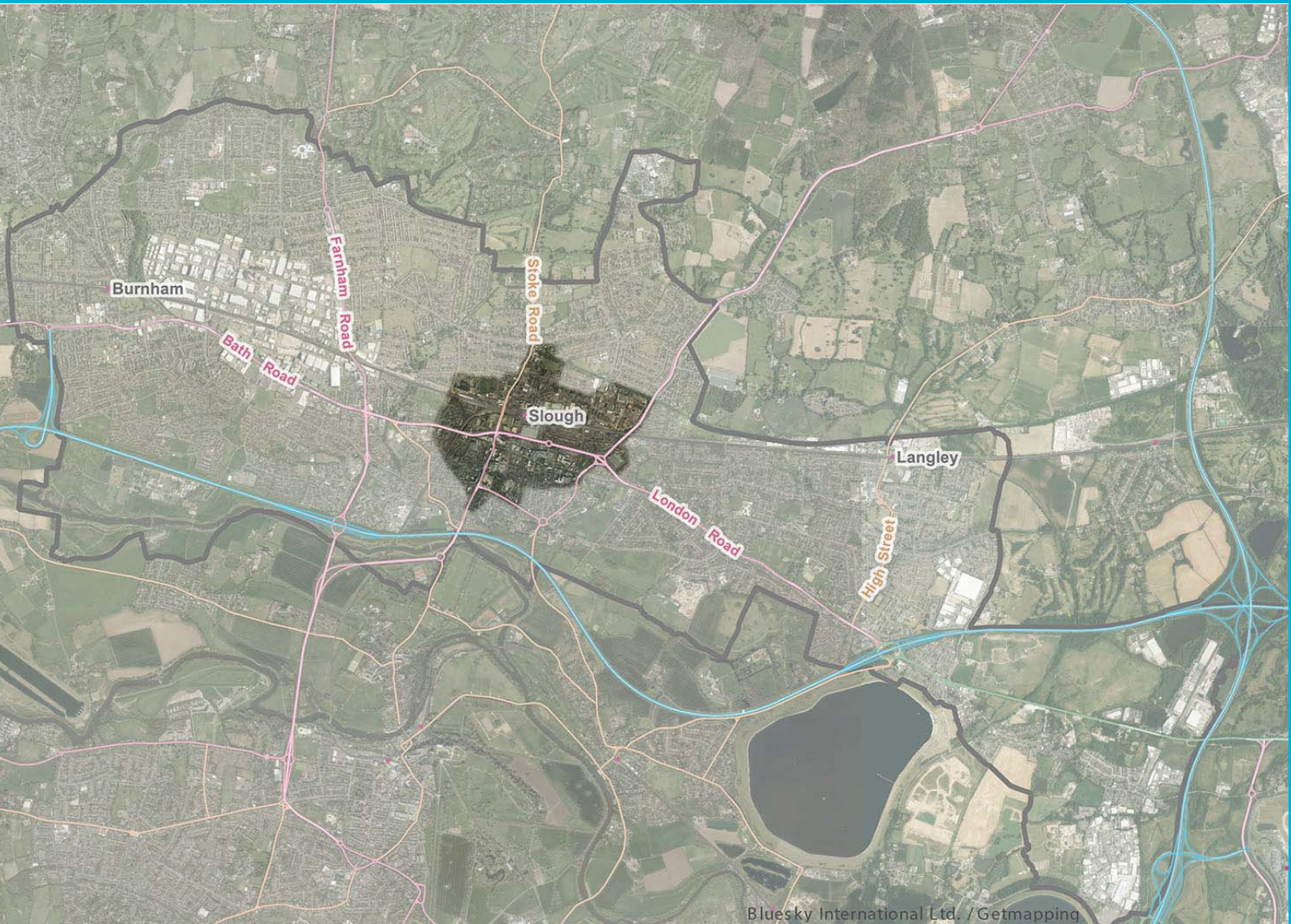


Slough Local Plan 2016-2033  
Centre of Slough  
Interim Planning Framework

July 2019



Bluesky International Ltd. / Getmapping



# Centre of Slough Interim Planning Framework

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Published July 2019

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## Summary

There is huge potential for the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of the Centre of Slough.

