store and McDonald's unit and redevelopment to include retail uses (use class A1), food and beverage uses (use class A3,A4,A5), non-residential institution uses (use class D1), assembly and leisure uses (use class D2), night club (sui generis), public event area, public realm improvements, landscaping, external seating and associated highway works.” As previously stated, the Site sits outside the red line area for the Outline Planning Permission for the redevelopment of Bracknell Town Centre”.

A Section 73 application (ref: 19/00507/FUL) was approved on 18 July 2019 for the variation of Condition 02 (approved plans) for Unit 14. The approved proposals include minor variation of the design and layout, the number of entrances and windows for Unit 14.

The final Section 73 application (ref: 20/00457/FUL) was approved on 07 August 2020 which included some minor variations.

“Application for minor material amendment (Section 73) to vary Condition 2 (approved plans) and Condition 10 (Bull Square Public Realm) of planning permission Ref: 19/00507/FUL dated 18 July 2019 for partial demolition and strip out of former Bentalls Department Store and McDonald's Unit 14 and redevelopment to include retail uses (use class A1), food and beverage uses (use classes A3, A4, A5), non-residential institution uses (use class D1), assembly and leisure uses (use class D2), night club (sui generis), public event area, public realm improvements, landscaping, external seating and associated highway works.”

In summary, the plans were varied to include the following minor amendments:

- Extension of the roof, incorporating wind breaks, that covers the entirety of the upper level event space and the steps;
- Inclusion of additional space (former Bentalls storage area) on the first floor of Ocean House and the insertion of new windows over the event space;
- Insertion of a roof top terrace above Unit 3 on the upper ground floor;
- Repositioning of Units 1 and 2 (including an amendment to the Western elevation to reflect this);
- Combination of Units 12 and 13 for a larger leisure unit (Use class D2, as approved);
- Minor changes to the parapet, including an increase to the height;
- Minor alterations to the Western Terrace to allow for enhanced accessibility; and
- Raising of the event space floor level (marginally) to allow for acoustic installation as per requirements.

Figure 0-3 shows a Computer-Generated Image (CGI) of the scheme with the latest roof design.

Figure 0-3 - Proposed CGI View of The Deck²

² Bentalls Redevelopment, Bracknell, Design & Access Statement, June 2020 Addendum, Piper Whitlock
BIM Ref: BRBE-PWA-ZZ-ZZ-RP-A-0101-G1



THE NEED FOR THE SCHEME

- **Complete town offering and ‘Figure of 8’:** There is an apparent lack of connectivity between Princess Square and the remainder of the town centre, preventing customers from easily navigating around the centre, and therefore negatively impacting journey experience and convenience.
- **Safeguard the town centre and jobs (following the Pandemic and the impacts of Brexit):** Market conditions have caused high levels of uncertainty and risk. This puts the town centre at a higher risk of job losses and retailers shutting down completely as the number of vacant units increase and footfall declines. This will cause a ‘cycle of decline’ as further numbers of units become vacant and there are further reductions in footfall numbers. In addition, empty units can also impact potential new investment opportunities, not just in the town centre but also in the outer parts of the town.
- **Western Town Centre Gateway:** Currently, the existing Ring entrance to the High Street (when approaching the centre from the east) has a poor quality of frontage. Visually it is difficult to see what the centre has to offer due to the building layout. This is a problem because the quality of a frontage has been shown to impact upon the perceptions of the space to which that frontage relates.

Town Centre 2032 Vision: Although a number of regeneration projects have begun in the town centre, the comprehensive regeneration is at risk of stalling without further investment and therefore funding from the LGF will provide the much-needed catalyst for the next phase of development. Creating a mixed-use town centre will encourage further investment from developers to provide higher density development. Therefore, providing a town centre that has not only high-quality retail, but also has a broader range of amenities and living options which is a priority for Bracknell Forest.

THE FIVE CASES

The FBC is made up of five separate cases. Together these show that the scheme is:

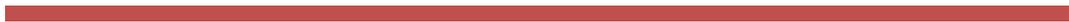
- Closely aligned to wider strategies and objectives – the Strategic Case;



- Best value for money – the Economic Case;
- Affordable – the Financial Case;
- Achievable in commercial terms – the Commercial Case; and
- Achievable in practical terms – the Management Case.

0

STRATEGIC CASE



STRATEGIC CASE

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Case is the foundation of the Business Case. It demonstrates that the scheme has not been developed in isolation, but as part of a broader strategy for Bracknell, in response to real problems and has clear aims and objectives.

The overarching theme is the need for Bracknell to complete the retail and leisure offering in the town centre and to improve connectivity from Princess Square to the rest of the town centre. The Deck will ensure that Bracknell remains an attractive retail opportunity and is one of the first steps to deliver growth as outlined in the Bracknell Town Centre 2032 Vision.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

This chapter describes the strategic aims and objectives of Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) and Thames Valley Berkshire (TVB) LEP and sets out the policy context in which the scheme has been developed.

Organisations promoting the Scheme

BFC in partnership with the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) have worked collaboratively to bring forward the regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre leading to the first phase of the £240 million Lexicon town centre development being complete in 2017. TVB LEP also supported the regeneration of Bracknell town centre through the Growing Places Funds.

BFC and BRP are continuing to work together to move forward with the next phase of the regeneration project (The Deck). In 2019, a development agreement between Bracknell Forest Council and BRP was signed to bring forward The Deck scheme and much needed investment. In 2020, Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) also approved £6 million of funding from its own budget to support development of The Deck scheme. This was to persuade BRP to invest in “major refurbishment” of land at Princess Square and take forward work at The Deck despite the adverse market conditions created by the COVID19 Pandemic and pressures from Brexit negotiations.

As with the previous phases of the regeneration scheme, TVB LEP have continued to support the overall project. This business case has been produced to secure TVB LEP Local Growth Funds to allow the demolition of the old Bentall’s building and unlock ‘The Deck’ scheme.

Policy Background

The proposed scheme is closely aligned with national, regional and local plans and policies. Collectively, these plans together set out a bold vision for economic growth and regeneration in the region, with a specific focus on the Bracknell area. The scheme is firmly part of that vision and aligns with the following documents:

- National policies and plans:
 - Industrial Strategy (2017)
 - National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- Regional policies and plans:
 - Thames Valley Berkshire SEP (2015-2021)

- Local policies and plans:
 - Bracknell Forest Council Plan 2019 to 2023
 - Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032
 - Bracknell Forest Council Draft Local Plan (2019)

National Policies and plans

Industrial Strategy

The Government's Industrial Strategy³ sets the importance of five foundations of productivity – the essential attributes of every successful economy:

- Ideas – the world's most innovative economy;
- People – good jobs and greater earning power for all;
- Infrastructure – a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure;
- Business environment – the best place to start and grow a business; and
- Places – prosperous communities across the UK.

'Places' demonstrates a strong focus on local and regional economic growth. The Industrial Strategy seeks to address disparities in regional productivity and affluence by making better use of local assets.

The Deck scheme helps to deliver the 'places' objective from the Industrial Strategy. This scheme aims to promote retail recovery and make better use of local assets. With a very large catchment area including the towns of Ascot, Wokingham, Maidenhead, Henley and Bagshot, the scheme can attract customers and visitors into Bracknell, resulting in the town centre becoming a destination in its own right, enhancing its comparative advantage and facilitating local growth.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)⁴

National planning policy is contained within the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government adopted the revised framework in February 2019.

Section 2 of the NPPF states the central pillars of the framework so that these are in favour of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives:

- An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the most suitable types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The scheme contributes to each of the objectives strongly especially from an economic and social perspective. The deck will create a safe, balanced and socially inclusive evening and night-time economy. Investment in this project will generate approximately 250 full-time jobs, as well as creating jobs and supporting apprentices during the construction phase. BRP also demonstrated in the planning process that the project will target a 'Very Good' BREEAM5 sustainability rating and whilst also targeting a circa 5% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through renewable energies.

The NPPF also states that local planning authorities should plan positively to create diverse town centres where people can live, visit and work. Whilst significant steps have been taken to improve the retail centre, key challenges remain for Bracknell Town Centre. This

³ Industrial Strategy White Paper, Building a Britain fit for the future (November 2017)

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁵ Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is a sustainability assessment method that is used to masterplan projects, infrastructure and buildings. It focuses on sustainable value across range of categories: Energy; Land use and ecology; Water; Health and wellbeing; Pollution; Transport; Materials; Waste; Management.

is primarily due to the lack of housing, employment and leisure space available within the centre and therefore investment is required in order to provide further mixed-use development that prepares the town for the future. This is explored further in section 0.

REGIONAL POLICIES AND PLANS

Thames Valley Berkshire LEP SEP (2015-2021)⁶

This document sets out the Strategic Economic Plan for Thames Valley Berkshire. The LEP has a vision that by 2021, people will choose the Thames Valley as the place to live and work, due to a strong and knowledgeable business community, whereby young people will be insured and older works highly valued.

This SEP supports the LEP's overall mission to generate sustainable economic growth in the TVB region and encourage people to live and work here. The overarching priority is to secure better access to talented people and innovative ideas, and to use both more effectively, which can be achieved through a focus on:

- Infrastructure;
- Enterprise, innovation and business growth;
- Skills, education and employment; and
- International offerings.

Currently, there are over 40,000 businesses within the TVB area. The document states that the area is ranked second behind London for Business birth rates (12.4%) and in economic output per head which is valued at £32,000. To maintain these standards, infrastructure will need to continually improve and grow.

The Deck scheme can help support the SEP's Employment and Business growth visions. The focus on enhancing the retail and night-time economy offerings in the region can benefit existing businesses through increasing footfall during out of work hours. The Deck will form an important part of the initial phases for the wider vision for Bracknell town centre over the next 12 years. Further development will enhance the area as a more attractive place to live, securing better access to a highly skilled workforce and innovative works generating sustainable economic growth.

Local policies and plans

Bracknell Forest Council Plan 2019 to 2023⁷

Bracknell Forest Council's Plan sets out key objectives for the 2019 – 2023 period and is based on the pledges made to residents in the 2019 local election, with the key objective of ensuring that Bracknell Forest stays prosperous and remains a good place to live, work and play. The Plan identifies the following needs that will encourage a vibrant and connected community:

- Reducing the impact on climate change;
- Ensuring early help is available to the most vulnerable residents to keep them safe and to help them remain independent, whilst avoiding loneliness and isolation;
- Reducing homelessness;
- Developing all age learning and life skills; and
- Maintaining value for money.

To deliver on all these needs, the Plan focuses on the following six strategic themes:

- Value for money;
- Economic resilience;
- Education and skills;
- Caring for you and your family;
- Protecting and enhancing our environment; and
- Communities.

⁶

<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/getfile/Public%20Documents/Strategic%20Economic%20Plan/TVB%20SEP%20-%20Strategy.pdf?inline-view=true>

⁷ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council-plan-2019-to-2023.pdf>

The Plan makes specific reference to the proposed Deck scheme, highlighting that 'Securing delivery of the next phase of Bracknell's town centre regeneration including The Deck and the refurbishment of Princess Square' is a key priority. This scheme directly aligns with the Plan's economic resilience strategic theme and the objectives of providing improved food and beverage, leisure and retail offers. These will contribute towards town centre regeneration, helping the town centre to flourish and grow and to provide an active 18-hour economy. This can help maintain high rates of local employment and ensure that Bracknell Forest remains a good place to live and work.

Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032⁸

The Bracknell Town Centre Vision outlines the way forward for Bracknell's town centre over the next decade. It outlines future opportunities for growth in the town centre beyond the first phases of the Lexicon and specifically identifies further development of leisure and cultural uses as an important part of this. The vision highlights the potential to provide space for creative business that can complement the well-established commercial sector whilst also expanding the opportunities for town centre living.

The Vision sets out potential retail, leisure, commercial and residential plans for the town's further redevelopment in the short-term, medium-term and long-term.

It states that in the short term, the focus will be on:

- Identifying and unlocking key sites within the town centre that have immediate development potential. This includes the old Bentall's site for The Deck scheme.

In the medium term, the focus will be on:

- The potential for office and residential buildings within the town; and
- Remodelling the roads around the southern quarter and developing the land in that area, using a phased approach.

In the long-term, the focus will be on:

- Further examining issues that could impact its success, for example driverless cars, in order to future-proof it for future generations; and
- Looking at expanding the regeneration even further to the west.

The Deck would introduce new cultural and leisure uses in the town centre that are currently missing, ensuring that it feels vibrant and welcoming. The development forms a key part of the early stages of the vision and will create a welcoming, sociable and invigorating location which provides amenity, entertainment and excitement for locals and visitors.

Bracknell Forest Council Draft Local Plan (2019)⁹

The Draft Local Plan presents a spatial vision and objectives based on the priorities for BFC over the period from 2019 to 2036 and will deliver sustainable growth.

The plan has the following ambitions:

- Protect / enhance existing assets and create new assets;
- Support economic growth and resilience;
- Allocate suitable, available and well-located land to meet identified development needs;
- Continued regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre to accommodate a range of uses to support and expand its role as the main retail, leisure and cultural centre;
- Support and create strong, healthy and self-reliant communities where the identities of existing settlements are maintained;
- Achieving high quality development;
- Promote a well-designed and sustainable transport system which enables reliable, safe access to services and facilities, and provides choices about the need to travel and transport modes; and

⁸ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/bracknell-town-centre-2032-vision.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/development-plan/draft-bracknell-forest-local-plan/background>

- Ensure that future infrastructure needs are properly assessed, planned for and delivered at the right time during the development process.

The scheme and further development of the town centre will support many of these objectives. The greatest impact of the scheme will be the expansion of the town centre’s retail and leisure offering especially as part of the night-time and ‘out of work hours’ economy.

An important part of the Local Plan is that Bracknell will remain a destination of choice for retail, leisure and employment. The Plan highlighted that since the Lexicon opened in September 2017, Bracknell Town Centre has risen in the retail rankings (Trevor Wood Associates) to 29th in 2019. Bracknell was ranked 255th before the redevelopment. The strong trading performance since opening needs to be complemented by implementation of the Deck scheme to provide new retail, food, drink and leisure facilities. The Plan recognises the importance of monitoring the impacts of the scheme on shopping patterns and turnover once it is in place. These reviews are built into the monitoring and evaluation plan for the scheme.

Summary

The scheme is closely aligned with national, regional and local policies and plans. At all levels, the policies recognise the importance of further development in the town centre, leading business growth and employment opportunities, to drive economic growth. They also recognise the significant role that town centre regeneration will play generating local economic benefits.

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

PROBLEMS

Despite Bracknell experiencing steady economic growth since the first of the developments were completed in 2011, there are several issues affecting the town and these are restricting its ability to achieve its maximum growth potential.

The problems identified, which provide the need and key drivers for the project, can be categorised into these broad categories:

- Falling Footfall and occupancy in recent months;
- Covid-19;
- The Deck scheme is not viable without funding;
- Lack of an ‘evening economy’;
- Lack of connectivity;
- Western Gateway Entrance to the town centre;
- Housing pressures.

RELATIVELY LOW FOOTFALL AND OCCUPANCY LEVELS

Bracknell has witnessed an influx of investment over the last decade, which has seen the town centre develop into a more vibrant destination for the people of Bracknell Forest and the wider Thames Valley area. The investment has been completed in development phases. Phase 1 saw a Waitrose store completed in 2011. The second phase, created 580,000sq ft of new space, establishing a retail offer of 70 new shops, high quality restaurants and a 12-screen cinema, which were completed in 2017.

The initial impact of the new developments was promising. The first nine weeks from Phase 2 inception indicated that there were more than three million visits to the new part of the town centre, which compares to 820,000 for the same period during the previous year. This coincides with supporting evidence undertaken by FSP Retail Business Consultants, who found that the new town centre was the destination of choice for 66% of people living in the area, up from 17% when the same research was carried out after the first week of opening.

Despite these early attempts to increase the attractiveness of Bracknell’s town centre, these have fallen short in recent years with regional competitors remaining the preferred choice for retail, entertainment and recreation. Reading, for example, remains the largest consumer catchment area in Berkshire. This is supported by findings from the 2016 Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area Study which identified a hierarchy of retail venues across Berkshire and the surrounding area. This can be used to better understand how different centres compete for spend and investment, evaluating each venue in terms of their provision of multiple retailers. The score attached to each shopping venue has been weighted to reflect their overall impact on shopping patterns. Table 0-1 below shows the retail ranking position for the main centres in Berkshire and surrounding areas in 2013.

Table 0-1 – Venuescore Shopping Venues Ranking

¹⁰ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/business-information/bracknell-forest-business/regeneration>

Centre	VENUESCORE 2013 Rank
Reading	13
Windsor	98
Newbury	116
Slough	128
Camberley	163
Maidenhead	258
Bracknell	292
Wokingham	360

Source: VENUESCORE 2013-14. Note: The ranking scores comprise over 500 retail centres across the country

The table above confirms Reading's position at the top of the sub-regional retail hierarchy, with a rank of 13 in overall terms across the country. In the most recent version of the ranking, Reading was still in top 20 in terms of overall rank placing 15th in the country. Focusing on Bracknell, the town was ranked 2nd lowest in the region, and in the bottom half nationally (ranking 292nd out of 500). This rank will have improved significantly since the first two phases of the town centre regeneration have been built but the detailed data is not available.

In regard to footfall, although the Lexicon was ranked the 26th top shopping destination in the UK by industry analyst Trevor Wood Associates in 2020, not only has this prosperity been contained and not 'trickled down' to the entire town centre, but more recently there has been a sharp decrease in footfall, mainly attributed to the 2020 pandemic.

The disparity between recent developments and the remainder of the centre is made apparent by the relatively high overall vacancy rate for the town's retail core at 16.5%. This is significantly above the national average, with retail rather than leisure being the poorest performer with a vacancy rate of nearly 18%.

After the opening of the new Lexicon retail area, 19.3% of the town centre's retail units were vacant¹¹ and primarily located within Princess Square as illustrated in Figure 0-1. The total amount of vacant floorspace across Bracknell town centre is 309,611 sqft. Four units in Bracknell town centre have never occupied since they were built.

- Unit 1 in Princess Square
- Unit 5Y (14 Braccan Walk)
- Unit 2C (7 The Avenue)
- 29 Braccan Walk (unit 12) Central Retail Area

Units in Princess Square are currently 36% vacant (74,037 sqft.) and this expected to increase considerably without the Deck development in place. This is in part due to the location of Princess Square at the 'weakest' end for the town centre. This results in low footfall and a reluctance from businesses to occupy the space. The figure below displays the vacant premises in the town centre.

¹¹ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/economy-authority-monitoring-report.pdf>

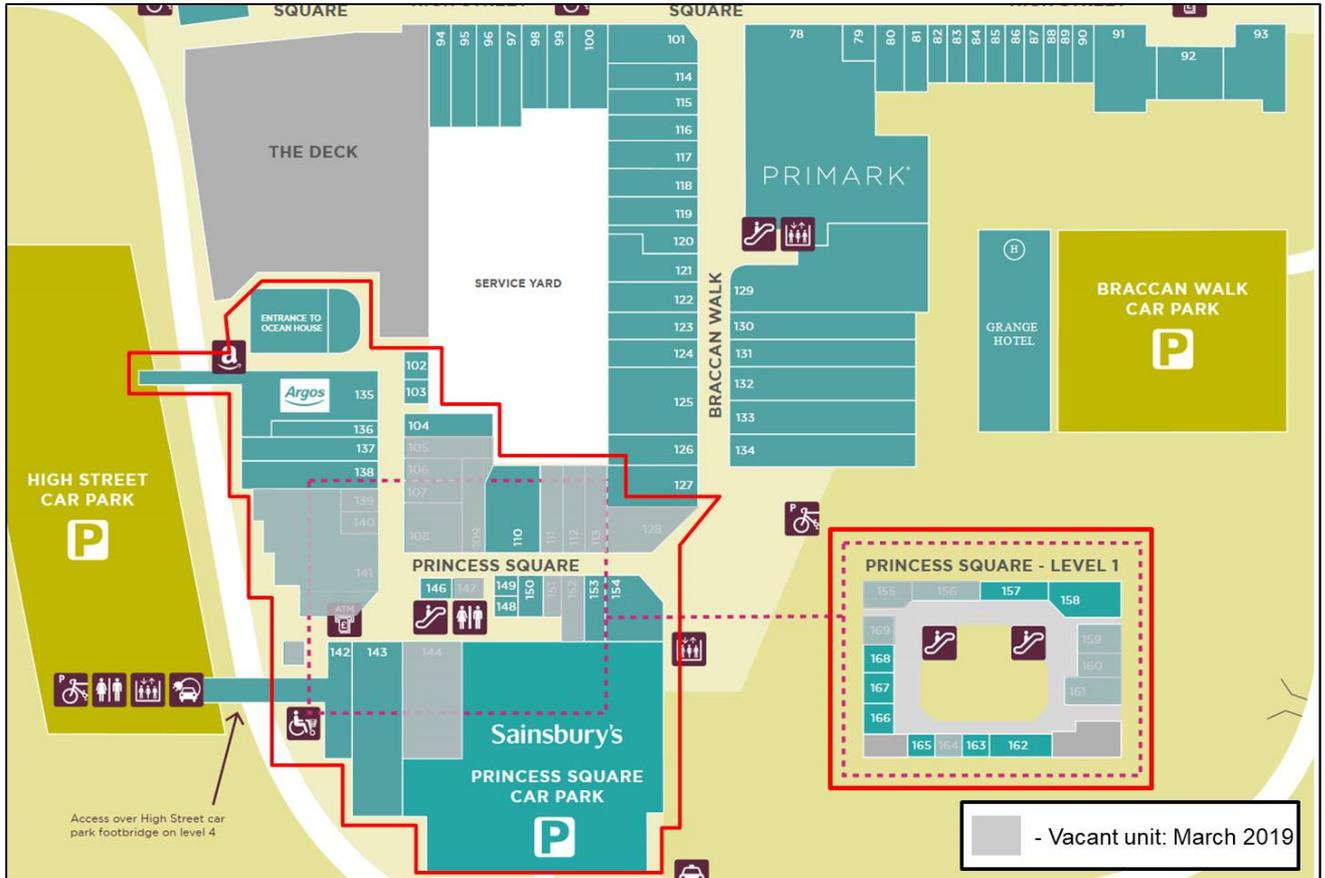


Figure 0-1 - Vacant premises in town centre

The Princess Square quarter is currently 36% vacant based on information provided by BRP. In terms of vacancies from established retailers and shops, the table below shows the tenants that have vacated from Bracknell town centre in the year 2020. This includes some significant national brands such as Sainsburys and Argos who have not chosen to continue their leases based on the falling footfall and poor connectivity of Princess Square with the rest of the town centre.

Table 0-2 – Bracknell 2020 vacancies	
Princes square	Northern retail sector
Sainsburys	Kiko
Argos	Carphone Warehouse
Ponden Homes	Carluccio

Figure 0-2 and Figure 0-3 show how footfall has changed in the Princess Square since 2017 and how it compares with the Lexicon. The footfall data is based on two sources as the system was replaced in 2019. The first being ShopperTrak RCT Retail Intelligence data from 2017 to 2019 (October) and Springboard footfall data from 2019 (October) to present.

Figure 0-2 - Princess Square footfall 2017-2020

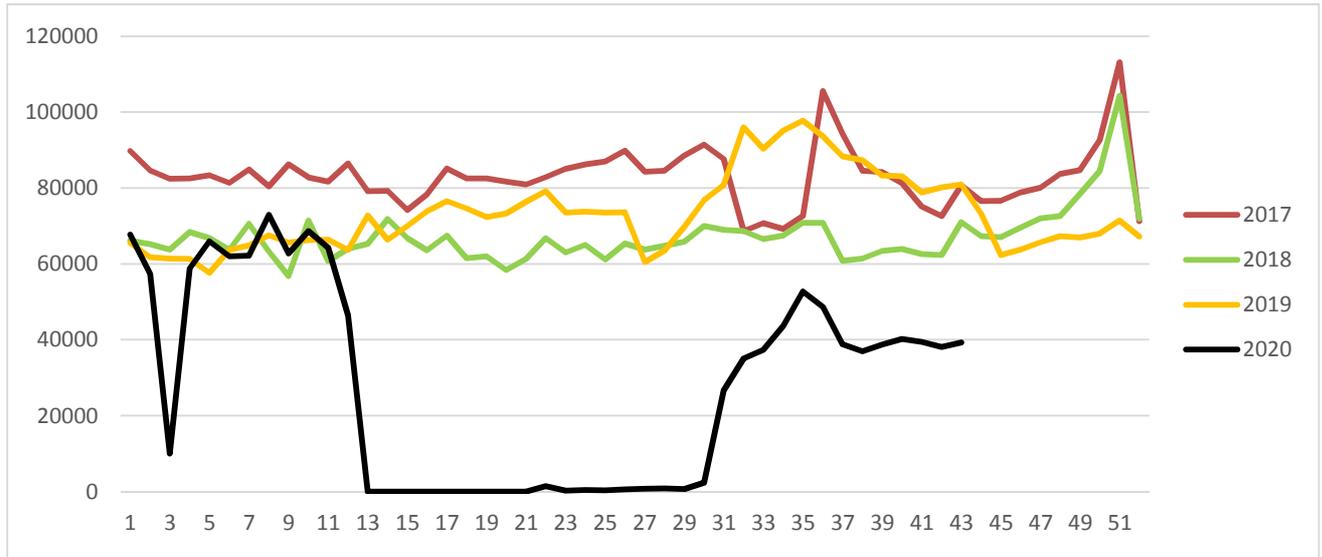


Figure 0-2 compares the footfall in Princess Square across the years 2017 to 2020. The graph shows that footfall in Princess Square is lower since 2017 which is when the Lexicon opened. The exception is during the summer of 2019 where footfall was higher than previous years.

Figure 0-3 - Lexicon vs Princess square footfall comparison

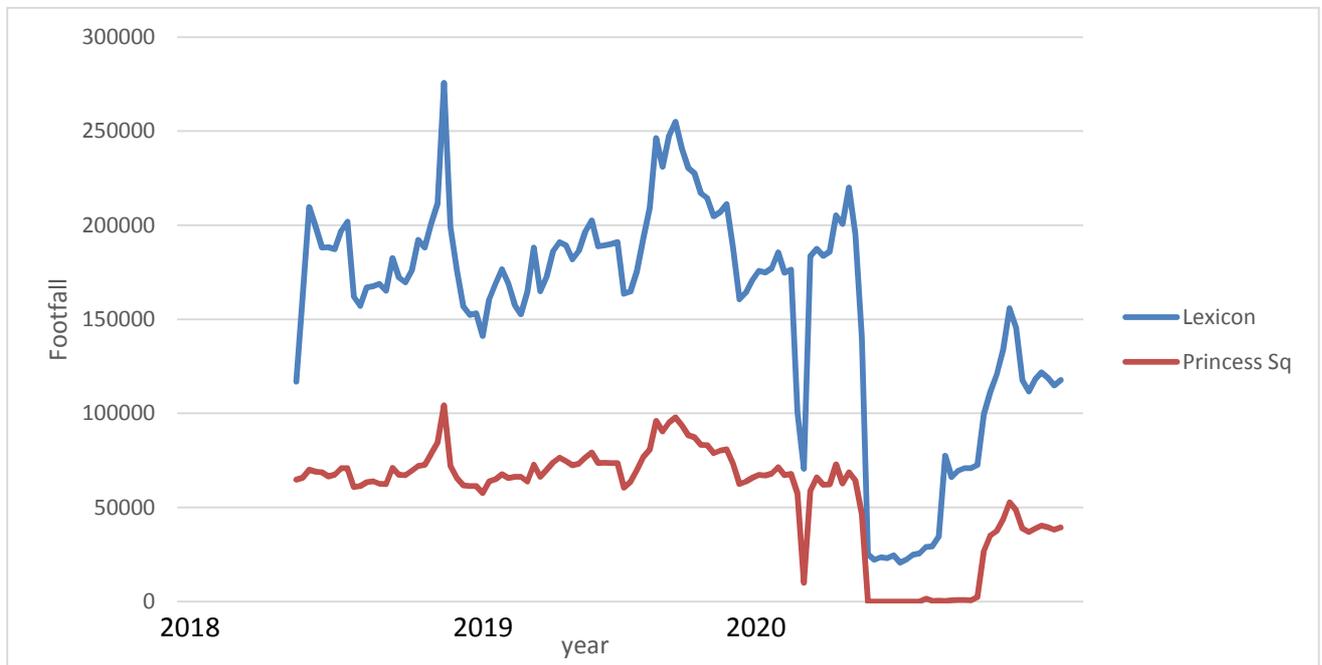


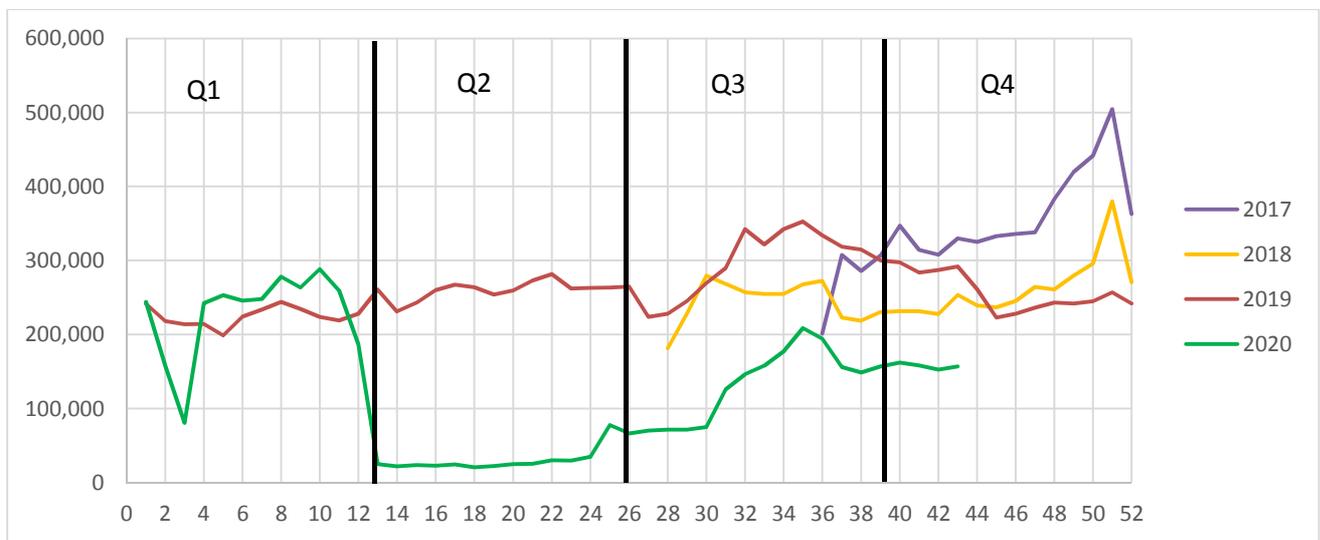
Figure 0-3 shows the disparity in footfall in the Lexicon and Princess square from the years 2018 to 2020. Despite both shopping areas experiencing an overall downwards trend, the graph shows that the Lexicon has outperformed Princess Square. The Lexicon achieved a footfall peak of 275,000 in 2019, more than double the Princess square shopping area peak of 105,000. This shows that the Lexicon is the more popular retail area. Better connectivity to the units is major reason why footfall is so much higher and can explain why vacancy rates are rising in Princess Square as retailers look to other locations with better pedestrian connectivity for their stores.

In summary, the retail and leisure opportunity is underrepresented in all but one Berkshire authority (Reading). This presents an opportunity and scope for Bracknell to improve its relative position and outperform direct regional competitors¹², with the Deck scheme playing a significant role in enhancing the role and performance of the town. Developing food and beverage, leisure, nightclub and public event areas will improve the attractiveness of Bracknell, particularly when compared with regional centres. Development will also provide the opportunity to increase footfall, lengthen dwell times, increase the frequency of visits and attract customers travelling from further away.

COVID 19

During early 2020, the Coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) meant that the UK went into lockdown, with thousands of businesses being forced to stop, reduce or alter trading. Following the reopening of the UK's retail and hospitality sectors through June and July, there were hopes that the economic damage of the coronavirus pandemic could be lessened. However, all towns and cities have seen a sharp drop in levels of activity since entering the lockdown and even during lockdown recovery, centres of all sizes have become increasingly quieter (likely to be driven by significant reductions in the numbers of people coming from outside the area). Bracknell town centre is no different to other retail centres across the country. The combined footfall of The Lexicon and Princess Square between 2017 to 2020 is displayed in the graph below.

Figure 0-4 - Bracknell Town Centre footfall data 2017-2020¹³



The figure above shows the impact that Covid-19 has had on footfall. Focusing on 2020, from week 0 to week 10 (January-March), Bracknell was outperforming 2018 figures, with footfall reaching a peak of near 300,000. The impact of a national lockdown can be seen in the sharp decline between week 10 and 13, with footfall falling to below 30,000. A footfall below 30,000 was maintained throughout the Q2 lockdown period. Week 24, the first week of June saw the start of a persistent increase in footfall; which continued until the summer shopping peak of week 35, the final week of August. Historically, week 35 represents the second highest footfall number of the year. However, footfall in week 35 was below 210,000, which is significantly lower than what was witnessed in previous years. This comparatively low footfall trend is expected to continue well into Q4 and the 2020 Christmas period.

Opportunity #1 - Bracknell to retain shoppers and recreation seekers who would have previously headed to larger centres such as London or Reading. The scheme can help the town tap into the nationwide increase in localism, which if undertaken correctly, can be sustained long past the COVID-19 pandemic and reverse the fortunes of the failing Princess Square quarter.

¹² <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/economy-authority-monitoring-report.pdf>

¹³ Note that footfall data was not available in 2017 prior to week 36 2017 (2nd week of September 2017) and in 2018 prior to week 28 (2nd week of July 2018).

THE DECK SCHEME IS NOT VIABLE WITHOUT FUNDING

Market failure, as defined by the Green Book, is when the market mechanism cannot achieve economic efficiency, and nobody can be made better off without someone else being made worse off. There is a fundamental market failure present, which, without intervention from the public sector, will continue to remain and will not self-resolve. The market failure in this instance is that, as it currently stands, developers are unable to invest in the scheme fully without the security of additional public funding. Estimated Rental Values (ERVs) have reduced as result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on current market conditions this scheme is not viable without additional public funding.

Detailed cost estimates put the total costs at the site to be approximately £19 million. BRP cannot build out the development unless the old Bentall's unit is demolished. In this case, market mechanisms alone cannot achieve an economically efficient outcome, and LGF funding is necessary to make the site viable and to start the works. Market failure is evident as the developer alone is not able to fund the demolition and construction of the Deck and based on current market uncertainties be confident about the return on investment.

Overall, whilst the development was assessed as viable when it was developed UK retail conditions have dramatically changed since 2016/17. As mentioned in the previous section, there has been a substantial decrease in footfall in Bracknell town centre due to current COVID-19 restrictions. Even prior to the pandemic footfall in Bracknell was already starting to fall leading to increased vacant units in the town centre. This decline in footfall is seen as a deterrent to potential investors, as investing in a new development may no longer generate a return on investments.

Brexit is an additional market pressure that has increased uncertainty and increased the level of risk even before the effects of the pandemic had been realised. Investment activity in the retail sector has also fallen dramatically over the last five years, with retail accounting for 20% of all investment deals by volume in 2014, and only 8.2% in the first quarter of 2019. Indeed, according to Property Data, BRP have highlighted the risk of market yield on units weakening further if the food and beverage market deteriorates in next year or so during construction period.

Without the scheme BRP expect ERVs in Bracknell to reduce by 5 to 10% in the short-term valuation hit if the decision was made to not progress the site. Then in the longer term ERVs could reduce between 25% to 50% without the Deck as making any further investment into the centre is unlikely to be financially unviable. The knock-on effects of this downward of spiral investment in the town unit vacancies will increase further and lead to local jobs losses undoing the work of the £240 million investment in the Lexicon in the last decade.

Opportunity #2 - Public sector investment will remove some of the risk from the developer and allow the scheme to proceed and deliver the expected benefits in terms of connectivity and increase leisure opportunities for the local and wider community. Although the developers will still bear the majority of project investment, additional financial support will reduce overall costs to the private sector, thus encouraging investment and unlocking the new units and jobs that will be created as a result.

LACK OF EVENING AND NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY BEYOND RESTAURANTS

In terms of the evening and night-time economy, Bracknell performs poorly against the UK average with an undersupply of culture and entertainment venues, bars, clubs and pubs. Bracknell is currently unable to offer either the diversity or quality of offer that its demographic make-up requires.

Demographic shifts and an emergence of the "millennial" generation has led to an increasing trend for people to want to be close to local amenities and working environments. According to 2019 ONS demographic figures, 45% of Bracknell's population are aged between 15 and 49, the age group most commonly, but not solely, associated with engaging in evening entertainment. In addition, the working age population has been growing due to inward migration and this in turn has generated an increase in the demand for after work activities. Further to this, high property values across London are forcing many people to relocate to regional towns and cities across the country, providing a significant opportunity for places such as Bracknell.

Successful towns have focused not just on providing places to work and live, but also the provision of high quality mixed-use urban environment, where residential, retail and office property are located side-by-side. Bracknell is yet to adopt this approach. This puts regional competitors at an advantage, which is supported by 2018 ONS data, highlighting that Bracknell is underperforming in terms of the number of jobs in the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors, when compared to regional and national averages. This disparity can be seen in Table 0-3 below.

Table 0-3 – Bracknell industry comparison 2018

Industry	Bracknell Forest (Employee Jobs)	Bracknell Forest (%)	South East (%)	Great Britain (%)

Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,250	2.0	2.7	2.5
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Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157279/printable.aspx>

The table above shows that only 2% of employed people within Bracknell Forest work in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industry. This falls below South East and Great Britain averages of 2.7% and 2.5% respectively. The relatively low number employed in these sectors is a direct result of a small number of recreational businesses in Bracknell, a clear signal that there is a lack of establishments offering evening economy services.

In terms of the economic benefits, figures from the Night-Time Industries Association (NITA) show that Bracknell is failing to tap into and capitalise on the benefits of this industry. The night-time economy is a growing part of the UK economy. Nationally, it is the UK's fifth-biggest industry, accounting for at least 8% of the UK's employment, with annual revenues of £66 billion.