The town centre is currently failing as a shopping centre and only has a limited leisure offer. It still suffers from a poor image and has problems with congestion and other environment issues.

At the same time there is a need to accommodate a large amount of residential and employment growth as part of the Local Plan strategy.

The purpose of this Interim Planning Framework is to start the process of producing a Master Plan for the Centre of Slough which can help to resolve all of these issues by promoting sustainable growth and investment in the area. The Framework covers an area that stretches beyond the current retail and commercial core of the town centre.

It sets out current thinking about how sites could be used in the future and how they could be linked together in a way that ensures that we get the maximum benefit from the comprehensive regeneration of the centre of the town.

In order to do this it promotes an “activity” led strategy which seeks to maximise the opportunities for everyone to use the centre for a range of cultural, social, leisure and employment activities which are unique to Slough.

It explains that plans for three of the main elements are already in place. The centre will become a major transport hub; it has the potential to be a thriving business area and can accommodate a large amount of new housing. It also recognises the aspiration to create a new cultural centre in Slough.

All of these will generate the footfall and spending power that can be captured by a regenerated and revitalised shopping, leisure and cultural centre.

The site owner’s proposals for the redevelopment of the existing shopping centres have still not been firmed up. The Framework proposes that it should happen in a way which “rediscovers the High Street” and makes it the focal point.

As part of this it is proposed to create a new pedestrian street which links the High Street to the station via Brunel Way. This will help to break down the barrier that is currently formed by the high volume of traffic on the A4 Wellington Street and start to knit the centre back together.

It recognises that there is an important role for some “meanwhile” uses in the centre in order to maintain its vitality and viability. The aim is for these to be incorporated as permanent facilities which enterprises can use.

The Framework is not over prescriptive as to what will happen to individual sites recognising that more detailed masterplanning work is required. It does, however, set out the broad principles for how the centre should look in terms of building heights, street patterns, key linkages and design quality. It also identifies where redevelopment should and should not take place.

The Interim Framework does not deal with some of the big issues facing the centre of Slough such as congestion, parking, air quality, affordable housing, sustainability and viability. These will be addressed in the emerging detailed Masterplan and other subsequent planning and transport work.

The Framework aims to direct development to key areas and sites and ensure new development is coordinated to ensure it ties in with transport objectives and contributes to an improved image of the town through good quality design and placemaking. Whilst the strategy supports growth and redevelopment there is no intention of all parts of the centre of Slough being redeveloped nor having high density schemes or tall buildings. Some areas will remain as they are.

The Framework does not replace any of the existing policies in the Local Plan, Core Strategy or Site Allocations DPD.

It does, however, provide a land use framework that future work can be hung upon.

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## Contents

1	Introduction .....	(Plan A & B).....	7
	1.1 Background.....		7
	1.2 Interim Planning Framework.....		7
2	Transport Hub .....		9
3	Business Quarter.....	(Plan C).....	11
4	Central Area .....		12
	4.1 Introduction.....		12
	4.2 Proposals for the Short Term.....		13
	4.3 Redevelopment of the Central Area.....		15
5	Wider Central Area.....		17
	5.1 Introduction.....		17
	5.2 Tesco Site, Brunel Way.....		17
	5.3 Thames Valley University Site (TVU).....		18
6	Cultural Centre .....		19
7	Housing in and around the town centre.....		20
	7.1 Introduction.....		20
	7.2 Location of Development Sites and Areas .....	(Plan D).....	21
	7.3 Stable Residential Areas.....		21
	7.4 Areas of Change - Residential Development Sites and Areas.....		21
	7.5 Areas not Identified for redevelopment.....		22
8	Framework Delivery Principles.....		23
	8.1 Managing Development .....		23
	Coordinating Development.....		23
	8.2 Transport and Connectivity.....		24
	Mass Rapid Transit (MRT).....	(Plan E).....	24
	Park and Ride.....		25
	Walking and Cycling .....		25
	Wider Network; Connecting the Suburbs to Town Centre.....	(Plan F).....	25
	8.3 Urban Design and Placemaking.....		25
	Network of Streets/Street Blocks .....		25
	Building Heights .....	(Plan G).....	26
	Public Space and Public Realm .....		27
	Heritage.....		28
	Plans: A to G (Noted above where first referred to in text).....		30