This means that Bracknell is currently not taking advantage of a night/evening time offering, which can include:

- recreation for people, which is often welcome after finishing work for the day;
- increased direct employment;
- increased indirect and induced employment - the industry has a vast value chain ranging from taxi firms to brewery suppliers;
- reduced social exclusion and increased vitality in towns; and
- tax revenue.

Opportunity #3 - This scheme presents an opportunity for the town centre to tap into the lucrative evening and night-time economy. Figure 0-5 displays what the proposed leisure offering will look like once the scheme is built. This scheme will create a space whereby workers and locals can enjoy recreation activity, allowing Bracknell to realise its potential as a strong town centre, serving a prosperous and dynamic area, which is a part of the town's 2032 Vision.

Figure 0-5 - The Deck leisure offering¹⁴

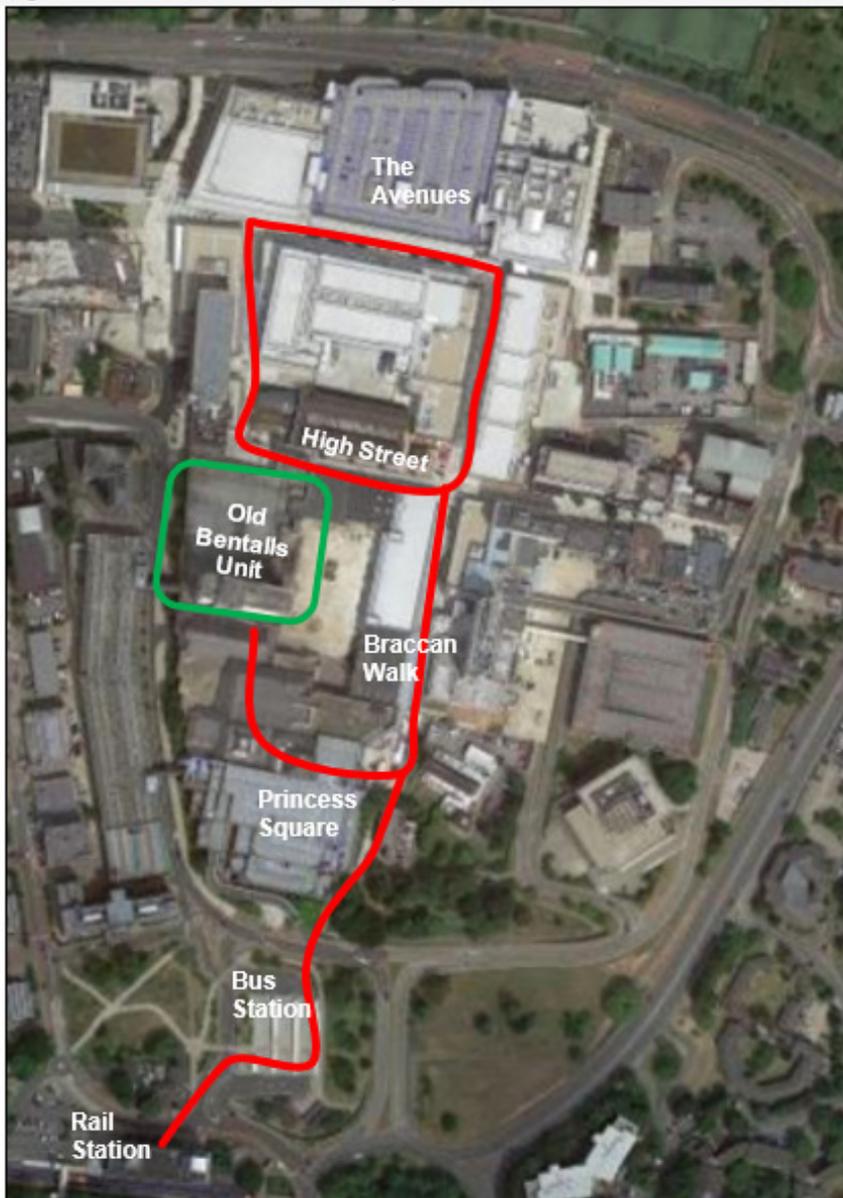


¹⁴ Bentalls Redevelopment, Bracknell, Design & Access Statement, June 2020 Addendum, Piper Whitlock
BIM Ref: BRBE-PWA-ZZ-ZZ-RP-A-0101-G1

LACK OF CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN PRINCESS SQUARE AND THE LEXICON

Consumer behaviour has fundamentally changed. The UK are moving into an experience-based economy where the customer journey is paramount, and convenience is key. Figure 0-6 below shows the current Bracknell's pedestrian circuit.

Figure 0-6 - Bracknell current pedestrian circuit



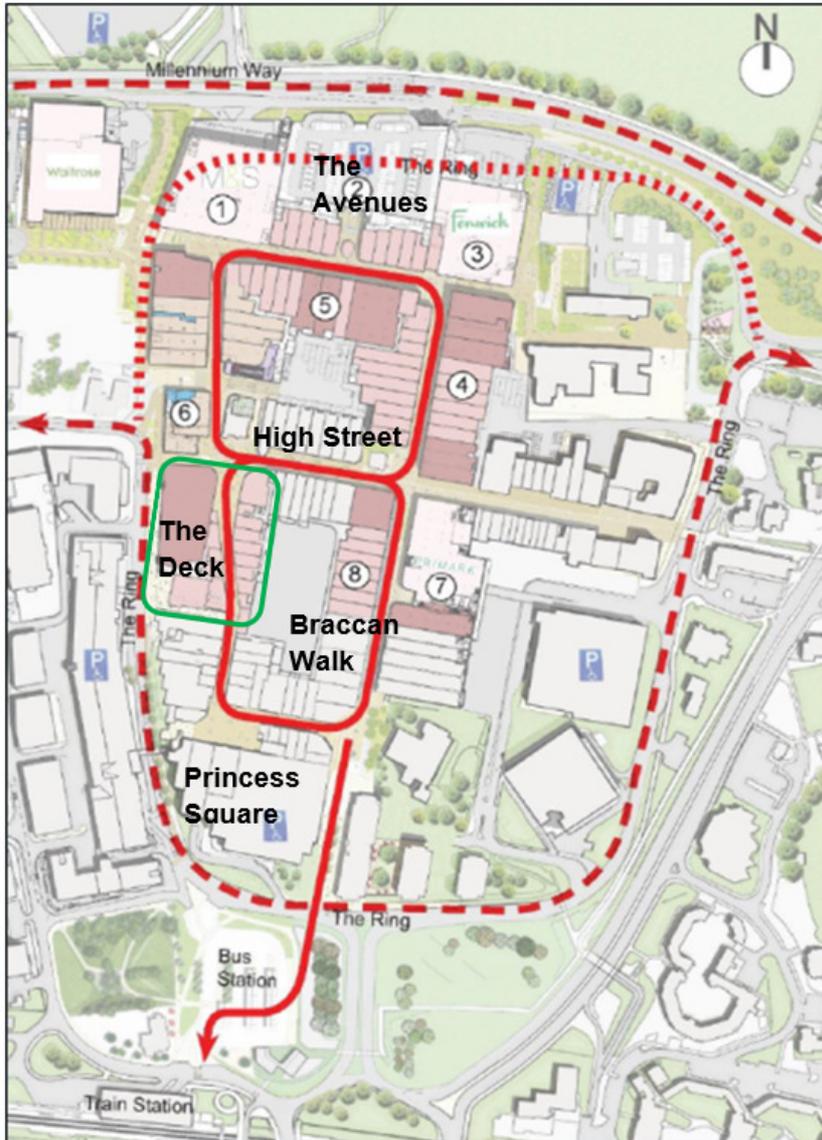
Imagery ©2020 TerraMetrics, Map data ©2020 Google, GeoBasis-DE/BKG (©2009)

There is an apparent lack of connectivity between Princess Square and the town centre, preventing customers from easily navigating the centre, and therefore negatively impacting the overall experience and convenience. This can be described as an incomplete 'figure of 8' pedestrian circuit, which means that visitors are not currently able to easily complete a loop around the entire centre, resulting in isolated areas which receive lower footfall. This is an example of the barrier effect, whereby poor physical connectivity and

psychological barriers between Princess Square and the Lexicon has created two separate shopping communities, forming a divide that leaves Princess Square at a disadvantage.

Opportunity #4 - This scheme presents the perfect opportunity to complete the ‘figure of 8’ and therefore contribute towards completing the town’s offering. Public realm improvements remain a key element to this scheme. These improvements will open up the town, creating an attractive free-flowing route which will help visitors more readily access some of the isolated areas. This can reduce the connectivity barrier between Princess Square and the Lexicon, allowing people to meet, congregate and socialise; lengthening dwell times and increasing the frequency of visits. This will also likely increase car parking numbers to the council owned Princess Square and High Street car parks. Figure 2-4 below shows the proposed Bracknell’s pedestrian circuit.

Figure 0-7 – Bracknell proposed pedestrian circuit



WESTERN GATEWAY ENTRANCE TO THE TOWN CENTRE

Visuals, whether cues or aesthetics, can play an integral role in influencing consumer patterns and behaviours. Currently, the existing Ring entrance to the High Street, when approaching the centre from the east, has a poor quality of frontage; visually it is difficult to see what the centre has to offer due to the building layout. The Ring's previous entrance can be seen in Figure 0-8.

Figure 0-8 - The Ring current entrance¹⁵



This presents a problem because the quality of frontage has been shown to impact upon the perceptions of the space to which that frontage relates. Evidence suggests that when the quality of active frontage increases, so does the perception that the space is safer, more comfortable, lively, sociable, pleasant, convivial, active and interesting¹⁶. This suggests that Bracknell town centre will benefit from increased visibility as it can increase footfall, benefiting the retail, leisure and recreational offerings in the centre.

Opportunity #5 - This scheme will provide the opportunity to clearly mark the High Street 'gateway' viewed from The Ring to the wider town centre and provide the missing linkage while providing a further architectural and urban design impetus to this part of the town. The new shop frontage will help visually demonstrate the excitement and activity that the centre has to offer, welcoming visitors into a more pleasant environment. Figure 0-9 shows the proposed new entrance frontage.

¹⁵ Bentalls Redevelopment, Bracknell, Design & Access Statement, December 2016, Piper Whitlock

BIM Ref: BRBE-PWA-00-ZZ-RP-A-0100-G1_DAS

¹⁶ <https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7162&context=eisapers>



Figure 0-9 – Proposed new west gateway frontage¹⁷

HOUSING PRESSURES

At a national level, the UK is facing a housing shortfall, and regionally over the last five years the local planning authorities of Berkshire have also struggled to meet their existing housing delivery targets. At a local level, Bracknell has also been unable to keep pace with their target **housing delivery targets**. The Housing Strategy for Bracknell Forest 2018 - 2036¹⁸ shows the gap between dwelling planned and dwelling completed, which can be seen in the table below.

Table 0-4 – Housing targets

year	No. of Dwellings planned (net)	No. of Dwellings delivered (net)
Completions 2014/15	572	376
Completions 2015/16	572	336
Completions 2016/17	572	437

Bracknell has experienced significant pressures to increase housing supply with higher than average future population growth expected. The growing pressure on Berkshire has further increased with Bracknell's nearest large town, Reading and the wider Thames Valley growing substantially in recent years. As these have both been identified to be within the highest performing areas of the UK, this has increased Bracknell's attractiveness as a commuter town. Bracknell has not been able to keep up with this increase in demand, and this

¹⁷ Bentalls Redevelopment, Bracknell, Design & Access Statement, December 2016, Piper Whitlock

BIM Ref: BRBE-PWA-00-ZZ-RP-A-0100-G1_DAS

¹⁸ <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/documents/s119283/FINAL%20Housing%20Strategy%202018-36.pdf>

has been made evident in Bracknell Forest's annual housing means assessment, highlighting that the town was not able to deliver within 10% of the annual housing targets¹⁹.

Opportunity #6 - The developer Countryside has been appointed by Bracknell Forest Council to deliver hundreds of affordable new homes as part of the town centre's regeneration. The sites are expected to provide up to 140 new affordable homes as well as 260 market homes, a new health centre, restaurant, gym, office space, community space and public art. This is for the third phase of the town centre's regeneration, focusing on key areas adjacent to the main Lexicon retail site.

This additional growth in housing will create further pressures on the town centre to provide a diversity of retail, leisure and employment opportunities. With consented planning permissions for over 700 new town centre dwellings and many already under construction, Bracknell has the challenge of providing a town centre serving the needs of these individuals. The development of The Deck will be critical to generating an evening economy and leisure activities for these individuals.

Although a number of regeneration projects have begun in the town centre, the comprehensive regeneration is at risk of stalling without further investment and therefore funding from the LGF will provide the much-needed catalyst for the next phase of development.

Creating a mixed-use town centre will encourage further investment from developers to provide higher density development. High density town centre housing has been supported by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) which has identified that younger generations are seeking well connected and convenient urban living. Therefore, providing a town centre that has not only high-quality retail, but also has a broader range of amenities and living options which is a priority for Bracknell Forest and can be addressed through The Deck.

OPPORTUNITIES

Bracknell Forest Council commissioned a Vision document outlining the short, medium- and long-term goals to prepare the town centre for the modern, diverse economy of 2032 and beyond. Over the coming decade, Bracknell hopes to realise its potential as a strong town centre, serving a prosperous and dynamic area. The 2032 vision focuses on:

- Investment;
- Re-invention;
- Public spaces;
- Business;
- Living;
- Landscape;
- Connections; and
- Unlocking growth.

¹⁹ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/amr-housing-2018-2019.pdf>

The proposed town centre developments will unlock the potential growth in these areas and encourage developers to invest further. Development, as identified in the 2032 Vision, will support Bracknell in overcoming some of the challenges with respect to housing and employment space shortages. As the population continues to grow and more people move to the area, there will be a greater demand for the town centre to provide a mixture of facilities and activities. This scheme will provide the gateway opportunity to complete the re-invention of Bracknell's town centre into a modern centre with renewed public spaces, a competitive retail offering and a leisure/recreational experience that suits the needs of the changing town demographics. Apprenticeships and recruitment services will also be developed to support the construction project.

Investor confidence is currently low as there are high levels of market uncertainty. Therefore, Bracknell Forest is at a critical point where investment in The Deck is needed to boost the project and provide confidence to existing and future town centre residents and businesses. This will unlock further developments in the town as the Deck scheme reduces perceived investment risks and uncertainties. This will present a clear signal to would-be investors that Bracknell is a town with significant growth potential and is worthy of investment.

SUMMARY

Table 0-5 summarises the problems that Bracknell faces and highlights the opportunities and the stakeholder that are affected.

Table 0-5 – Problem Identified Summary		
Problem Identified	Key stakeholders affected or concerned	Opportunities
Relatively low footfall and occupancy levels- regional competitors remain the preferred choice for retail, entertainment and recreation	Local businesses Employees	Developing retail, food and beverages, leisure, nightclub and public event areas will improve the attractiveness of visiting Bracknell, particularly against regional centres, provides the opportunity to increase footfall, lengthen dwell times, increase the frequency of visits and attract customers travelling from further away.
COVID 19	Current resident population Future residents Local businesses (existing and potential) Employees	The scheme can help the town tap into the nationwide increase in localism, which if done correctly, can be sustained long past the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unviable based on current market	Current resident population Local businesses (existing and potential) Employees	Remove some of the risk from the developer and allow the scheme to proceed and deliver the expected benefits in terms of connectivity and increase leisure opportunities for the local and wider community. Although the developers will still bear the majority of project investment, additional financial support will reduce overall costs to the private sector, thus encouraging investment and unlocking the new units and jobs that will be created as a result.
Lack of evening and night-time economy beyond restaurants	Current resident population Future residents Local businesses (existing and potential) Employees	Opportunity for the town centre to tap into the lucrative evening and night-time economy, with the following benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recreation for people, which is often welcome after finishing work for the day ■ Increased direct employment ■ Increased indirect and induced employment- The industry has a vast value chain ranging from taxi firms to brewery suppliers ■ Reduced social exclusion and increased vitality in towns ■ Tax revenue
Lack of connectivity between princess square and the rest of the lexicon	Current resident population visitors Local businesses (existing and potential) Employees	Improvements will open up the town, creating an attractive free flowing route which can help encourage visitors into visiting more isolated area.
Poor west gateway to the town centre	Current resident population Local businesses (existing and potential) Visitors	The opportunity to clearly mark the high street 'gateway' viewed from the ring to the wider town centre and provide the missing linkage while providing a further architectural and urban design impetus to this part of the town

IMPACT OF NOT CHANGING

The population of Bracknell is forecast to grow substantially in the coming years. By 2021, 910,000 residents will live in Bracknell's catchment area with 10,780 new homes (based on data in the Bracknell Forest Council Housing Assessment). Population growth has led to demographic shifts and by 2021, the town's 'retail' population is expected to have quadrupled, from 37,000 to 151,000. Failing to address the issues will constrain local growth, and the potential of the region will not be fully realised.

According to 2018 ONS data, wholesale and retail trade remains the largest employer by industry for Bracknell Forest, with 13,000 employed, representing over one fifth of total employee jobs. Table 0-6 below shows a breakdown of how this industry compares to regional and Great Britain averages.

Table 0-6 – Industry comparison

Industry	Bracknell Forest (%)	South East (%)	Great Britain (%)
Wholesale and Retail Trade	21.3%	16.4	15.5

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157279/printable.aspx>

The table shows that Bracknell has a higher percentage of people employed in wholesale and retail trade (21.3% compared to the southeast and Great Britain averages of 16.4% and 15.5% respectively). This suggests that if there was no intervention, the nationwide

slowdown in high street footfall currently being witnessed, and its subsequent negative impact on retail trade, will impact Bracknell more severely. This puts the town centre at a higher risk of job losses and retailers shutting down completely. A rise in unemployment can cause a negative multiplier effect, potentially resulting in social instability. Areas of high unemployment historically tend to have more crime and vandalism. Ultimately, this can impact how Bracknell town centre is perceived and its attractiveness as a working, living and visitor location, undoing the positive impacts of the previous Phase 1 and 2 developments.

This scheme will not only create new jobs, but it will play a significant role in the retention of current retail jobs, which play a key role for the town. In a do-nothing scenario, occupancy in Princess Square will continue to fall and jobs in the town centre will be lost.

Empty units create a general feeling of decline in the area, resulting in an unpleasant shopping experience for visitors and locals no longer wishing to socialise in the high street. As vacant units increase, footfall declines, resulting in a 'negative feedback loop' of even more vacant units and further reductions in footfall numbers. High streets must have a critical mass of shops and services to ensure consumers have a reason to visit them. Further to this, empty units can also impact on potential new investment opportunities (not just in the town centre but also in outer town areas). ERVs (estimated rental values) will reduce from between 25% - 50% without the Deck making any further investment into the centre financially unviable.

The Deck scheme recognises the relationship between high-street prosperity and future investment opportunities. If potential investors see that the area is not performing well economically, they will potentially look to invest elsewhere due to higher uncertainty and risks, with lower profits. The scheme can help advertise Bracknell as an attractive and lucrative town to invest in, unlocking further developments, and thus enabling the town to realise its 2032 growth goals.

OBJECTIVES

The high-level strategic outcomes and objectives of the scheme are:

- To fulfil the potential of Bracknell Town Centre in relation to existing and new opportunities;
- To redevelop the former Bentalls Department Store and Unit 14 located in Bracknell Town Centre;
- To create a new roof terrace and provide a mix of retail, food and beverage and leisure offers which seek to complement and support the existing shopping facilities within The Lexicon and Bracknell Town Centre;
- To enhance Bracknell Town Centre’s evening offer;
- To improve pedestrian linkages and connectivity through the Town Centre from the High Street to Princess Square quarter;
- Achieve an overall increase revenue for existing businesses in the town centre;
- To create new 250 jobs and safeguard 100 existing jobs in the town centre;
- To improve the gateway entrance from The Ring to the High Street;
- Create a town centre which demonstrates commercially viable offering to businesses and increase occupancy of new and existing empty units in the town centre; and
- To create a new roof and a covered event space which can be used for seasonal events.

The objectives relate closely to the policies, opportunities and problems described above.

MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

It is important to be able to demonstrate that the scheme, when complete, is performing as expected and that it is delivering the strategic aims and objectives set out in section 0. A programme of monitoring will be put in place prior to construction. Table 0-7 outlines the measures for success for each objective and how this will be measured.

Table 0-7 – Measures for Success

Objective	Measures for success	How will this be measured
To fulfil the potential of Bracknell Town centre in relation to existing and new opportunities	Development in the town centre that comes forward post delivery	Progress against the identified development opportunities in the Bracknell Town Centre Vision and Local Plan

To redevelop the former Bentalls Department Store and Unit 14 located in Bracknell Town Centre	The Deck is delivered	Scheme construction
To provide a mix of retail, food and beverage and leisure offers which seek to complement and support the existing shopping facilities within The Lexicon and Bracknell Town Centre	Deliver 5,355 sqm of new retail floorspace comprising 14 units for leisure, food and beverage uses.	BRP monitoring
To enhance Bracknell Town Centre's evening offer	Increase footfall in the evening	Footfall surveys
To improve pedestrian linkages and connectivity through the Town Centre from the High Street to Princess Square Shopping Centre	Increase in overall footfall in the town centre	Footfall surveys
Achieve an overall increase revenue for existing businesses in the town centre	Increase in revenues for existing businesses in the town centre by 5% by 2025	BRP leasing monitoring
To create new jobs and safeguard existing jobs in the town centre	Create 250 new jobs No demonstrable fall in jobs at existing retail sites once the scheme is in place	Monitoring employment activity of occupants
To improve the gateway entrance from The Ring to the High Street	Increase in overall footfall in the town centre	Footfall surveys
Create a town centre which demonstrates commercially viable offering to businesses and increase occupancy of new and existing empty units in Footfall data the town centre	50% of existing empty units in princess square filled by 2025 80% of the 14 newly built filled or secured units by end of 2022.	BRP leasing monitoring
To create a new roof and a covered event space which can be used for seasonal events	Demonstrable increase in the number of community events in the town centre	

The objectives relating to economic growth and investment in business and housing will be difficult to quantify, especially in the short-term, so cannot be directly attributable to the development. A longer-term evaluation could seek to monitor economic, employment and housing growth in the Town Centre.

Scope

The scope of The Deck scheme includes partial demolition/strip out and subsequent redevelopment of the former Bentalls Department Store and former McDonald's in the town centre.

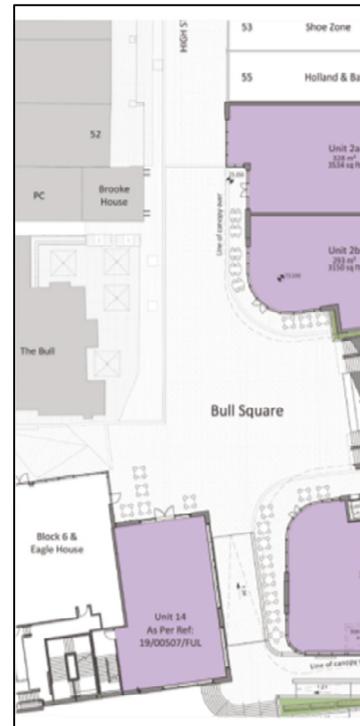
The redevelopment will include:

- 3,207 sqm of Food and beverage uses (use class A3/A4/A5);
- 2,148 sqm of Assembly and leisure uses (use class D2);
- Night club (sui generis);
- Public event area;



- Roof covering;
- Public realm improvements; and
- Associated highway works.

Figure 0-10 – Proposed Lower Ground and Ground floor plans²⁰



CONS TRAINTS

PHYSICAL

BRP have indicated through the planning process that there are no physical constraints to

Whitlock



development of the scheme.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Heritage

Two Grade II Listed assets have the potential to be affected by the development: The Red Lion Inn (now known as Blues Smokehouse) and The Bull. The impact of the proposed development on this setting and therefore significance has then been assessed. It has been concluded that there will be no harm to the assets. The development will enhance the setting of both Grade II Listed assets. Overall it will have a negligible impact on the significance of The Red Lion and will moderately enhance the significance of The Bull.

Energy

An Energy Strategy was adopted for the Development which aimed at achieving, as a minimum, a 10% carbon reduction from a base L (2013) target. This scheme provides 9.40% of its energy requirements from renewables (ASHP). Therefore, the proposed Development attains part compliance with Bracknell Forest Core Strategy Policy CS12 by achieving a carbon saving of 10.3%.

Noise

A report to consider the potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the scheme (in relation to construction activities and the operation of the completed development) concluded that the following all have negligible residual effects:

- Construction Traffic Noise;
- Road Traffic Noise;
- Noise from Fixed Plant;
- Servicing noise; and
- Noise generated by the potential night club.

Noise and vibration from construction activities will have negligible to occasional moderate adverse residual effects. Mitigation will be put in place during construction to reduce the impact as much as possible.

FUNDING

Affordability constraints may include agreed limits on capital and revenue spend. Constraints on the project need to be managed from the outset, since they will constrain the options that can be considered for project delivery.

MARKET

BRP have highlighted the risk of potential market yield shifts and the possible downsides should the market weaken whilst The Deck was being constructed. While future market conditions are volatile, BRP have tried to mitigate this by identifying different options²¹ for the Deck if the food and beverage market does not improve or deteriorate further prior to the scheme being built. As it stands the scheme will continue as planned with the decision to be reviewed periodically at pre-set out milestones through the demolition phase.

INTERDEPENDENCIES

The scheme already has planning approval as outlined in section 0 and can be delivered independently of other development proposals. The scheme is only dependent on additional funding from TVB LEP to unlock the scheme and allow it to proceed.

STAKEHOLDERS

This section identifies the main stakeholders who are affected by the proposed scheme, or who are involved in some way with its delivery and the decision-making processes.

The main stakeholders include:

- Bracknell Forest Council;
- Bracknell Town Council (BTC);
- Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (50:50 Joint Venture between Legal and General and Schroders);
- Bracknell Forest Economic & Skills Development Partnership;
- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group;

²¹ See appendix A for more detail about the different options.

- Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Activate Learning (Bracknell and Wokingham College);
- Bracknell Business Improvement District;
- James Sunderland (local MP); and
- The wider community.

BFC has been directly engaging with BRP on the scheme throughout the development and planning process. The other stakeholders have all demonstrated support for the Deck scheme during the development process and believe that the town centre would greatly benefit from an increased variety of evening and leisure facilities in addition to improvements to public realm.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In November 2016, a pre-application consultation exercise was undertaken to allow local residents and other key stakeholders to express their views on the proposals and to inform the design of the development. This complied with national and local requirements, allowing a range of stakeholders to have their say and openly influence the proposals through consultation.

The pre-application exhibition exercise included the following components:

- Pre-application consultation with BFC;
- Technical meetings with BFC Officers;
- Private exhibition with key stakeholders; and
- Public exhibition with members of the public.

The consultation was well received. People who attended the public exhibition welcomed the opportunity to view the emerging development proposal and to discuss them with the Applicant's consultant team, who sought to respond to the queries that were raised. The public exhibition was well attended over the course of three days. The exhibition was publicised by way of an online presence, publication in the Bracknell and Wokingham Weekender and invitations to the local community and key stakeholders.

Key concerns that were raised during the consultation exercise have been addressed / adequately responded to and are confident that the proposed development will deliver significant overall benefits for the local community and Bracknell Town Centre.

Options

A list of options for the scheme is difficult to describe and summarise succinctly because the scheme has evolved over the past three years. The plans for The Deck have changed since the original planning application in 2016 as described in section 0 with aim of improving the scheme and achieving the objectives. Design changes include:

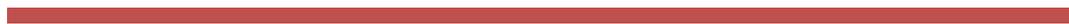
- Extension of the roof to make the space suitable year-round;
- Insertion of a roof top terrace; and
- Repositioning or combining of units.

However fundamentally the main focus of the scheme is still increasing evening and leisure opportunities in the town centre. **Error! Reference source not found.** indicates that BRP have assessed different high-level options for the site, but the preferred option is to develop the scheme as outlined in the scope (section 0). No detailed design has been undertaken on these alternative scenarios but have been assessed in terms of the expected financial performance of each them.

The main reason behind this decision is that even today's retail market that BRP believe that creating units for leisure, food and beverage will produce a better return on their investment than other options which may look at creating office space or more retail units. It also the best option to complement BRP's existing investment in the Lexicon and the Bracknell Town Centre 2032 vision.

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ECONOMIC CASE



ECONOMIC CASE

Introduction

- The Economic Case identifies and appraises the scheme impacts to determine its overall Value for Money. It takes account of the costs of developing, building the scheme, and the benefits and disbenefits of its impacts. These include those impacts which can be monetised, as well as quantitative and qualitative impacts that cannot be monetised. The Economic Case considers the extent to which the scheme's benefits will outweigh its costs.
- This chapter covers:
 - Options appraised;
 - Overview of methodology and assumptions;
 - Scheme costs;
 - Scheme impacts;
 - Sensitivity testing; and
 - Value for Money statement.

Options appraised

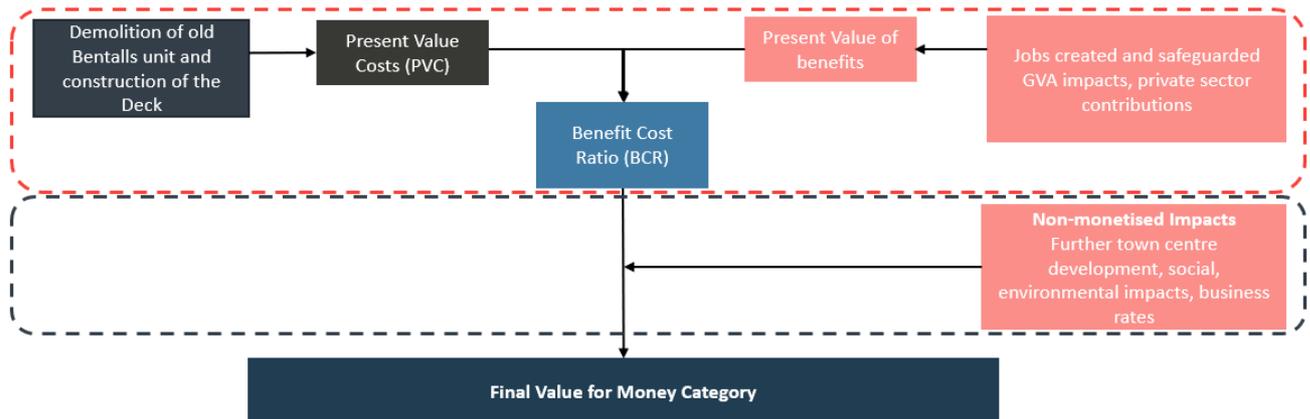
A simplified cost-benefit analysis was undertaken and only the following options have been considered in the appraisal.

- **Do Nothing** – the deck scheme is not built and the former Bentall's building remains empty and unused, and the trends identified in the Strategic Case continue and jobs will be lost in Princess Square; and
- **Do Something** - the deck scheme is built, and 5,355 sqm of new leisure, food and beverage floorspace are realised alongside some minor highway and public realm improvements.

Overview of Methodology and Assumptions

- The economic assessment of the scheme has been undertaken in accordance with HM treasury Green Book and MHCLG guidance.
- An overview of the appraisal process is presented in Figure 0-1.

Figure 0-1 - Process to derive BCR and Value for Money



- The benefits outlined above were compared with the scheme costs to produce a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR).

GENERAL APPRAISAL ASSUMPTIONS

- All impacts have been calculated over a 10-year period from completion of the scheme i.e. from 2022 to 2032²²;
- A total of 5,355 sqm of new food, beverage and leisure use floorspace, based on assumed breakdown discussed in section 0;
- Assumes occupation of new food and beverage units 60% in 2022, 80% in 2023, and 100% from 2024 onwards²³;
- Assumes occupation of the bowling alley will start from 2023;
- All financial amounts are discounted to 2020 values; and
- The results are shown in 2020 prices and present value.

ADDITIONALITY

The method adopted is based on the additionality guidance set out in HCA's Additionality Guide²⁴. The additionality calculations are based on the standard steps set out in the guidance. These cover:

- The level of 'leakage' (i.e. the proportion of new jobs that are expected to be created for residents outside of Berkshire);
- The level of 'displacement' (i.e. the proportion of new employment generated that will simply be displaced from neighbouring areas or retail centres); and
- The economic 'multiplier' impacts (i.e. the additional jobs generated in supply chains, indirect employment, and through the expenditure of employees, induced employment).

²² Paragraph 2.14, Green Book, HM Treasury

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf

²³ This assumption has been made as worst case scenario in terms of unit occupation based on discussions with BRP and their consultants.

²⁴ Homes and Communities Agency, Additionality Guide, Fourth Edition 2014

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378177/additionality_guide_2014_full.pdf (note that several aspects of this additionality guidance are also contained in DCLG's Appraisal Guide of December 2016)

To calculate the extent of additionality, the following assumptions were made and were applied to both the intervention and reference cases:

- Leakage: a Medium impact of 25% was selected (*based on Table 4.3 in the Additionality Guide: Fourth Edition*);
- Displacement: a Medium impact of 50% was selected (*based on Table 4.8 in the Additionality Guide: Fourth Edition*); and
- Multiplier: a multiplier value of 1.26 was selected for Food/Beverage and Leisure respectively (*based on the Office for National Statistics industry multiplier rates published in 2019*).

Using the MHCLG formula for additionality a 38% additionality rate has been calculated. Multiplier impacts will be shown in the Indirect and Induced benefits calculations for GVA.

The leakage value has been selected based on analysis of travel to work census data in the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP area. This analysis showed that around 30% of people who worked in the area live outside the area. Based on this and the fact that the nature of jobs means these are likely to be filled by people local to Bracknell we consider a Medium leakage rate of 25% to be appropriate.

The Medium displacement factor has been selected even though we would expect displacement will be low given that the scheme is going to attract more investment to the shopping centre rather than stop other investment coming forward. However, we have taken cautious approach to ensure the benefits are not overstated.

JOB CREATION AND GROSS VALUE ADDED

The construction of The Deck is expected to encourage businesses to locate to the new units and thus create additional jobs. This will subsequently generate significant economic benefits for the area. The analysis examines the extent that new jobs will create additional Gross Value Added (GVA). The employment will also generate further demand across the new businesses' supply chains, which in turn creates additional economic growth and jobs.

The additional employment and activity generated by the new food/beverage and leisure sites will increase the economic activity in the local economy (as measured by its GVA impact). GVA is used in the estimation of GDP, which is a key indicator of economic activity across the whole economy. The methodology used to estimate each benefit is as follows:

- **Direct on-site employment** – based on estimated floorspace and employment densities (SQM of floorspace per FTE), the annual GVA from new jobs has been estimated. This is based on ONS GVA²⁵ and employment data²⁶ for 2018 in Bracknell Forest.
- **Indirect and induced employment** – additional jobs and economic activity are supported through the supply chain expenditure of businesses within the local and wider UK economy. This will increase because the new developments and businesses will generate additional demand for their services. Moreover, those directly or indirectly employed via activity at the sites support further employment in the local economy through their expenditure on goods and services. The indirect and induced effects have been estimated by the use of economic multipliers taken from the HCA (now Homes England) Additionality Guide (2014).

GVA data has been adjusted from 2018 to 2020 values using the GDP deflator from TAG Data Book.

Jobs safeguarded

In addition to creating new jobs, the scheme is expected to protect existing jobs within the town centre. As discussed in the Strategic Case, the Deck completes the town centre offering by providing a mix of leisure, food and beverage units which seek to complement and support the existing retail facilities within The Lexicon and Bracknell town centre. Without the scheme, Bracknell may continue to see more store closures, leading to job losses elsewhere in the town centre.

The strategic case demonstrates the rising number of vacant units across the town centre but the greatest increase in vacant units experienced in recent years is in Princess Square. The scheme is expected to have a significant impact in terms of increased footfall and improved commercial viability of units in Princess Square. Without the Deck vacancies are expected to increase in Princess Square significantly beyond the current rate of 36%.

This scheme will open up the town, removing the barrier of the old Bentall's unit and creating a free-flowing route which will help visitors more readily access some of the isolated areas such as Princess Square. This means people are more likely to meet, congregate and socialise; lengthening dwell times and increasing the frequency of visits helping to halt and reverse the decline of Princess Square.

²⁵ Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by NUTS1 region: UKJ South East

²⁶ Employee Jobs, ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

We have estimated the opportunity cost the scheme has in terms of safeguarding existing jobs in Princess Square. This is based on the estimated number of FTE's roles that retail units with tenants support in Princess Square, approximately 345, we have estimated the impacts of a 3%²⁷ year-on-year fall in employment in the town centre and what impact this would have in terms of lost GVA. Based on the current trends relating to falling footfall and increase in vacancies in retail units in Bracknell and across the country we believe that a 3% fall on year-on-year is a conservative estimate. The Centre for Retail Research estimate that UK job losses in retail will reach 236,000 in comparison to 143,000 last year²⁸. Without the scheme, more store closures and jobs losses are expected by BRP in Princess Square the wider town centre.

The GVA assumptions for jobs safeguarded are the same as discussed above for the appraisal of new jobs.

BUSINESS RATES

WSP has also looked at the increase in business rates as result of the new food/beverage and leisure units that will come forward. The assumptions used within the economic modelling to capture the benefits within the 10-year appraisal period (2022-2032) are stated below.

- Business Rates are calculated on a per annum basis in 2020 prices;
- To calculate the Business Rates, the area in square foot was converted into square metres;
- This was multiplied by the chargeable rate per square metre to get a Rateable Value;
- The chargeable rate has been based on the Government's Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data for £68 for food/beverage and the bowling alley);
- A multiplier rate of 0.512 has been assumed based on the Government's published multiplier rates for 2020/21.

Business rates have not been included in the PVB and BCR calculations but expected values have been calculated. This has been done to avoid potential double counting of business rates within GVA impact analysis. Increases in business rate revenue is effectively reducing the net public sector costs rather a specific economic benefit.

NON-MONETISED IMPACTS

There are several impacts associated with the scheme that have not been monetised as part of the appraisal. These should, however, be considered as part of the overall Economic Case. These include:

- Supporting future development (commercial and residential);
- Social (apprenticeships and construction jobs); and
- Environmental (including heritage, energy usage and noise).