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# 1 Introduction

***The centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities.<sup>1</sup>***

*“Present a comprehensive vision and master-planning of opportunities, and to encourage and influence high quality design and development throughout the town centre.”<sup>2</sup>*

*We will involve residents in shaping “meanwhile” improvements and in the longer-term redevelopment plans for the town centre.<sup>3</sup>*

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Council is promoting “major comprehensive redevelopment within the Centre of Slough” as part of its wider growth agenda. This, together with support for the expansion of Heathrow and the creation of a new “garden suburb” north of Slough, is a key element of the Local Plan’s Preferred Spatial Strategy.
- 1.1.2 There is a need for more housing and employment in Slough, as well as improved shopping, leisure and cultural facilities. The Centre of Slough, as identified in Plan A, is well placed to provide for much of this. It already has a lot of facilities but there are also a large number of sites that are potentially available for redevelopment as shown in Plan B. The centre has excellent transport links and is capable of absorbing some large scale high density development.
- 1.1.3 It is important to acknowledge that there is considerable uncertainty about the future of town centres and Slough’s centre in particular.
- 1.1.4 It is currently failing as a shopping centre and only has a limited leisure offer but there are signs of it regaining its position as a major office centre. It still suffers from a poor image, a legacy of some outdated buildings and peak time traffic congestion.
- 1.1.5 In order to deal with this the Council’s Five Year Plan requires us to produce a comprehensive vision and master plan which will encourage high quality design and development throughout the centre.
- 1.1.6 This will be achieved through the production of a “Centre of Slough Master Plan” which will bring together all of the Council’s strategies to promote the sustainable regeneration of the centre in a way which works for everyone.
- 1.1.7 The Master Plan will have to be fully tested to ensure that it is deliverable and capable of being implemented. It could then be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

## 1.2 Interim Planning Framework

- 1.2.1 This Interim Planning Framework is the first step in producing a Centre of Slough Framework Master Plan. It sets out current thinking about how sites could be used in the future and how they could be linked together in a way that ensures that we get the maximum benefit from the comprehensive regeneration of the centre of the town.
- 1.2.2 It takes as its starting point the work that we carried out as part of the Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan. This established a “Vision for Slough” and series of Planning Objectives, many of which are directly relevant to the Centre of Slough.

<sup>1</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)

<sup>2</sup> Five Year Plan (2019-2024) Document (2019, P 22)

<sup>3</sup> Council Pledge 2019-2020

- 1.2.3 It also takes account of the Council's 5 Year Plan and the Manifesto pledges that have been adopted as Council policy (Relevant extracts are set out in the grey boxes below).
- 1.2.4 The Framework is based upon an "activity" and culture led strategy which seeks to maximise the opportunities for everyone to use the centre for a wide range of appropriate purposes which provide the necessary footfall to support new investment in retail, leisure and cultural facilities.
- 1.2.5 It is therefore a "concept" led strategy which seeks to promote the centre's potential as location for major employment and housing growth and destination for leisure and cultural activities, all underpinned by a sustainable transport network and world-class transport hub.
- 1.2.6 The key is to try to knit everything together in a way which maximises the number of people who have an affinity with the centre and want to work, rest, play or stay there.