It is not considered proportionate or in some case feasible to monetise these impacts, but they should be considered as part of the overall Value for Money framework.

Costs

- The cost of the proposed scheme has been estimated in 2020 prices, as set out in detail in section 4.2, the Financial Case. This includes all costs associated with demolition, scheme preparation and construction.
- The costs have been calculated in line with HM Treasury Green Book and uses the following methodology:
 - Estimation of a base cost estimate and risk;
 - Incorporation of a real cost increases;
 - Application of optimism bias-cost adjustment; and
 - Discount cost to 2020.

²⁷ Based on 2.8% fall year on year from 2019 Q3 data British Retail Consortium (BRC) Retail Employment Monitor, <https://brc.org.uk/news/2019/retail-employment-falls-by-85-000>

²⁸ <https://www.retailresearch.org/retail-crisis.html>

ESTIMATION OF BASE COST ESTIMATE

- The initial cost estimate of the scheme is **£18.5 million** in 2020 prices. This includes costs for the demolition and construction of the scheme and includes risk as discussed in section 0.

Table 0-1 – Investment Costs, £s at 2020 prices

Investment Costs	Costs (£s) at 2020 prices
Preliminaries	1,775,000
Demolition	2,116,861
Construction	12,530,600
Externals	1,164,800
Risk	931,000
Total	18,518,261

Table 0-1 includes sunk costs (i.e. costs that have already been spent prior to this economic appraisal and cannot be retrieved). Sunk costs are not, however, included in the Present Value of Costs calculation. The costs incurred prior to the scheme appraisal, at 2020 prices, total £1.04 million.

INCORPORATION OF REAL COST INCREASES

The base investment cost estimate does not take account of real increases in costs, and it therefore needs to be adjusted to provide real costs that account for the effects of inflation.

- The real cost adjustment is calculated by inflating base costs by the construction cost index and then dividing by the rate of general inflation to give their 'real' value. General inflation is based on the most recent forecasts of the GDP deflator by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), while construction costs are forecast to increase based on the RPI forecasts in the DfT's TAG Databook (July 2020). Using the real cost adjustment to multiply by the initial base estimate derives a 'real' cost estimate.

APPLICATION OF OPTIMISM BIAS-COST ADJUSTMENT

- In line with Green Book guidance, an optimism bias adjustment has been applied to all costs. The purpose of Optimism Bias is to ensure that the cost-benefit analysis is robust. Optimism bias is only applied to costs in the economic assessment and is not included in the Financial Case. The recommended optimism bias uplifts for Standard Building projects are set out in Table 0-2 below.

Table 0-2 - Recommended optimism bias uplifts²⁹

Types of projects	Capital Expenditure	
	Lower	Upper
Standard Buildings	2%	24%

²⁹ HM Treasury Green Book Annex 5

- Based on the risk management process completed by BRP, we believe it is possible to reduce the upper bound adjustment by 50%. We believe this is appropriate as the scheme is well developed in the planning process and a significant proportion of the risk has already been identified and included in the cost estimates³⁰. Therefore, the optimism bias adjustment applied to the costs in the appraisal is 12%.

DISCOUNT COST TO PRESENT VALUE

- As well as rebasing, a discount factor is applied to adjust costs occurring in different periods (to 2020 Present Values, PVs). A discount rate of 3.5% per year is applied for years 2020 until 2022. This reflects the lower weighting placed on costs (and benefits) incurred at a future date compared to those incurred in the present. Table 0-3 shows the present value of scheme costs for public and private costs with sunk costs removed.

Table 0-3 - Present Value of Costs

Costs (£m's)	TVB LEP Contribution to Costs	Bracknell Forest Contribution to Costs	Private Sector (BRP) Contribution to Costs
2020 (Outturn cost with risk adjustment)	£0.96m	£6.0m	£12.1m
2020 prices (real) ³¹	£0.96m	£5.9m	£10.9m
2020 prices including GB	£1.07m	£6.6m	£12.2m
Present Value of Costs (PVC) - 2020 PV prices	£1.07m	£6.4m	£11.6m

Benefits

DIRECT JOBS CREATED

Direct Jobs created will be in the form of Restaurant & Cafes (User Class A3) and a new bowling alley (User Class D2). These units are expected to create 203 in terms of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) in Bracknell. It is estimated that 38% of these FTEs are additional based on the additionality rate calculated above. The estimates of GVA are based on the expected increase in FTEs, with an average GVA per employee calculated at £93,395 assumed for each direct job. The total direct GVA benefits across the appraisal period are circa £52.6 million in 2020 PV.

³⁰ See section 0.

³¹ Sunk costs removed at this stage.

Indirect and Induced effects

The Deck will support further job creation within Bracknell's economy through supply chain expenditure and the wages of those directly or indirectly employed. Based on indirect and induced effects as well as additionality factors, it is estimated that the restaurants/cafes and bowling alley would create 53 indirect and induced FTEs, and total indirect/induced GVA across the appraisal period are circa £13.7 million in 2020 PV.

Table 0-4 summarises the expected local economic impacts and the net additional impacts of the newly created jobs in the town centre.

Table 0-4 – Jobs created and GVA impacts			
	Gross Jobs	Net Jobs (after additionality)	Total GVA after additionality (2020 PV)
Direct impacts	203	76	£52.6m
Indirect and induced impacts	53	20	£13.7m
Total	256	96	£66.4m

Jobs Safeguarded

The Deck will also safeguard existing jobs in the town centre as without the scheme, the number of unit vacancies is expected to increase, and this will lead to job losses without the investment in the Deck. The total direct GVA benefits of these safeguarded jobs across the appraisal period is circa £11.0 million in 2020 PV with a total of 80 jobs safeguarded across the appraisal period. Table 0-5 summarises the expected local economic impacts and the net additional impacts of the safeguarded jobs in the town centre.

Table 0-5 – Jobs safeguarded and GVA impacts		
	Jobs	Total GVA (2020 PV)
Total	80	£11.0m

Benefit Cost Ratio

The BCR is calculated by dividing the Present Value of Benefits (PVB) by the Present Value of Costs (PVC). The calculations of the BCR are set out in Table 0-6.

Table 0-6 - Analysis of monetised costs and benefits	
Analysis of monetised costs and benefits (BCR)	Benefits (£m in 2020 PV)
GVA impacts from direct jobs created	£52.6m
GVA impacts from indirect/induced jobs created	£13.7m
GVA impacts from jobs safeguarded	£11.0m
Total benefits	£77.4m
Private sector costs	£11.6m

Present Value of Benefits Adjusted (Benefits minus Private Sector Costs)	£65.7m
BFC capital reserves funding	£6.4m
TVB LEP LGF	£1.1m
Present Value of Costs	£7.4m
Net present Value	£58.3m
BCR	8.8:1

- Based on the analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits (AMCB), the total monetised benefits exceed the costs by more than £58.3 million, giving a BCR of 8.8:1, indicating Very High Value for Money. The largest proportion of the benefits can be attributed to GVA impacts from the direct jobs created followed by the indirect/induced jobs and safeguarded jobs. Private sector contributions to the scheme costs have taken away from the total benefits as MHCLG guidance states private sector costs should not be captured in the benefits and should be taken away from the Present Value of Benefits.

BUSINESS RATES

The results of the business rates calculations covering the 10-year appraisal period are shown in Table 0-7.

Table 0-7 – Business Rates impacts	
Local Authority	Business Rates, (2020 PV)
Bracknell	£562,000

- The table above shows the increase in business rate revenue in Bracknell will have a present value of £562k.

NON-MONETISED IMPACTS

Supporting future development

Over the coming decade, Bracknell will realise its potential as a strong town centre, serving a prosperous and dynamic area. The strong retail centre which has been carefully developed will be extended with complementary uses, supporting a diverse and resilient economy. The Deck plays an important role in delivering this. The scheme is one the first phases of the Bracknell 2032 vision and will try to complete the town's retail and leisure offering creating amenity, entertainment and excitement for all. The retail centre and the Deck will help to deliver the planned housing, leisure and business developments outlined in the 2032 vision. The vision will create numerous jobs and economic activity in the region that with a focus supporting ICT, Digital and High-tech sectors.

Social impacts

Construction jobs and apprenticeships will be created in the initial demolition and strip out of the Bentalls Department store and McDonalds unit as well as the redevelopment of the area. These apprenticeships will provide the opportunity for young individuals to develop skills in construction which will boost the productivity in the Bracknell and when further investment comes forward in the area there will be an improved supply of skilled construction workers.

Investment in construction has many benefits for the local area. The construction of the Deck is expected to generate economic benefits for Bracknell based on the increased GVA and the jobs it creates. It also provides supply side expenditure, standard requirements associated with major construction processes include:

- Construction equipment - mobile and tower cranes, scaffolding, access equipment, hand tools, generators, earth moving equipment, site cabins, etc.; and
- Supplies – concrete, drainage products, steel, bricks, blocks, and mortar, paving and tarmac, cabling, pip work, cladding materials, etc.

It is likely these will be demanded locally so will buy/rent equipment and goods from local businesses providing a boost to the economy. Additionally, as the construction runs over a 2 year period, workers will demand other goods and services in the area, such as:

- Accommodation;
- Transport (public transport and vehicle/taxi hire);
- Catering and welfare facilities;
- Security; and
- Couriers.

Environmental impacts

Heritage

Two Grade II Listed assets have the potential to be affected by the development:

- The Red Lion Inn (now known as Blues Smokehouse); and
- The Bull.

The impact of the proposed development on this setting and therefore significance has then been assessed. It has been concluded that there will be no harm to the assets. The development will enhance the setting of both Grade II Listed assets. Overall it will have a negligible impact on the significance of Blues Smokehouse and will moderately enhance the significance of The Bull.

Energy

An Energy Strategy was adopted for the Development which aimed at achieving, as a minimum, a 10% carbon reduction from a base L (2013) target. This scheme provides 9.40% of its energy requirements from renewables (ASHP). Therefore, the proposed Development attains part compliance with Bracknell Forest Core Strategy Policy CS12 by achieving a carbon saving of 10.3%.

Noise

The potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the scheme (in relation to construction activities and the operation of the completed development) concluded that the following all have negligible residual effects:

- Construction Traffic Noise;
- Road Traffic Noise;
- Noise from Fixed Plant;
- Servicing noise; and
- Noise generated by the potential night club.

Noise and vibration from construction activities will have negligible to occasional moderate adverse residual effects. Mitigation will be put in place during construction to reduce the impact as much as possible.

Sensitivity analysis

- To understand the sensitivity of the above benefits to a range of alternative parameters, a number of sensitivity tests have been performed. These are described below.

Additionality

The appraisal model tests the level of displacement and leakage applied and this impacts the additionality rate applied to jobs created and safeguarded GVA analysis. The results are summarised in Table 0-8.

Table 0-8 - Sensitivity Testing on Additionality

Test Scenario	Displacement Rate, %	Leakage rate %	Additionality Rate, %	Total GVA impacts (Jobs created and	BCR

				safeguarded)	
Core Scenario	50%	25%	38%	£77.4m	8.8:1
S1 (Higher Leakage)	50%	50%	25%	£51.6m	5.4:1
S2 (Lower Leakage)	50%	10%	45%	£92.8m	10.9:1
S3 (High Displacement)	75%	25%	19%	£38.7m	3.6:1
S4 (Lower Displacement)	25%	25%	56%	£116.0m	14.0:1

The Core Scenario shows an additionality rate of 38% with a Medium rate applied to Displacement and Leakage. The sensitivity tests show that although the benefits are sensitive to additionality assumptions, the scheme still generates a BCR greater than 3:1 for each sensitivity test undertaken. The table shows that even in the scenario with the lowest levels of additionality, the scheme still delivers strong benefits with a BCR is 3.5 representing High value for money.

Optimism Bias

As noted in section 0, an allowance of 12% Optimism Bias is considered appropriate for this scheme, given the level of development and risk assessment. The effect of changing the level of OB on the PVC and BCR (applied to the upper and lower bounds of the core scenario, based on Annex 5 of the Green Book for standard building projects) is set out in Table 0-9.

Table 0-9 - Alternative optimism bias sensitivity tests (2010 prices and values)

Allowance for Optimism Bias	Private sector contributions	PVB (£m)	PVC (£m)	BCR
12% (Core scenario)	£11.6m	£65.7m	£7.4m	8.8:1
24% (Upper Bound)	£12.8m	£64.5m	£8.2m	7.8:1
2% (Lower Bound)	£10.5m	£66.8m	£6.8m	9.8:1

These results show that when high levels of Optimism Bias are applied the BCR remains above 4.0:1, which indicates Very High value for money regardless of which the level of Optimism Bias is applied and is not that sensitive to increase in overall costs.

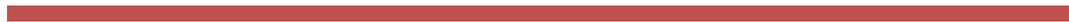
Value for Money Summary

- The cost benefit analysis for the scheme shows that the monetised benefits of the scheme (PVB) of **£65.7 million** are greater than the monetised costs of the scheme (PVC) of **£7.4 million**. The benefit-cost ratio (BCR) is **8.8:1** which demonstrates that the scheme offers **Very High value for money**.

A range of sensitivity tests have been undertaken including: altering the Leakage, Displacement and Optimism Bias. The results of the tests show that the BCR ranges from **3.6:1 to 14.0:1** which indicates for all scenarios the scheme demonstrates High value for money. These sensitivity tests provide a high degree of certainty that that the scheme will generate significant benefits which will outweigh the costs of the scheme.

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FINANCIAL CASE



FINANCIAL CASE

Introduction

This section sets out the financial case for the proposed scheme to demonstrate its affordability. It describes how much the proposed scheme is expected to cost, and how this has been calculated. This is based on:

- Risks that could affect the cost of the scheme;
- How the scheme will be paid for and by whom; and
- The anticipated profile of expenditure over time (whole life costs).

This chapter deals with costs and accounting issues. The Value for Money appraisal is dealt with separately in the Economic Case.

Costs - Capital and revenue requirements

An extensive costing exercise has been completed for the project. HMBC Cummings have produced a Cost Plan, on behalf of BRP for the primary works associated with the development of the site. The cost plan can be found in **Error! Reference source not found..** This exercise estimated the base scheme costs at 2020 Q2 prices.

The scope of the cost estimates is the partial demolition of the existing Bentalls department store and Unit 14 to form a large 'Event Space' surrounded on two sides with 15 units. This also includes the roof covering, public realm improvements and any associated highway works. The estimate also includes other associated project costs such as preliminaries, external works and provisional sums.

HMBC Cummings' Cost Plan uses industry benchmarking data to support the measurements and estimates of each element of the project that is typically expected of a project of this type. The benchmarking data also considers the nature and specification of the project, the expected method of construction and the location and defined uses.

The Cost Plan is also based on the following assumptions:

- Demolition costs estimates are based on negotiated tender with Erith Ltd who undertook the asbestos and strip out of Unit 14 and the Bentalls building;
- Inflation is excluded as the original programme was for the project to be continuous. The demolition was going to be followed immediately by construction, so it was felt that inclusion of inflation was not necessary; and
- VAT is excluded.

The estimate incorporates a 6.5% risk allowance made up of 4% for Design Development and 2.5% for construction risks. The 4% allowance has been maintained through the project as until recently there were still design decisions to be made associated with the roof structure and the design of steelwork to support the roof. The construction risk has reduced as the design approached Stage 4 of the Royal Institute of British Architects Plan of Work³² and ground investigations had identified previously unknown issues. As outlined in the Commercial Case, any other risk is being passed to the contractor.

The estimated cost of the scheme is shown below at 2020 Q2 prices (excluding future inflation and non-recoverable VAT).

Table 0-1 – Estimated costs of the proposed scheme

Investment Costs	Costs at 2020 prices (£'s)
Preliminaries	1,775,000
Demolition	2,116,861
Construction	12,530,600
Externals	1,164,800
Risk	931,000

³² <https://www.architecture.com/-/media/GatherContent/Test-resources-page/Additional-Documents/2020RIBAPlanofWorkoverviewpdf.pdf?la=en>

Total	18,518,261
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EXPENDITURE TO DATE

Expenditure to date represents those costs incurred prior to the scheme appraisal and which cannot be retrieved. In the case of this scheme, this refers to any cost incurred before October 2020. The costs incurred by BRP prior to the scheme appraisal, at 2020 prices, total £1.04 million.

OUTTURN PRICE ADJUSTMENT

- The cost estimates assume a price base of 2020 without inflation. An allowance is therefore made for expected inflation between the date of the estimate and the date when the expenditure is expected to occur.
- Inflating the base costs by forecasted RPI in the DfT's TAG Databook July 2020 per year provides a total outturn cost of £19.1 million. Therefore, the inflation allowance for construction of The Deck is £0.60 million.

SPEND PROFILE

- The build-up of the cost estimate and spend profile over time is demonstrated in Table 0-2.

Table 0-2 – Breakdown of scheme

Scheme element	Costs (£'s) in 2020 prices			
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Preliminaries	-	1,331,250	443,750	1,775,000
Demolition	1,375,960	740,901	-	2,116,861
Construction	1,065,101	8,959,379	2,506,120	12,530,600
Externals	-	873,600	291,200	1,164,800
Risk	-	698,250	232,750	931,000
Total	2,441,061	12,603,380	3,473,820	18,518,261
Outturn	-	384,403	215,850	600,254
TOTAL	2,441,061	12,987,783	3,689,670	19,118,515

WHOLE LIFE COSTS

1. The scheme will give rise to additional revenue liabilities for operating and maintenance, when compared to a future scenario where the Deck does not exist. All maintenance obligations will fall under the purview of BRP and, as such, will be fulfilled as part of the maintenance regime operated by BRP.

BFC will have the ongoing liabilities for the adopted highway elements which make a small portion of this scheme.

Overall affordability and funding

- The scheme will be funded by a combination of public (Bracknell Forest Council and TVB LEP LGF) funding and private finance from BRP. An estimated funding profile is outlined in Table 0-3, split by the financial year.

Table 0-3 – Estimated funding profile

Budgetary Impact Summary (£s)	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total (%)
Bracknell Forest Council	-	6,000,000	-	6,000,000 (31%)
Thames Valley Berkshire LEP	955,000	-	-	955,000 (5%)
Private Sector (BRP)	1,486,061	6,987,783	3,689,670	12,163,515 (64%)
Total	2,441,061	12,987,783	3,689,670	19,118,515 (100%)

- The largest contribution to scheme costs (£12.2 million) will be provided by BRP. In 2019, BRP has previously confirmed its intention to provide investment to bring the forward the scheme however since. BFC have also provided a contribution to encourage BRP to commit the funds necessary to commence the development. The deterioration in market conditions as result of the Covid-19 Pandemic have meant, however, that the scheme is no longer viable based on previous funding commitments. Since the TVB LEP have granted the scheme entry into the programme to bid for Local Growth Funding (LGF), BRP have recommitted to providing the investment to allow the scheme to come forward. **Error! Reference source not found.** present a summary of the minutes from the BRP Board Meeting in October 2020 and states that BRP will continue to progress with the scheme as planned if additional the LGF funding is secured.
- A local contribution of £6 million from Bracknell Forest Council, will account for 31% of the scheme costs. This has been secured from Council reserves as part of a Development Agreement with BRP. This has been approved as part of the council's capital budget for the 2020/2021 year and the regeneration is set to be funded through council capital reserves.
- Finally, if successful in being granted the LGF from TVB LEP, the £955,000 of LEP funding will be used to undertake the demolition of the old Bentalls site. This will give BRP the confidence to unlock the rest of the scheme despite the current adverse market conditions experienced throughout the UK.