## 2 Transport Hub

***As a result of Crossrail, the Western rail link to, and expansion at, Heathrow airport, Slough will be one of the best connected places. Accessibility within the town will have been improved through the development of convenient pedestrian, cycle, and bus networks.<sup>4</sup>***

***We will complete construction of phase 2 of the Mass Rapid Transit Bus scheme (MRT), connecting the town centre to Heathrow.***

***We will significantly improve the public forecourt to the north side of Slough station and deliver improved paths and walking routes around the town centre.***

***We will deliver a new public transport vision for Slough including a public transport corridor for the town centre and a new pedestrian bridge link to connect communities north of the railway with the High Street.<sup>5</sup>***

- 2.1.1 One of the key elements to delivering the “Activity led” strategy is to create a world class transport Hub (See Plan C). Each year, Slough station is the entrance/exit point for 7.5 million rail journeys. A further 750,000 people stand at platform 1 looking at Slough whilst waiting to catch the train to Windsor. The bus station and adjoining stops are used for many journeys.
- 2.1.2 The opening of the Queen Elizabeth Line and Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLTH) plus the other public transport schemes such as the development of the Slough Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme will increase the number of people using the transport hub.
- 2.1.3 It is important that we make the most of all of this activity and encourage more people to use the centre on their way to or from the transport facilities.
- 2.1.4 The railway/bus station provides many people with their first impressions of Slough centre. Both are attractive/distinctive buildings with the railway station being one of the few Listed Buildings in the centre.
- 2.1.5 There have been significant improvements to the environment around these facilities but more needs to be done to enhance the visitor experience and way finding.
- 2.1.6 Improvements to the northern forecourt of the railway station are proposed which would remove the car parking in this area and create environmental enhancements which can open it up as an alternative location for taxis and car/mini bus drop offs. This could then reduce pressure on Brunel Way and free up space for further rationalisation of the area south of the station. This could also help facilitate the creation of a new MRT stop outside of the station’s main frontage.
- 2.1.7 They will also improve the attractiveness of the location for businesses. It is important that we also create opportunities for people to meet eat and drink around the station.
- 2.1.8 In order to promote its use we also need to improve accessibility to the station from all directions.
- 2.1.9 A key proposal of this Framework is that a new pedestrian route is created from the station to the High Street by extending Brunel Way southwards. This will include breaking down the physical and psychological barrier that is currently created by the A4 by creating a super crossing across Wellington Street. It will also be important that the route through the bus station is

<sup>4</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P16)

<sup>5</sup> Council Pledge 2019-2020

maintained and enhanced which could potentially involve extending the canopy to Wellington Street.

2.1.10 The current Stoke Road improvement project, which we hope to have funding for from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), will include improvements to the local environment and pedestrian links.

2.1.11 Improved cycle links are required from the north and west with new routes through the Horlicks site and a new bridge over the railway line through the TVU site.

2.1.12 We have a long standing ambition to build a new bridge over the railway line to better connect the area north of the railway to the centre. If this cannot be accommodated next to the station it would have to be provided as part of any changes to the existing Tesco site.

2.1.13 It is proposed to build a new multi storey car park on the railway land to the west of William Street which will consolidate (and increase) the parking available for rail users as well as providing parking for the proposed redevelopments on the former TVU site. This will free up space in front of the station for other uses.

2.1.14 All of these physical changes, together with the Council's proposals for reducing the use of the private car will increase the use of the rail and bus stations. This will increase the amount of activity around the transport hub which can help promote the centre as a vibrant business, shopping, leisure and residential location.