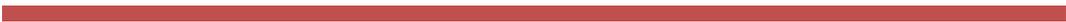
Any additional cost incurred during scheme construction beyond the estimates in this Financial Case would be covered by BRP and their contractors as they bear the full risk of any additional financial obligations related to the scheme. BFC have secured the maximum



amount possible from council capital reserves to support the scheme so no additional public funding will be provided if there are increases in costs.

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COMMERCIAL CASE



COMMERCIAL CASE

Introduction

This chapter outlines the commercial viability of the scheme and the procurement strategy used to engage the market. The Commercial Case has been developed following the outline set out below:

- Output based specification;
- Procurement strategy;
- Sourcing options; and
- Risk allocation and transfer.

Service requirements and outputs

The scope of The Deck scheme includes partial demolition/strip out and subsequent redevelopment of the former Bentalls Department Store and former McDonald's in the town centre.

The demolition works include the soft strip and asbestos removal then demolition of the Unit 14 and Bentalls units.

The retail and public space works includes:

- Substructure
- Superstructure (building works and roof)
- Internal Finishes
- Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment
- MEP Services
- External Works (public realm)

The redevelopment will include:

- 3,207 sqm of Food and beverage uses (use class A3/A4/A5);
- 2,148 sqm of Assembly and leisure uses (use class D2);
- Night club (sui generis);
- Public event area;
- Roof covering;
- Public realm improvements; and
- Associated highway works.

Procurement Strategy

The town centre regeneration is being led by the BRP and as such their procurement strategy will be dictated by their own internal processes. BFC will, however, emphasise that any works undertaken making use of public funding will be subject to public accountability and scrutiny. The developers will procure all the works through selective tendering via their supply chain.

The initial soft strip and asbestos removal works for the scheme were a large unknown for BRP and they believe that if this had been put straight into a main contract tender that it would have created uncertainty and price or programme risk. Therefore, it was decided to proceed with the ongoing design changes to The Deck in early 2020 while progressing the soft strip and asbestos removal. This allowed the design risk to be reduced as it meant structural investigations could be carried out to ratify structure as well as re-measure for dimensional accuracy as all dimensions for early stage design were based on a fully fitted out retail store

BRP negotiated with the lowest tendering contractor on the strip out (Erith Limited) for the remaining full demolition package. This is fixed to end of 2020 and would mean a dedicated procurement under its own Building Contract, for just this element of works. BRP have indicated that Erith Limited could be on site within 6 weeks to mobilise the demolition process. As specified in the project programme, the contract for demolition phase of the scheme will run from January 2020 to June 2020.

This option remains feasible, although will need to now be detached from the main contract rebuilding tender which has been prepared for the rest of the works. The contractor pricing remains open. BRP need to identify some of the site protection issues that are needed in the event of works being delayed beyond demolition as it will then be a cleared site needing protection.

BRP have considered two construction contract procurement routes:

- **Single Stage Design and Build** - This method utilises the contractors input into the design process and is more suited to new build projects. The contractor is able to understand the design solution far better than a traditional procurement route and as a consequence is able to price for taking the design and therefore programme responsibility, together with its associated risks.
- **Two Stage Design and Build** – This is similar to a two-stage traditional approach. The contractor is introduced into the design process at an early stage which is developed under the Clients control. The contractor can be selected on limited documentation and they ‘buy into’ the Cost Plan, programme and will value engineer the project with the design team.

Both procurement methods are traditionally used for ‘un-complicated’ one-off schemes such as this the Deck. The matrix in Table 0-1 below demonstrates strengths and weaknesses of both options.

Table 0-1 – Procurement routes considered

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Single Stage Design & Build	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tender sought based on time, design, efficiency and price ■ Design and construction risk (development and co-ordination) with the contractor ■ Price certainty (subject to changes of scope) ■ Integrated design and construction functions ■ Consultants can be novated to the contractor to maintain consistency of design ■ Design process to suit contractor’s mode of operation ■ Early site start as a minimum amount of design and specification are required to invite tenders ■ Contractor input into design ■ Less exposure to abortive fees ■ Contractor responsible for final design information, therefore no opportunity to claim for late receipt of information ■ Single point responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contract variations can be expensive ■ Quality can suffer ■ Once agreed the contract can be inflexible ■ Disputes under design and build contracts can arise when there are differences between the employer’s requirements and the contractor’s proposals ■ If extensive variations are required by the employer during the construction period, this can have a seriously detrimental effect on the benefits which would otherwise be obtained by adopting a design and build contract
Two Stage Design & Build	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ First stage tender is quicker with a limited cost on the basis of Preliminaries, Overheads and Profit and design fees ■ Design and construction risk (development and co-ordination) with the contractor ■ Price certainty at end of second stage (subject to scope changes) ■ Integrated design and construction functions ■ Consultants can be novated to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contract variations can be expensive ■ Quality can suffer ■ Reasonable lead-in time required ■ Once agreed the contract can be inflexible ■ Project could fail without correct approach from both client and contractor ■ Second stage tender costs high and can be abortive if acceptable contract sum not agreeable ■ Disputes under design and build

	<p>contractor to maintain consistency of design after the second stage tender completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Design process to suit contractor's mode of operation ■ Contractor input into design, buildability and programme at an early stage ■ Less exposure to abortive fees ■ Contractor responsible for design information, therefore no opportunity to claim for late receipt of information ■ Contractor buys into cost plan at an early stage ■ Single point responsibility ■ Flexible up to the point of second stage tender agreement 	<p>contracts can arise when there are differences between the employer's requirements and the contractor's proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If extensive variations are required by the employer during the construction period, this can have a seriously detrimental effect on the benefits which would otherwise be obtained by adopting a design and build contract
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Given the nature of the works and intention to deliver by 2022 Q3, BRP are procuring the works using the Single Stage Design and Build procurement route. The form of contract being Joint Contract Tribunal (JCT) Design and Build Contract 2016 edition. This decision is outlined in more detail in procurement strategy paper in **Error! Reference source not found.**

This method allows early identification of a suitable contractor and enables this contractor to be involved as the design develops. BRP can decide when to novate the architect and other design team members. This seeks to place some of the remaining risk on design with the main contractor through a series of Construction Design Portion (CDP) packages. These have been developed to RIBA Stage 4 to limit the potential exposure on design risk as they have been taken to a more detailed level than is sometimes the case with Design and Build routes.

A variation on this may be to get initial pricing of Preliminaries, Profit and Overheads from four or five contractors to narrow down a tender list.

As specified in the project programme, the contract for construction of the scheme will run from June 2020 to August 2022.

Sourcing Options

BRP has chosen to procure the design works using the existing relationships built in earlier project stages in regeneration of the town centre due to the underlying knowledge of Bracknell within the team. These existing supplier relationships will be easier to transition to the Deck scheme borne out of the successful implementation of the Princess Square upgrade earlier in 2020. The time spent to introduce a fully new team and integrate them was deemed to be unnecessary.

Specialists for roof design have been introduced where there was insufficient knowledge in house and sourcing this specialism was deemed to be better dealt with by negotiating with known companies in the field that were known to the incumbent team, rather than presenting this to the wider market and having to spend valuable design time, selecting suitable providers.

The experience of the design team, knowledge of the market and the 'fit' of suitable contractors to the type of work is an important consideration in contractor selection. For this project BRP do not believe the pre-qualification stage need not be too formal, however the financial and 'health' checks on any contractors would still be undertaken. Four contractors will be invited to tender after a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) process. At this time, the following list of contractors has been identified:

- Vinci Construction
- McClaren Construction
- Graham Limited
- RG Group Ltd
- Galliford Try

The contract will be subject to a competitive tendering process and each tender will be evaluated so that the evaluation team are satisfied that each Contractor has properly understood the project scope within its tender and has presented both a competitive tender price and realistic programme for the overall delivery, as well as demonstrating a good understanding of the overall project.

Once the stage tender is priced, BRP believe there should be a reasonably clear path to reaching an agreed contract sum with the preferred contractor. There will inevitably be some closing negotiations to clarify positions, allowances and expectations and to incorporate any late changes to design or material selection. The Building Contract will be drafted at this point but nearly always will be subject to final discussions on commercial and legal points. Cash flow expectations, contract sum analysis can also be confirmed at this point.

Risk allocation

The developers design team have prepared a risk assessment based on their experience and following detailed investigations on the ground. It is for the developer's team to allocate risks to the organisation best suited to overcome the risk.

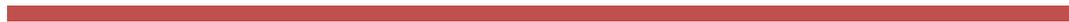
Table 0-2 shows the likely allocation of risk between the public and private sector for this project. The risks for the scheme will be mostly transferred to BRP and any Contractor they procure to undertake the works, as they are responsible for ensuring that works are complete. BFC risks are more reputational risks.

Table 0-2 – Risk transfer matrix

RISK TRANSFER MATRIX			
Risk Category	Potential allocation		
	Public	Private	Shared
1. Design risk		✓	
2. Construction and development risk		✓	
3. Transition and implementation risk		✓	
4. Availability and performance risk		✓	
5. Operating risk		✓	
6. Variability of revenue risks		✓	
7. Termination risks		✓	
8. Technology and obsolescence risks		✓	
9. Control risks		✓	
10. Residual value risks		✓	
11. Financing risks		✓	
12. Other project risks			✓

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MANAGEMENT CASE





MANAGEMENT CASE

Introduction

The Management Case sets out the processes and controls in place to manage the implementation of the scheme, and track and realise future benefits. It demonstrates the way in which the scheme will be delivered in accordance with best practice, outlines timescales, and establishes the governance structure and assurance framework that will oversee the project. The following sections cover:

- Evidence of similar projects;
- Programme and project dependencies and interfaces;
- Governance, organisational structure and roles;
- Programme and project reporting against milestones;
- The stakeholder management process;
- Risk management strategy; and
- How the benefits set out in the economic case will be monitored and realised.

Evidence of Similar Projects

The Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) who are delivering the regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre is a Joint Venture between Legal and General property and Schroders. Legal and General Property (LGP) are the Development Managers for the project and are one of the largest and most experienced Fund managers of Commercial Property in the UK. LGP have a dedicated team of 11 professionals in their Development Team who deal with major redevelopments across the UK including projects in London, Birmingham and Cardiff as well as other major projects within Bracknell Borough. These include retail and leisure, residential and office projects, across the spectrum of differing sectors.

LGP is providing significant infrastructure and regeneration capital in the UK in the next five years (circa £15bn) and is committed to stimulating the UK economy through capital investment. LGP was founded in 2013 to help look after the financial interests of its millions of customers. It helps deliver benefits to society by ensure financial security for its customers and funding investments in public projects. In 2013, LGP invested £2.9 billion in a range of sectors, including housing, care homes, hospitals and city regeneration. LGP and Schroders have been long term partners with the Council on the delivery of the Town Centre Regeneration.

The Lexicon, part of the Bracknell regeneration programme and built by BRP, has been recognised by many organisations as an example of a successful town centre regeneration project. Revo is an organisation which shapes the future of retail property by working with Government and others to help develop a beneficial regulatory environment. In 2017, The Lexicon and BRP were successful at the annual Revo awards ceremony winning Gold in the Re:new category and 'Best of the Best' in the Re:turn category³³. The Lexicon and BRP were also successful at the South East RICS Awards 2019 after being awarded the Regeneration project award³⁴. Finally, the Lexicon won 'Development of the Year' at the Thames Valley Property awards in 2018³⁵. These awards reflect the quality and scale of one the largest town centre regeneration projects in the UK. It also demonstrates that effective management arrangements were put in place by BRP to deliver the project successfully.

Project management governance arrangements

Governance arrangements for Bracknell Town Centre are already well developed and are operating successfully. This is because the scheme has already received Planning approval and successfully delivered the delivered the earlier phases of the town centre regeneration.

BRP BOARD

An appropriate governance structure is essential to the successful operation of the town centre and delivery of the scheme. The BRP Board is well established, aligned with best practice guidance on project and programme management.

The BRP Board is the decision-making body for BRP. It provides overall direction of the Town Centre, the Deck scheme and is accountable for its success. It approves all major plans and authorises any significant deviations from agreed plans. The Board ensures that the required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts in the project.

Project reporting to the Board will include the necessary detail to inform the Board's primary function of decision-making and review. The reporting will be delivered through the project Delivery Team in advance of Board meetings. The reporting will provide

³³ <https://www.thelexiconbracknell.com/news/top-industry-award>

³⁴ <https://www.rics.org/uk/training-events/rics-awards/rics-awards-south-east/>

³⁵ <https://thamesvalleypropertyawards.co.uk/winners-2018/>



updates on scheme progress including programme review, financial matters, risks and opportunities. Particular emphasis will be given to change events and will highlight any key decision or actions required by the Board.

The Board meet on a regular basis review the progress of projects such as the Deck against the programme, identifying if milestones have been met and will make decisions at gateway review points.

The BRP Project Director in conjunction with their contractors will oversee the detailed design, construction and monitoring stages of the scheme. The day to day delivery of the scheme will be managed by the Project Manager.

An organogram detailing the BRP and consultant team organisational structure for the scheme as it currently stands can be seen in Table 0-1.

Table 0-1 – Project consultant team

Consultant	Role
Piper Whitlock	Architect
Campbell Reith	Civil and Structural Engineer
Cudd Bentley	Mechanical and Electrical Engineer
MHBC	Project Manager, Principal Designer, Contract Administrator and Cost Consultant
Deloitte	Planning Consultant
KPM Fire Solutions	Fire Engineer
David Bonnett	Access Consultant
Gillespies LLP	Landscape Design
Plowman Craven	Measured Survey Surveyor
TBC	Roofing Consultant

Dependencies

2. The successful delivery of this scheme is not dependent on the prior delivery of any other project, nor is any other project dependent upon this scheme.
3. The scheme is dependent upon the receipt of the LGF funding. Without this funding the scheme will not proceed.

Project Programme

4. A project programme has been developed by BRP setting out all the key project tasks and their duration, the interdependencies between each of the tasks, with key milestones and gateways also recorded. This can be found in **Error! Reference source not found..** Certain elements of the programme have built in tolerance/contingency to account for risks identified within the risk register (which could have an impact upon the programme).

The programme will be a live document, with progress on planned task completion being monitored against actual progress on a weekly basis by the project manager. The Project Manager will report progress against plan to the BRP Board.

Table 0-2 – Key Programme Dates / Milestones

Key Milestones	Dates
Full Business Case submitted to TVB LEP	w/e 30 th October 2020
TVB LEP Board Meeting and Approval Decision	12 th November 2020
Demolition of Bentall's	January 2021 – June 2021
Construction of The Deck	June 2021 – August 2022
Tenant fitouts	April 2022 – August 2022
Scheme Opening	August 2022

Risk management arrangements

The approach to risk management taken on the project, is a methodical approach which involves identifying, quantifying and managing risks. It proceeds through a process which is broadly cyclical (plan-do-review) requiring an on-going review and update of risks to ensure that effective controls are implemented during for the operation of the town centre and delivery of the scheme.

The risk assessment has been undertaken using the following process

- Risk identification;
- Risk quantification - Assessing the impacts of risk;
- Managing risk.

Completion of each of these processes enable the population of a risk register for operations of Bracknell town centre. An extract of the risk register can be found in **Error! Reference source not found.** which shows risks that have been highlighted relating to the scheme.

RISK IDENTIFICATION

BRP and their consultants populated (and “own” / manage) the risk register for the operation of the whole town centre, identifying all risks which have the potential to stop or hinder the successful delivery of the project and their operations. The risk register is also a ‘live document’ meaning that it is reviewed regularly, so that individual risks can be monitored and updated.

RISK QUANTIFICATION

Risk are quantified by assessing the severity of impact on the project. These are scored using a 3-scale point system from Low, Medium to High.

MANAGING RISKS (RESPONSE PLANS AND MITIGATION)

Following the initial assessment of risks, a systematic approach is adopted to respond to risks and allocate responsibility to the most appropriate party in line with the governance arrangements. One of the following four strategies is adopted for each risk when developing a suitable response plan:

- Accept or tolerate consequences in the event that the risk occurs – In the event that a) the cost of taking any action exceeds the potential benefit gained; or b) there are no alternative courses of action available;
- Treating the risk – Continuing with the activity that caused the risk by employing four different types of control including preventative, corrective, directive and detective controls;
- Transferring the risk – Risks could be transferred to a third party e.g. insurer or contractor; and
- Terminating the activity that gives rise to the risk.

Assurance and approval plans

BRP and its consultancy team follow a “Gateway Process” as a mechanism for assessing projects at critical stages in their lifecycle prior to commencing the next stage. The use of the Gateway process enables:

- Realistic and achievable targets to ensure successful delivery;



- Deployment of relevant skills and competencies to a project;
- Compliance with best practice;
- Key stakeholder input and understanding;
- Project feedback through lessons learnt; and
- A visible audit trail.

These milestones have been built into the project programme and will be monitored by the Developers Project Manager and reported to the BRP Board.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF WORKS BEING PERFORMED

The building contract will be administered by a Contract Administrator whose duties include fortnightly inspections of works in progress for compliance with quality standards set by the Building Contract and associated specifications drafted by the design team (architect, structural engineer and services consultants).

On a monthly basis the quantity surveyor will value the works completed after verifying scope by inspection and will issue a "valuation" to the contract administrator to raise a payment certificate. In order to raise such a certificate, the contract administrator will need to have first obtained a commentary for the design team that the works as progress are free, as far as can be ascertained by visual inspection, of defects.

In the event that works are not to the specified standard the contract administrator will issue a certificate on non conformity and payment to the contractor will be adjusted by the quantity surveyor to reflect the value of works (if any) which fail to meet the necessary standard(s).

In the connection with mechanical and electrical services the contractor will need to demonstrate to the contract administrator, the services consultants and independent commissioning engineers, that systems are performing to the intended standards.

This rolling process of quality assurance, involving all the design team, is intended to allow deficiencies (if any) to be dealt with as the works progress rather than allow them to accumulate to the end of the project.

FUNDING ASSURANCE

5. The Section 151 Officer will approve the release of local funding, when satisfied and appropriate to do so.

Stakeholders

As the proposals have evolved, BRP has continued to engage with the community and considered the views of all those affected by them. The process has been in full accordance with pre-applications advice both at the national and the local level.

In November 2016, a pre-application consultation exercise was undertaken to allow local residents and other key stakeholders to express their views on the proposals and to inform the design of the development. This complied with national and local requirements, allowing a range of stakeholders to have their say and openly influence the proposals through consultation.

The key objectives of the scheme's stakeholder management process are to:

- Keep stakeholders aware of schemes development and progress;
- Increase public and stakeholder awareness of the scheme through local publicity; and
- Provide information and support to those affected by the scheme during construction and operation.

The scheme's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) aligns with the Government's reform of the planning system, emphasising increased community participation. The SCI's key objectives involved engaging with representatives of the BFC, key stakeholders, as well as groups and residents in the area, and to allow the community adequate opportunity to consider, understand and comment on the development proposed.