**Figure 1: Slough Railway Station**



**Figure 2: Slough Bus Station**



### 3 Business Quarter

***The centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities.***

***By encouraging investment, regeneration, innovation and high standards of design we will have created distinct environments with high quality public realm that creates a sense of place.***

- D To ensure that Slough's economy creates wealth and retains its role as a competitive economic powerhouse by retaining its multinational HQs, having a diverse resilient economic base, and including start-ups and Smart technology.***
- E To create 15,000 jobs supported by a competitive local workforce who have the skills to meet businesses' changing needs.<sup>6</sup>***

- 3.1.1 One of the other key elements of the Planning Framework is to develop the centre as a location for major employment growth. The Heart of Slough strategy envisaged the area immediately south of the railway station, which also contains the new bus station, being the Central Business District where major new office development would take place. It has taken some time to happen, but the combination of the new Porter Building, the first phase of the Future Works and proposals for the former Octagon site mean that a Business Quarter is now taking shape.
- 3.1.2 This can be expanded by the development of the of the former TVU site. This is proposed for a mix of uses including new offices which could be built on the William Street frontage. With improved connectivity this could be integrated into the Business Quarter (Paln C).
- 3.1.3 These sites will between them provide around 90,000 m2 of new Grade A office space. In addition they will provide ground floor uses which can provide cafes, bars or small scale shops which can meet some of the day to day needs of the office workers. Additional supporting facilities in close proximity include the Tesco superstore, The Curve community centre, new hotels under construction and the shopping centre.
- 3.1.4 It is recognised that this anticipated growth in the business sector must be supported by the availability of cutting-edge digital infrastructure. Slough will have the benefit of the full fibre network being rolled out by CityFibre which will provide an ultrafast service.
- 3.1.5 There may be scope to expand the Business Quarter further to meet the anticipated demand for new HQ offices and other flexible workspace.
- 3.1.6 The Queensmere Shopping centre, which currently contains Dukes House, could be developed for a mix of uses including employment/workspace. This could be carried out as part of the proposals to break down the barrier which is currently created by the A4 Wellington Street and reconnect the railway station with the High Street.
- 3.1.7 The west façade of Tesco's, alongside Brunel Way and opposite the business quarter, does not look attractive. The Strategy seeks to remodel Brunel Way including the adjacent part of Tesco's to improve its appearance and introduce active frontages. In the long term the Tesco site might be comprehensively redeveloped for mixed uses including a smaller food store.
- 3.1.8 The overall conclusion is that all of the necessary elements are in place to enable the Business Quarter to flourish as a commercial centre which, in addition to bringing significant employment opportunities, will transform the appearance of the area and generate significant weekday footfall and expenditure to support the proposed new retail and leisure facilities.

<sup>6</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)



## 4 Central Area

***The centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities.***

***By encouraging investment, regeneration, innovation and high standards of design we will have created distinct environments with high quality public realm that creates a sense of place.<sup>7</sup>***

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 For the purposes of the Framework, the “Central Area” is defined as the High Street, Queensmere, and Observatory shopping centres, which together perform many of the traditional town centre functions for Slough (See Plan C).

4.1.2 In the context of a decline in the number of visitors to the Town Centre, and a significant number of shop closures, the Framework is being developed to provide guidance for the future of the Central Area to ensure that it:

- Manages a reduction in the amount of retail floorspace;
- Supports the “meanwhile” strategies and other related initiatives that are in place;
- Encourages new facilities to be provided in the most appropriate manner to benefit the local community; and,
- Supports the overall strategy of the Centre of Slough for accommodating considerable amount of development as part of the comprehensive regeneration of the centre of Slough.

4.1.3 It is clear that the overall size of the shopping centre will have to be reduced. Whilst there may be the opportunity to introduce many new uses, as part of the activity led strategy, the amount of retail floorspace needed in the centre will be less than it is at present. In deciding how we shrink the shopping centre we have two basic choices. Do we reduce the role of the High Street or the shopping precincts?

4.1.4 The preferred strategy is to keep the High Street as the primary shopping area and redevelop the southern part of the Queensmere and Observatory centres as integral parts of the new High Street. This will then allow the northern parts of the precincts, including the Wellington Street frontage, to be redeveloped for a mix of other uses including high rise residential.

4.1.5 The longer term proposals for this, including the proposal to link the High Street with the railway station by extending Brunel Way, are explained below.

**Figure 3: Central Area**



<sup>7</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)

## 4.2 Proposals for the Short Term

***The centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities.<sup>8</sup>***

*We will bring forward plans for a “meanwhile” improved food and beverage offer for the town centre while major regeneration takes place.*

*We will introduce more regular intensive cleaning of the town centre and hotspot areas.*

*We will begin work on two new hotels with ground floor branded restaurants, affordable shared ownership homes and an attractive public realm on the **former Slough Library site.**<sup>9</sup>*

- 4.2.1 The Framework sets out a short term strategy for the High Street and surrounds for the next five years or more, whilst major redevelopment and regeneration takes place. This assumes that the Tesco superstore will remain as an anchor for the centre in the short term but could be remodelled or redeveloped in the medium term as explained below.
- 4.2.2 Pedestrian counts show that around 9,000 people walked along the High Street on a peak day which shows that, despite the closure of shops, it remains a popular destination.
- 4.2.3 It is an important entrance point for many people coming to the centre and part of the circulation route around it. It helps define the character and image of the centre.
- 4.2.4 As a result we cannot afford the High Street to become run down and have to take measures to prevent this.
- 4.2.5 The Council has developed The Curve and is building two new hotels to the west of the High Street which will help to anchor this end.
- 4.2.6 The Eastern end of the High Street has adapted to provide an eclectic mix of specialist shops, takeaways and restaurants. This needs to be encouraged and promoted. It has also seen a substantial amount of new residential built above it.
- 4.2.7 The main part of the High Street was comprehensively refurbished as part of the Council’s Art@Centre scheme which was inspired by the town’s art, historic and cultural background. This introduced high-quality natural stone paving materials, bespoke granite benches, new lighting, artwork, open spaces, public plazas, and semi-mature tree planting to dramatically change the high street’s physical appearance and open it up to pedestrians.
- 4.2.8 As a result of this, the High Street retains a familiar feel with a mixture of some historic buildings and some more modern development.
- 4.2.9 It is recognised that improvements can be made but it is not proposed that any significant changes should be made to the fabric of the High Street in the short term.
- 4.2.10 The south side of the High Street contains an important part of the central area retail offer. Development of vacant plots will be encouraged where it will support the town centre. Continued trading of existing south side shops will allow the High Street to remain vibrant whilst the north side is redeveloped. Some vacant or new south side shops could provide temporary space for retailers having to vacate the shopping centres for the initial phase of redevelopment. Consequently substantial redevelopment of existing south side buildings will not be encouraged in the short term.

<sup>8</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)

<sup>9</sup> Council Pledge 2019-2020



- 4.2.11 There are a number of important initiatives which are currently taking place which will help to maintain the vitality of the central area.
- 4.2.12 One of the most important is the proposal to create a Business Improvement District (BID) which will cover the High Street plus the Queensmere and Observatory centres which has just been agreed. This will produce more than £2 million investment over the five year term of the BID paid for by the business community.
- 4.2.13 The partnership will:
- Tackle crime and antisocial behaviour;
  - Create a clean safe and welcoming environment;
  - Support and lobby for physical changes that will encourage increased customer dwell time;
  - Carry out a new audit of signage to make necessary improvements; and
  - Undertake marketing events and provide business support.
- 4.2.14 This will augment the work already being carried out by the Town Centre Management team. As a result of this the Council has recently committed to a programme of more regular intensive cleaning of the town centre. In addition a "Purple Flag" programme is being developed as the possible solution to developing an evening and night time economy. Purple Flag is the international accreditation scheme and "gold standard" for town centres in the evening and at night.
- 4.2.15 The Council is also developing a Slough cultural arts strategy. As part of this Home Slough has been awarded £1 million through the Arts Council to enable its creative people and places program to support a further three years of community driven arts and cultural activity in Slough. This can include the organisation of arts events and activities in the High Street.
- 4.2.16 In addition, the Council was successful in bidding for the Open Doors Pilot scheme funded by MHCLG which matches landlords struggling to find tenants for empty properties with community groups looking for space. The first property being offered in Slough is in the Queensmere centre but this initiative can also be applied to the High Street.
- 4.2.17 The Council is also proposing that there should be major new "Meanwhile" uses in the centre which could provide, amongst other things, a new food and beverage offer. This could install temporary buildings on a site which is awaiting longer term development or use a vacant building.
- 4.2.18 The nature and location of the proposed major "Meanwhile" food and beverage facility has not yet been determined. Wherever it is within the centre, it should help to restore confidence and draw in more activity which will benefit the High Street.
- 4.2.19 This package of short term measures should give time for the longer term comprehensive redevelopment of the Queensmere and Observatory centres, including the northern side of the High Street to be sorted out.