The pre-application exhibition exercise included the following components:

- Pre-application consultation with BFC;
- Technical meetings with BFC Officers;
- Private exhibition with key stakeholders; and
- Public exhibition with members of the public.

Benefits realisation arrangements

As part of the ongoing management of the town centre BRP will employ their own monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that the scheme provides a return on investment. Monitoring and evaluation are important elements of any major project. They help



to determine the extent to which it is meeting its objectives and delivering the expected benefits, helping to improve future decision making.

- **Monitoring** seeks to check progress against planned targets. It can be defined as the formal reporting and evidencing that spend and outputs are successfully delivered, and milestones met
- **Evaluation** is the assessment of the initiative’s effectiveness and efficiency during and after implementation. It seeks to measure the causal effect of the scheme on planned outcomes and impacts and assessing whether the anticipated benefits have been realised, how this was achieved, or if not, why not.

BRP have an asset management team which produces in-depth research into every phase of the scheme and look at following information:

- Focus groups;
- Footfall analysis;
- Catchment data; and
- population growth statistics.

These are reanalysed at every phase of ongoing development such as the Deck. BRP have quarterly board meetings which evaluate the data and analysis the asset management team have produced and make decisions based on that analysis.

Section 0 in the Strategic Case outlines the measure of success that have been developed for the scheme and where possible BRP and BFC will work collaboratively to monitor these targets and evaluate the progress towards them. It is anticipated that the benefits will be realised in stages as The Deck is built. The expectation is that these benefits will be delivered in line with the overall delivery programme and as the individual leisure facilities open so that the community can experience the new leisure and evening offering in the town centre.

Contingency plans

Contingency planning forms part of the risk register and are reviewed by BRP and their design team (and reviewed by the BRP Board).

For example, **Error! Reference source not found.** indicates that BRP will continue to assess different high-level options for the site and units in the case that the food and beverage market does not recover as expected post COVID-19 pandemic. BRP have agreed to continue progress with the preferred option but have built in milestones in the programme to review this decision and the potential uses for the newly built units. Alternative options would produce smaller profit margins for BRP but would still mitigate against a worst-case scenario of empty units.

ⁱ <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/roads/strategic-economic-plan/background>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

^{iv} <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/roads/strategic-economic-plan/background>

^v <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regional-growth-fund-identity-guidelines>

^{vi} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-value-act-information-and-resources/social-value-act-information-and-resources>

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020**CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB****PART I****Item 10: Transport for the South East – Subscription Report Update*****Purpose of Report***

1. At your meeting in November 2019, you agreed to renew the annual subscription to Transport for the South East (TfSE) of £58,000 for 2019/20, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities.
2. In its role as accountable body for the Berkshire Local Transport Body, Slough BC collects contributions from BLTB members and passes the subscriptions to East Sussex County Council, the accountable body for TfSE.
3. TfSE has now submitted its proposal to become a statutory body to government, and whilst government has committed to supporting TfSE's South East transport strategy, its current position is that the time is not right for the further devolution of transport powers.
4. TfSE has welcomed the news that its transport strategy will be used by government to help decide where, when and how to invest in the South East's transport network and as this dialogue with government continues, we believe that it remains prudent for the BLTB to agree the renewal of further subscriptions on an annual basis.

Recommendation

5. You are recommended to agree to a renewed annual BLTB subscription of £58,000 for TfSE to cover the period 2020/21, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities.

Other Implications***Financial***

6. Funding of £1.225m has been secured for TfSE from the Department for Transport for 2020/21.
7. The TfSE Shadow Partnership Board has agreed in principle to a funding model for 2020/21, which retains the same level of local contribution as the previous year and will bring in a further £498,000 of funding to support the operation of Transport for the South East.
8. The TfSE Board have not yet considered the local authority contributions for 2021/22 yet – this will happen in early 2021, but officer level discussions have indicated that the amounts will remain unchanged.
9. The approach for calculating contributions has been developed in a pragmatic manner with members and reflects the sizes of different member authorities.

Type of authority	Proposed level of contribution per year	Total
County councils (East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex)	£58,000	£290,000
Unitary authorities (Brighton and Hove, Isle of Wight, Medway, Portsmouth, Southampton)	£30,000	£150,000
Other partner authorities (Berkshire Local Transport Body)	£58,000 (shared between partner organisations)	£58,000
Total		£498,000

Risk Management

10. In November 2015, the DfT published [proposals as part of its devolution agenda](#)¹ to establish sub-national transport bodies on a statutory basis. It gave [Transport for the North](#)² and [Midlands Connect](#)³ as examples.
11. The risk for the Thames Valley Berkshire area is that by not engaging with the government's policy to promote sub-national transport bodies, it will be harder to fund infrastructure proposals that are significant at the sub-national scale.
12. The risk associated with participating in these arrangements is that time, resources and energy will be devoted to the new arrangements which fail to deliver any tangible benefits.
13. At the March 2017 meeting you agreed that the BLTB should join the new arrangements, as opposed to the six individual unitary authorities, as response to these risks. The logic of the proposal is that the six unitary councils have a shared interest at the sub-national scale, and that our participation can be safely streamlined through joint participation.
14. Having agreed to join the organisation, it is appropriate to contribute to its costs.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

15. [Section 21\(1\) of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#)⁴ amended Part 5 of the Local Transport Act 2008 as follows,

“The Secretary of State may by regulations establish a sub-national transport body for any area in England outside Greater London.”

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regions-to-be-offered-legal-powers-to-transform-transport>

² <http://www.transportforthenorth.com/>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482247/midlands-engine-for-growth.pdf

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/1/section/21/enacted>

The Act goes on to describe further the regulations for a sub-national transport body should be made.

16. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of this enabling legislation to the arrangements for the proposed Transport for the South East.

Supporting Information

17. Attached at Appendix 1 of this report is the budget report that was agreed by the TfSE Shadow Board on 22 October 2020.
18. You will note that the Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed at the beginning of August 2020 that TfSE had successfully secured £1.225m of grant funding for 2020/21. This will enable TfSE to progress with the planned technical work programme at an accelerated rate. It takes the total amount of DfT investment to £2.825m over a four-year financial year period.
19. As the grant funding was not announced until August 2020 TfSE had previously been working on the assumption of a zero DfT grant allocation, although the Board had considered a number of budget scenarios up to £1m DfT grant. As the grant allocation was higher than the scenarios anticipated, it has been necessary to develop a revised budget profile as outlined in Appendix 1.

Conclusion

20. The Shadow Board for 'Transport for the South East' continues to make the case for progression towards statutory status and welcomes continued government grant funding and its commitment to support TfSE's draft Transport Strategy.

Background Papers

21. Correspondence between LEPs and briefing notes supplied by the TfSE shadow project team.

Appendix 1

Report to: **Shadow Partnership Board –Transport for the South East**

Date of meeting: **22 October 2020**

By: **Lead Officer, Transport for the South East**

Title of report: **Financial Update and Budget for 2020/21**

Purpose of report: **To update on the budget position for Transport for the South East and note the Comprehensive Spending Review submission**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Shadow Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Agree the amended budget proposal for 2020/21, which is based upon receipt of the £1.225m grant from the Department for Transport;
- (2) Note the current financial position for 2020/21 to the end of September 2020, including the forecasts for end of year spend; and
- (3) Note the submission to Treasury for consideration in the forthcoming Spending Round.

1. Overview

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Shadow Partnership Board on the revenue budget for Transport for the South East (TfSE).

1.2 The paper provides an update on the financial position for 2020/21 to the end of September 2020, including forecasts for the projected spend at the end of the financial year.

1.3 The paper also presents the submission to the Treasury for consideration as part of the forthcoming spending round.

2. 2020/21 budget

2.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed at the beginning of August 2020 that TfSE had successfully secured £1.225m of grant funding for 2020/21. This is incredibly welcome news and will enable TfSE to progress with the planned technical work programme at an accelerated rate. It takes the total amount of DfT investment to £2.825m over a four-year financial year period.

2.2 As the grant funding was not announced until August 2020 TfSE had previously been working on the assumption of a zero DfT grant allocation, although the Board had considered a number of budget scenarios up to £1m DfT grant. As the grant allocation was higher than the scenarios anticipated, it has been necessary to develop a revised budget profile (Appendix 1).

2.3 The DfT grant is conditional and the funding can only be used for activities relating to the technical programme, although the conditions do enable the recruitment of some fixed term staff to

support the delivery of the technical programme. The grant conditions are clear that the grant cannot be used for any lobbying activity.

2.4 The revised budget sets out the proposed technical programme to the end of March 2021. This includes elements of work that were already underway through previous grant allocations (i.e. completion of the Transport Strategy, the outer orbital area study and the future mobility strategy). Additional work that will be completed through the new grant allocation includes two additional area studies, the freight and logistics strategy and a number of smaller technical studies to support the delivery of the strategic investment plan. The funding for the remaining two area studies would need to come from a subsequent funding allocation for 2021/22. It is proposed that a small contingency is included in the budget to cover the need for additional technical work that arises in the next six months, as previous experience has demonstrated that the technical programme needs to evolve to consider wider factors (e.g. Covid-19 and carbon assessment work).

2.5 The grant also makes provision for the appointment of two fixed term staff to support the delivery of the technical programme. Recruitment is underway for a Strategy Manager and a Support Officer for a period of two years. These posts will be funded entirely through the DfT grant settlement.

2.6 The budget also makes provision for operational costs and communications and engagement activities, including events, website development and stakeholder management tools. A proportion of funding is allocated for additional work associated with the ongoing development of the bid for statutory status. This will be used to develop the TfSE operational model and governance structures, which will need consideration even if TfSE does not secure statutory status at this time.

3 Q2 Budget Update

3.1 Appendix 2 sets out the spend position to the end of September 2020. To date, spend has been focused on staffing costs and the technical programme.

3.2 The technical programme costs, which amount to just over £210,000, have included the final work on the transport strategy, initial work on the future mobility strategy and the Outer Orbital Area Study and the additional work on the SEELUM model (including the carbon assessment work stream).

3.3 We are currently forecasting that a total of £704,000 will be spent from the technical programme by the end of March 2021. However, it is important to note that a number of significant workstreams, including the area studies and freight strategy, will continue into 2021/22 and therefore the funding that will be carried forward is already committed to activities.

3.4 Staffing costs are forecast to be slightly higher than anticipated, which reflects the inflationary pay rise applied to all staff. The costs associated with the additional two members of staff (DfT funded) will be confirmed following the recruitment process. The amount budgeted for these staff is to cover the full two-year costs associated with the two posts and therefore the underspend from this financial year will need to be carried forward and ringfenced to cover their costs until the end of January 2023.

4 Comprehensive Spending Review 2020

4.1 The Government has announced that a three-year revenue spending review will take place later this year and will come into effect from 2021/22, although this may be subject to change due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation. The deadline for call for submissions to HMT was 24 September 2020 and TfSE submitted a bid to the Treasury, copied to ministers from the DfT and MHCLG.

4.2 DfT has also made a submission to HMT setting out their departmental priorities, including a view on future funding for STBs. TfSE has shared its proposals with officials from the DfT to ensure that the approach aligns with the Department's.

4.3 TfSE's submission to the Treasury sets out the funding that we are seeking to support our core operational costs beyond those covered by the constituent authority contributions, as well as funding to deliver and implement the technical programme. Appendix 3 provides a copy of the TfSE submission.

4.4 The document makes a strong case for investment in TfSE. It sets out how departmental funding has been used to help TfSE deliver against its technical programme, including delivering the Transport Strategy and setting out priority schemes for MRN and RIS. It also outlines how multi-year funding is crucial to support the ongoing delivery of the Strategic Investment Programme and its implementation and the value that this will add to the work of the Government.

4.5 The core element of the bid will support TfSE's operational costs, including some increased staff funding, increased levels of communication and engagement activity and back office costs. The proposal includes an assumption that local contributions will continue to fund the current staffing costs as it is anticipated that this will be a requirement for any future grant funding through the DfT. Core costs increase slightly each year to take account of inflation.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 The Shadow Partnership Board are recommended to agree the revised budget proposal which incorporates the £1.225m received as grant funding from DfT. The Board are also asked to note the financial position to the end of September 2020/21 and the end of year projections.

5.2 Members are asked to note the Comprehensive Spending Review submission.

RUPERT CLUBB

Lead Officer

Transport for the South East

Appendix 1: TfSE Budget 2020/21

INCOME	
Local Contributions*	£382,000
DfT Grant	£1,225,000
Reserves	£263,887
Carry forward	£226,399
Committed funding	£557,725
TOTAL INCOME	£2,655,011
EXPENDITURE	
Staffing	
Core Policy Team	£530,000
Additional team resource	£240,000
Technical Programme	
Transport Strategy	£53,000
Covid-19 Scenarios	£30,000
SEELUM	£20,000
Carbon Assessment	£50,000
Area Studies - Tranche 1 (1 study)	£350,000
Area Studies - Tranche 2 (2 studies)	£700,000
Future Mobility Strategy	£110,000
Freight scoping work	£23,175
Freight and Logistics Strategy	£125,000
Data & Modelling development	£15,000
SIP Brief	£15,000
Project view	£12,000
Other strategy costs	£40,000
Sub national Transport Body Proposal	£40,000
Operational Expenses	£15,000
Communications/ Engagement	
Events	£20,000
Advertising and publicity	£10,000
Website	£5,000
Stakeholder Database	£6,000
Media Subscriptions	£2,500
Reserves	£243,336
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£2,655,011

**Please note: Two LAs paid in previous year hence local contribution total above differs from summary table in point 7 of report*

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB

Item 11: Updated Assurance Framework for Berkshire Local Transport Body

Purpose of Report

1. At a meeting of the BLTB in November 2017, the BLTB's Assurance Framework was ratified.
2. In January 2019, HMG published a significantly updated National Assurance Framework (NAF) for LEPs, necessitating a review of the LEP's Assurance Framework. This was completed in March 2019 and the outcome – **AF 4.0** – in turn necessitated a review of the BLTB's Assurance Framework - this resulting update was ratified at the [July 2019 BLTB](#) meeting (item 11).

Recommendation

3. You are now recommended to approve updates to the BLTB Assurance Framework (Fourth Revise) as highlighted in Appendix 1.

Other Implications

Financial

4. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Risk Management

5. LEPs are responsible for a significant amount of public funding to drive inclusive growth, increase prosperity and improve productivity. As such, in addition to adhering to their Articles of Association, LEPs must have in place an Assurance Framework that complies with the NAF, published in January 2019. This is AF 4.0 and was agreed in July 2019.
6. The BLTB Assurance Framework responds to AF 4.0 and reinforces the principles and procedures that should be followed in conducting BLTB business. In this regard it serves a different purpose to the Founding Document and is an appropriate response to managing the risks inherent in the BLTB role of LEP Programme Group.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

7. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of the proposed Assurance Framework.

Supporting Information

8. The proposed updated Assurance Framework is attached.

BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY - ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK (FOURTH REVISE)

November 2020

Contact: Bill Hicks, bill@thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk, 07770 266231

STATUS

This Assurance Framework has been developed from the Berkshire Local Transport Body Founding Document, which was adopted by Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Berkshire Leaders' Group in November 2013.

PREAMBLE

The Local Enterprise Partnership(LEP), the six local transport authorities¹, the Department for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, Highways England, Heathrow Airport Limited, and some train and bus operating companies have developed a forum for discussion and consultation on matters of mutual interest relating to strategic transport issues in Thames Valley Berkshire. We call this body the "Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum" (BSTF). It operates at two levels: one with elected members² and business representatives³; the other with senior transport officers. The Berkshire Chief Executives' Group has recognised the importance of these arrangements by nominating a representative⁴ to chair the officers' meeting and liaise with the LEP and the members.

These arrangements were adapted in 2013 to conform to the guidance of establishing Local Transport Bodies. They were reviewed on the publication of the Local Enterprise Partnership National Assurance Framework by MHCLG in January 2019.

Our Local Transport Body is known as Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB). The BSTF will continue to meet and only those parts of its business that relate to the operation of the BLTB will be subject to this Assurance Framework.

On 26 March 2019, the LEP Forum agreed to continue with the BLTB, as the competent body to prioritise, invest in and oversee transport capital schemes on its behalf. In practice, the LEP will accept any BLTB recommendations or refer them back but will not substitute its own recommendations. AF 4.0 designates the BLTB as a LEP Programme Group. The BLTB is also responsible for authorising revenue spend, where appropriate, using the same approach as for capital schemes.

¹ Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Councils

² 6 councillors, usually the relevant Lead/Cabinet/Executive Member for Strategic Transport

³ 6 business leaders nominated by the LEP

⁴ Currently the Chief Executive at Slough Borough Council

PART ONE: PURPOSE, STRUCTURE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

1. Name: the Local Transport Body for Thames Valley Berkshire will be known as “Berkshire Local Transport Body” (BLTB).
2. Status: BLTB is constituted as a Joint Committee of Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Councils.
3. Geography: the BLTB will comprise the Local Enterprise Partnership area of Thames Valley Berkshire, which covers the six-council area.
4. Membership and Voting: there will be 12 members of the BLTB, nominated as follows: six business representatives nominated by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP (6); one Councillor nominated each by Bracknell Forest; Reading; Slough; West Berkshire; Windsor and Maidenhead; and Wokingham Councils (6, each with a named substitute who will be the only permitted deputy).

There shall be appointed a Chair from among the local authority members and a Deputy Chair from among the LEP members. The Deputy Chair will be a Non-Executive Director of the LEP Board.

Each member shall have one vote. In the event of an equality of votes on any matter, a second and casting vote shall be given to the Chair of the meeting. This vote shall not be cast for the view supported by a minority of local authority votes. Only those present at the meeting can vote.

If there is a majority (in the 12) for a scheme to proceed but not a majority amongst the six local authority members for the same, there will be a review of the circumstances leading to such an outcome. Once concluded, and if there is no change to the likely outcome of a further vote, the scheme will be referred to the LEP Forum and to Berkshire Leaders’ Group for further consideration before being brought back to the LTB.

The membership and functioning of the LTB will be kept under review by the LEP Forum and by the Berkshire Leaders’ Group, and amendments and alterations made on an ad hoc basis when the need arises. This Assurance Framework was signed off by the BLTB, with DfT present, on 18 July 2019.

5. Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality: a role description at [Appendix 1](#) makes clear that when conducting the business of the BLTB all members are expected to serve the interests of the Thames Valley Berkshire area and adhere to a Code of Conduct.

As BLTB is a Joint Committee of the local authorities, the expectations for the declaration and management of personal, financial and other interests, and on the treatment of any gifts or hospitality relating to BLTB business will be set by local authority requirements. These expectations will apply equally to local authority and LEP members and be administered by Slough Borough Council, acting as the Accountable Body for the BLTB.

BLTB recognises that on occasion there may be a conflict between the interests of a member’s nominating authority (or in the case of a business member nominated by the LEP, a member’s own interests) and the overall interests of the Thames Valley Berkshire area. It will be a principle of the BLTB that the interests of the Thames Valley Berkshire area will take precedence.