### 4.3 Redevelopment of the Central Area

***By encouraging investment, regeneration, innovation and high standards of design we will have created distinct environments with high quality public realm that creates a sense of place.<sup>10</sup>***

*We will help the owners of the High Street shopping centres to deliver their ambitious plans for the northern side of Slough High Street.<sup>11</sup>*

- 4.3.1 The most significant change that will take place in the central area will be the comprehensive redevelopment of the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres.
- 4.3.2 The demolition of the precincts and reduction in retail floorspace will allow new uses to be created on the sites including major new residential development, employment uses, replacement retail and new leisure uses. It will also allow the existing car parks to be reconfigured. The principles for development are set out in more detail below.
- 4.3.3 It will also provide the opportunity to refocus major retail development back onto the High Street which should become the prime frontage for the retail/leisure units within the Queensmere and Observatory centres when they are redeveloped.
- 4.3.4 The predominance of this “rediscovered” High Street will be reinforced by the proposal to reconnect it with the railway station by creating a new pedestrian street from Mackenzie Square through to Brunel Way. More details as to how this could be achieved are set out below (See Plan C).
- 4.3.5 This proposal will provide the Queensmere and Observatory sites with two prime frontages for the replacement retail. One facing south onto the High Street, the other facing onto the new extended Brunel Way. We don’t know what the nature or scale of the new retail and leisure offer will be but this gives the developer the flexibility to bring forward their proposals in due course which can be fitted into this overall approach.
- 4.3.6 These proposals could include some large stores and big leisure complex including a replacement cinema. The basic requirement will be that all buildings along the south side respect the scale of the High Street and the primary frontages and entrances are from the High Street.
- 4.3.7 The expected reduction in the overall amount of retail space within the town centre will create the opportunity for the High Street to become the busiest shopping street. It will contain a variety of shops and facilities including local shops meeting daily needs. It will also be important that it continues to provide a range of shops, including those that cater for people on low incomes.
- 4.3.8 The historic fabric of the High Street will be protected and the historic pattern of streets will be explored and incorporated in proposals wherever possible.
- 4.3.9 This will ensure that the “rediscovered” High Street remains valued by the community and attractive to visitors to Slough Central area.
- 4.3.10 Any development proposals on the south side of the High Street will need to clearly support High Street retail activity/vibrancy, protect and enhance the High Street environment and not disadvantage adjacent future redevelopment opportunities nor the proposed redevelopment of Queensmere/Observatory as explained below. They will also need to respect the character of the small scale Herschel village area alongside and to the south of Herschel St. Consequently only small scale redevelopment is expected for the area between Church St and Alpha Street north (see paragraphs 8.1.4 - 8.1.5 for details).
- 4.3.11 The successful redevelopment of Queensmere and Observatory shopping centre is so important for the regeneration of the centre that it is appropriate to ensure

<sup>10</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)