6. Status and Role of BLTB Accountable Body: Slough Borough Council will be the Accountable Body for the BLTB. It will:
- ensure that the decisions and activities of the BLTB conform with legal requirements regarding equalities, environmental, EU issues and other matters
 - ensure that an official record of BLTB proceedings is maintained
 - ensure that the BLTB Assurance Framework is being adhered to
 - ensure that the BLTB proceedings and documents are accurately recorded and kept, and that all BLTB documents are accessible to the press and public
 - be legally responsible for the decisions of the BLTB, and will receive any legal proceedings involving the BLTB as respondent.
7. Status and Role of the LEP Accountable Body: the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is the Accountable Body for the LEP. Its role is to oversee the ongoing proper administration of the LEP's financial affairs, in accordance with AF 4.0. This includes:
- holding Local Growth Funds (LGF) or other devolved major scheme funding
 - making payments to delivery bodies at the request of the LEP
 - accounting for LGF or other devolved major scheme funding so that it is separately identifiable from the Accountable Body's own funds
 - providing financial statements to the LEP and the BLTB as required
 - through the Section 151 Officer, ensuring that LGF or other devolved major scheme funds are used appropriately, as detailed above. This includes jointly signing-off quarterly LGF dashboards with the LEP Board, for submission to the Cities & Local Growth Unit.
8. Strategic Objectives and Purpose: The BLTB is a publicly accountable Joint Committee of the six Berkshire Authorities. It straddles the strategic, technical and operational, and thus makes a significant contribution to the formation and implementation of the Strategic Economic Plan and its associated Growth Deal/s and successor documents. It will have the following objectives:

Managing Local Growth Funds:

- To manage an investment programme of LGF for developing and improving the transport infrastructure within the Thames Valley Berkshire area
- To establish and keep under review a prioritised list of local major transport schemes within the available budget

- To assess and evaluate the relative merit of competing schemes, and to subject all proposals to independent scrutiny
- To ensure value for money is achieved from individual schemes and the overall investment programme, and to review the impact of completed schemes
- To monitor the progress of scheme delivery, outputs and spend
- To oversee the management of the devolved budget and programme such that it responds to changing circumstances
- To make decisions on individual scheme approvals

Responding to Government and Other Consultations

- To consider and co-ordinate joint responses to government and other consultations about transport matters affecting the Thames Valley Berkshire area

Sub National Transport Body – Transport for the South East

- To arrange for representatives to attend and contribute to the work of Transport for the South East (TfSE)

9. Support and Administration Arrangements: The Accountable Body will supply appropriate support and administration to fulfil the responsibilities on meeting management, legal and procedural advice.

The six councils will support the work of the BLTB with professional advice on transport matters. This advice will include the identification and promotion of individual schemes for support from the BLTB, with appropriate officer liaison via the BSTF Officers' group and advice and support to councillors and LEP nominees who are members of the BLTB. This contribution will be in the form of the officer time of relevant senior officers (or retained consultants), as is commensurate with the resources available to each of the councils.

The BSTF Officers' group will continue to be the primary forum for discussing, sharing, evaluating and preparing formal business for the BLTB. The Berkshire Chief Executives' Group has identified this as an important group, and has nominated a representative⁵ to chair the group, which is also actively supported by the LEP, DfT, Network Rail, Highways England, Heathrow Airport Limited and transport operators.

10. Working Arrangements and Meeting Frequency, Transparency and Local Engagement: The BLTB has a schedule of at least three meetings a year. The Accountable Body for the BLTB will set the meeting dates at least a year ahead according to the planning cycle of the municipal year, and the meetings will be included in the formal calendar of meetings for that council. The arrangements for advertisement of meetings, the publication and circulation of papers, response to FOI and EIR⁶

⁵ Currently the Chief Executive at Slough Borough Council

⁶ Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations

requests, dealing with complaints and whistleblowing arrangements, compliance with the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, and other similar codes of practice will be a matter for the Accountable Body, and will conform to the operating practices of the Accountable Body.

BLTB, through its Accountable Body, and with the assistance of the LEP and the constituent councils as proposers of individual schemes, will publish meeting papers and minutes in accordance with AF 4.0, along with scheme business cases and evaluation reports, funding decision letters with funding levels and conditions indicated, and regular programme updates on delivery and spend against budget.

For meetings of the BLTB, the publication of papers will allow five clear working days between the day of the publication of the papers and the day of the meeting. In order to promote openness and transparency, the LEP encourages scheme promoters to conduct appropriate stakeholder consultation in their own area, and publicise the details of the schemes they are promoting as soon as they are available. These details include scheme summaries as well as detailed appraisals, impact statements and other reports which may or may not be part of the full business case submission.

The meetings of the BLTB will be followed immediately by meetings of the Berkshire Strategic Transport Members' Forum. There will be regular meetings of officers, and the papers, proposals, and other relevant documents for the BLTB will be circulated to this group for comment and advice. This group includes colleagues from DfT, Network Rail, Highways England and other transport interests.

PART TWO: PRIORITISATION

11. Development and Maintenance of Programme of Schemes: The BLTB will establish and maintain a Programme of Capital Transport Schemes. The "Unapproved" or "Long List" of schemes will be generated by a periodic invitation (known as a call for schemes) to the members of the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum to submit proposals.
12. Call for Schemes: The BLTB will issue a call for capital schemes, including eligibility criteria
 - a minimum threshold value in order to encourage major schemes
 - a minimum level of detail in order to be able to establish the nature, purpose and content of the scheme
 - a minimum matching funding percentage in order to ensure local commitment to the scheme

Schemes which do not meet the eligibility criteria may be refused entry to the programme, or referred back to the promoter for further development.

13. The eligible schemes will then be subject to a simple (3-level High-Medium-Low) assessment against each of the six criteria described below. The scoring and preliminary evaluation will be moderated by the BSTF Officers' Group, and this will form a recommended list for consideration by the BLTB and the LEP as a basis for agreeing a prioritised long-list of unapproved schemes.

14. BLTB has adopted a methodology for the prioritisation of schemes using the following criteria (or suitable proxies):

The six factors with weightings are:

Factor	Weighting
Contribute to the implementation of the Thames Valley Berkshire SEP*	10%
Deliverability	20%
Long-term, sustainable economic growth	40%
Tangible benefit to the sub-region	10%
Investing in natural capital	15%
Maximising social value	5%
Total	100%

*The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) will be augmented with the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and a Recovery and Renewal Plan (RRP) in due course

This methodology, including the relative weightings and detailed scoring criteria, will be reviewed and refreshed as appropriate prior to each new call for schemes. The result of each new call for schemes will be a prioritised long list of unapproved schemes.

PART THREE: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT DECISIONS

15. Scheme Assessment and Approval: The BLTB will operate a stepped system of scheme assessment and approval:

Step 1: Unapproved or Long List of schemes. This will be the prioritised list of schemes which have met the eligibility criteria according to the evaluation process set out at paragraphs 11-14 above.

Step 2: Pre-Programme Entry Stage. Schemes seeking programme entry status will need to meet three conditions:

- a) to have the highest priority in the long list of pipeline schemes
- b) there being sufficient available uncommitted funds in the relevant funding programme
- c) to have submitted a Full Business Case development programme to the satisfaction of the LEP's Independent Assessor

The Full Business Case development programme will include, amongst other things:

- a) a timetable for producing an Appraisal Specification and Option Assessment Reports as well as the five cases of the Full Business Case
- b) a statement of what modelling tools are available
- c) a commitment to delivering sufficient design work and operational planning prior to FBC submission

Step 3: Programme Entry Stage. Schemes will be moved from the unapproved (or long-list) and given Programme Entry Status in the priority order established at Step 1 as funds become available. Programme Entry Status signifies that funds are available and that the scheme promoter should develop a [Full Business Case](#) in line with current DfT guidance.

Step 4: When completed, the Full Business Case together with a VfM Statement and an independent assessment report and any contributions from the public will be reported to the BLTB. Where a scheme can demonstrate high value for money and receive a positive assessment, and have this validated by the independent assessor, a report will be made to BLTB recommending approval.

Step 5: After considering the reports supplied at Step 3, BLTB may:

- a) give Conditional Financial Approval (with the conditions and the delegated authority for releasing them being made explicit), or
- b) give Full Financial Approval, or
- c) refer a scheme back for further development and retain its place in the Programme

In addition, after considering routine progress reports BLTB may delete the scheme from the Programme.

Step 6: Approved schemes will be subject to formal agreement by way of a capital grant letter issued by the LEP. This will set out the roles, responsibilities, reporting and auditing arrangements between the LEP and the organisation promoting the scheme.

16. TVB LEP has appointed consultants to perform the role of independent assessor. The draft report of the independent assessor will first be made available to the applicant, and an opportunity will be provided for the promoter to make a response to the assessment. The independent assessor's report and any response from the promoter will be reported in full to the LTB, along with the financial approval report, and through the publication of LTB meeting papers, to the wider public.

17. External View on Business Case: At Step 3, all promoters seeking full financial approval for a scheme will arrange for their full business cases to be published at least five clear working days in advance of the relevant meeting of the BLTB. This is the minimum publication requirement that must be met by the scheme promoter. The LEP encourages scheme promoters to conduct appropriate stakeholder consultation in their own area, and publicise the details of the schemes they are promoting as soon as they are available. These details include scheme summaries as well as detailed appraisals, impact statements and other reports which may or may not be part of the full business case submission. Any comments from interested parties or the public should, where possible, be made to the LEP in time to be included in the papers for the BLTB.
18. Release of Funding, Cost Control and Approval Conditions: As outlined above, all schemes that receive BLTB approval will be subject to formal agreement about roles, responsibilities, reporting and auditing between the LEP and the scheme promoter. This agreement, the capital grant letter, will cover timing and triggers for payments, any conditions about contributions from other funders, the consequences of scheme delay or failure to meet conditions, and formal audit and clawback provisions.
19. Evaluation: Evaluation post implementation. The scheme promoter will publish one- and five- year impact reports post scheme opening. These reports will be reviewed by the independent assessor and reported to the BLTB.
20. This process is summarised at Appendix 2, *How we work*.

Appendix 1

Role Description for private sector members of the Berkshire Local Transport Body

Role description

Profile

We are looking for business representatives from the private sector who have an interest in the transport infrastructure and its impacts in the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP area. We want you to present your views as users of the transport infrastructure, both on behalf of the movement of goods and supplies, and the movement of staff and customers. There is no requirement to have specialist knowledge of the transport industry.

This role will be as a **volunteer** to represent the views and interests of businesses in Thames Valley Berkshire. You will have the opportunity to work with the Berkshire Strategic Transport Officers' Forum to support and encourage appropriate levels of consultation with the business community and others. In order to maintain the balance of the BSTF it is an essential requirement that sector representatives must live or work in Berkshire. The successful candidate will have experience/understanding of the issues facing Thames Valley Berkshire businesses in relation to transport infrastructure.

Role Description

- To actively contribute to the strategic direction and purpose of the LEP, and help create an environment in which the local economy can grow to benefit all
- Be prepared to take the lead and provide strategic direction in areas in which they have skills, expertise and experience
- Work collaboratively and build strong partnerships between the public sector and business community
- Engage the wider business sector to enable true representation at the LEP
- Able to deal with media attention and to represent the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

Terms of appointment

The appointment will be for a minimum of three years with the option of serving a further three-year term. The maximum, estimated commitment equates to approximately two days each quarter, including BSTF meetings every four months. This time commitment may increase depending on the leadership role/s that a volunteer adopts, e.g. representing the BSTF at meetings of TfSE.

This is a voluntary role and attracts no remuneration; the LEP does not pay expenses or reimburse receipted travel expenditure: <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/expenses-policy.htm>

Accountability

As a custodian of public funds, the LEP's accountability responsibilities are significant and can be viewed here: <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/accountability>. All involved in the LEP – as volunteers or staff – must therefore comply with the Seven (Nolan) Principles of Public Life, which are the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders. You will be expected to sign and comply with a Code of Conduct and complete a Register of Interests, which will be published on the LEP's web site as well as that of the BSTF Accountable Body, Slough Borough Council.

Benefits of the role

We believe that there are benefits to your involvement with Thames Valley Berkshire LEP:

- Influence local economic policy
- Contribute to developing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) for our area – ensuring that (your) sector priorities are recognised [According to HMG, LIS will be *“long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the national Industrial Strategy. They should focus on clearly defined objectives for the future of local economies; and be clear on how cities, towns and rural areas will maximise their contribution to growth in UK productivity. They will help to inform local choices, prioritise local action and, where appropriate, inform investment decisions at the national level”*]
- Personal & professional profile and CPD
- Expand business and other stakeholder(s) network
- Help to make Berkshire a better place to live and do business
- Help to secure public investment into Berkshire - influence the most appropriate use of that funding; into business priorities.

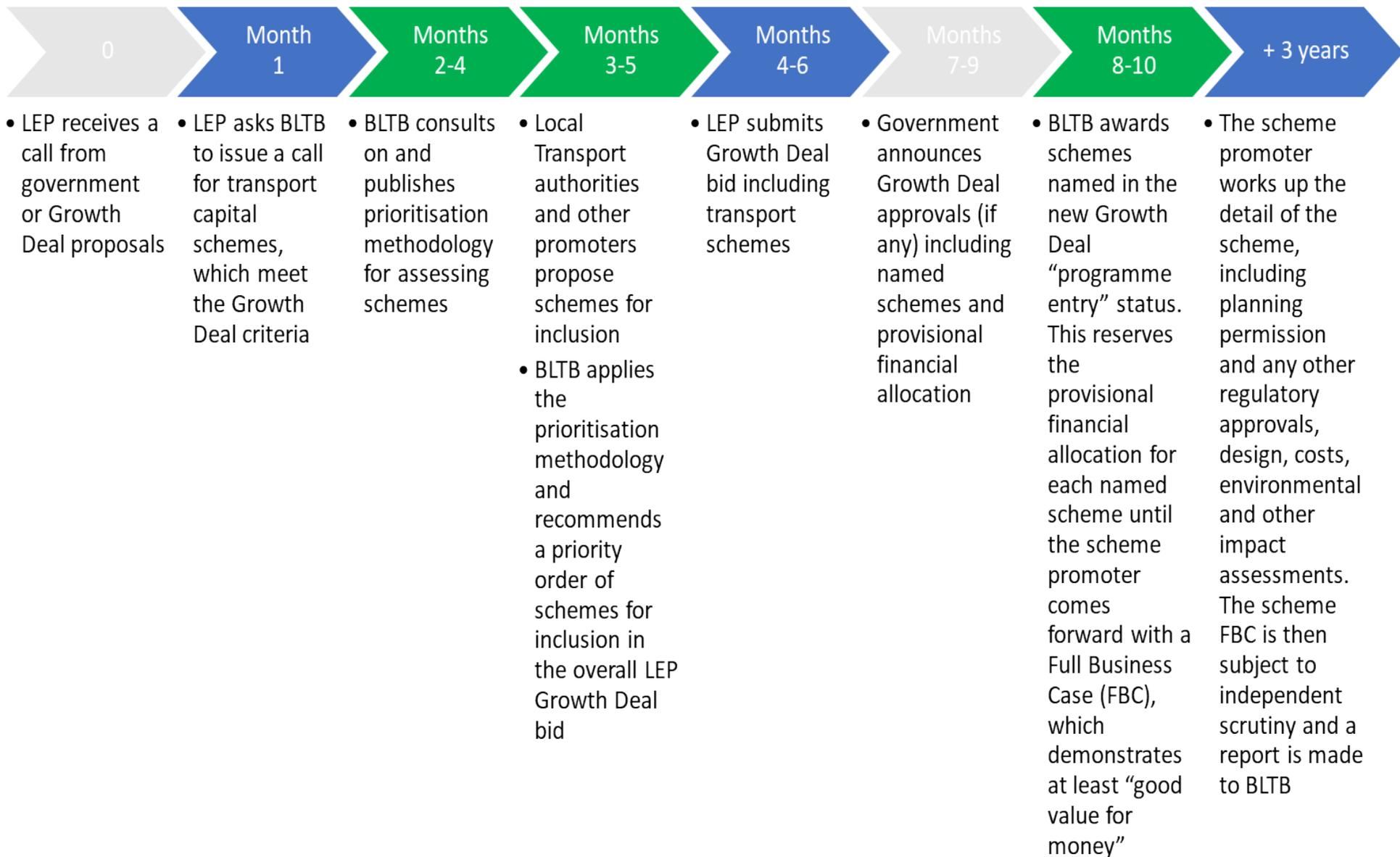
Appendix 2

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) and the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) – investing in local transport schemes

This briefing note is intended to set out the way TVB LEP works with BLTB to invest Local Growth Funds in transport schemes.

1. TVB LEP is a business-led organisation responsible for determining the key funding priorities to which Local Growth Funds (LGF) and other public resources are directed in order to implement a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and meet its commitments in the TVB Growth Deals. As a company limited by guarantee (registered at Companies House No. 07885051) it operates according to its Articles of Association, which comply with the Companies Act 2006. As a publicly-funded body it behaves in accordance with an Assurance Framework, which determines the practices and standards necessary to provide assurance to government and local partners that decisions over (all government) funding are proper, transparent and deliver value for money. [**LEP AF 4.0 March 2019**]
2. BLTB consists of six elected members (usually the lead member for transport or related portfolio), and six private sector representatives recruited and appointed by the LEP. [**LEP AF 4.0, 4.23**]. It is a Joint Committee of the six unitary authorities in Berkshire and its constitution is set out in its [Founding document](#).
3. TVB LEP recognises BLTB as “the competent body to prioritise, invest in and oversee transport capital schemes on its behalf. In practice the LEP will accept any BLTB recommendations or refer them back but will not substitute its own recommendations.” [**LEP AF 4.0, 5.9**]
4. The process established by government for making Growth Deals is to invite LEPs to submit competitive proposals, and after due consideration to make awards based on all or part of a LEP bid. To date TVB LEP has agreed three Growth Deals. Each of these has included, among other things, the award of capital funds for individual transport schemes that were prioritised in the TVB LEP bid and named in the Growth Deal settlement.
5. TVB LEP works with its partners to identify and prioritise suitable schemes. It is a lobbying organisation, and, via Growth Deals, a joint-funder of selected schemes promoted by (usually, but not always) a local transport authority. [**BLTB Founding Document (FD) 11-13**]
6. BLTB requires promoters to develop each scheme in accordance with current WebTAG guidance published by DfT. In order to receive financial approval from BLTB, the Full Business Case must be subject to independent assessment and a positive recommendation about value for money. [**BLTB FD 14-16**]
7. The scheme promoter is responsible for all aspects of the design, risk management, insurance, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including their responsibilities as highway and planning authorities, any other statutory duties, and any financial or other liabilities arising from the scheme. [**BLTB FD 18**]

8. The time taken between an initial government call for bids and the final announcement of a new Growth Deal can be in excess of a year. TVB LEP (together with BLTB for transport schemes) must go through a number of steps to respond to a government call for bids. Similarly, a transport scheme promoter also must go through several steps:



BLTB Forward Plan 2020-2022

Meeting	Deadline for final reports:	Agenda published	Agenda items
11 March 2021	18 February	3 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-year-on Impact report for 2.10 Slough: A322 Improvements • One-year-on Impact report for 2.11 and 2.12 Reading: Phase 1 & 2 South Reading MRT • One-year-on Impact report for 2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron roundabout • Progress reports • Forward Plan
15 July 2021	24 June	7 July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Forward Plan
11 November 2021	21 October	3 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Forward Plan • Transport for the South East – Annual Subscription Report Update
10 March 2022	19 February	2 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Forward Plan

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