<sup>11</sup> Council Pledge 2019-2020

- that this is not compromised by incompatible development around it.
- 4.3.12 Redevelopment schemes are expected to incorporate residential development above retail/commercial units.
- 4.3.13 To the north of the High Street there will be a network of small streets or pedestrian links behind the new retail and leisure units which will provide permeability but there will not be a major shopping street or mall running parallel to the High Street as there is now through the precincts.
- 4.3.14 This will create space for major high rise residential development to take place on the rest of the Queensmere and Observatory sites which would also front onto Wellington Street. The exact scale and mix of uses does not have to be determined at this stage. When proposals come forward they will have to follow the design principles set out below which provide guidance for the height and form of development. The application of the building heights policy will facilitate the creation of a skyline that reflects the importance of this site within the Central area. At ground level there will be the opportunity to bring the pedestrian network from the High Street through to Wellington Street resolving the issues of permeability and removing the barrier of Queensmere and Observatory centres. In particular a north/south link from the High Street to the Tesco's site is needed.
- 4.3.15 One of the aims of the Framework is to transform the character of Wellington Street so that it has less of a severing effect on the town centre and becomes visually more attractive. This will involve reducing and slowing traffic and improving its appearance and encouraging more activity on the street. The degree of traffic reduction is dependent upon how the Transport Vision is implemented.
- 4.3.16 It should have active frontages and become the address street for the new residential blocks along it.
- 4.3.17 The end result should be to change it from a bypass to a boulevard with new planting and landscaping which make it attractive for pedestrians and cyclists to use. This will enable Wellington Street to be reclaimed as an important part of the Centre of Slough and, make a key contribution to the regeneration of the Central Area.
- 4.3.18 The other key proposal for the redevelopment of the Queensmere centre would be the creation of a new pedestrian street linking the High Street via Mackenzie Square and Brunel Way to the railway station. This will support the development of the transport hub and Business Quarter by breaking down the physical and visual barrier to the shopping centre.
- 4.3.19 The Council's Transport Vision proposes to reduce the amount of traffic on Wellington Street and this will provide the opportunity for there to be a "super crossing" where Brunel Way meets the A4 which will give pedestrian priority over vehicular traffic. The design of this will also begin the process of turning Wellington Street into a more attractive, greener and pedestrian friendly area.
- 4.3.20 The crossing will lead to a gateway at the northwest corner of what is now Queensmere. From here there will be the opportunity to create prime retail frontages which link through to the reinvigorated High Street.
- 4.3.21 The creation of the new street would allow the area currently occupied by Dukes House and the retail units that back onto The Curve to be developed independently for uses that could include offices above. This would enable the area east of St Ethelbert's Church to be redeveloped in a sympathetic way which also creates an attractive pedestrian route and an enlarged public space at the west end of The Curve.
- 4.3.22 Prior to the new pedestrian street being created through the Queensmere there is the opportunity to improve the attractiveness of Brunel Way with the introduction of some temporary uses along the eastern side in front of Tesco. In the medium to longer term the Tesco store could be partially redeveloped to create a new frontage along Brunel Way or completely redeveloped in a way which also achieves this.

## 5 Wider Central Area

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 There are two other key sites which form part of the wider central area and are integral to the town centre. Redevelopment of both need to be comprehensively planned. The sites are the Tesco superstore site south east of the station and the former Thames Valley University site south west of the station inclusive of Network Rail car park. The Curve is also part of the wider central area and is part of the Cultural Centre referred to below.

### 5.2 Tesco Site, Brunel Way

5.2.1 The Tesco superstore occupies a very important site within the centre of Slough and does not look very attractive when viewed from the north and west (See Plan B).

5.2.2 In the short term it is envisaged that it will remain as a superstore which helps to meet the needs of the town and continue to attract significant numbers of people into the centre. The car park also operates as a town centre facility for people doing linked trips.

5.2.3 In the future it is considered that, given its location, the site could be utilised for a variety of town centre uses which would be better integrated with and support the rest of the centre. This could positively improve the appearance of the site and provide the opportunity to create a new public realm.

5.2.4 Whilst it could be described as a “pivotal” site which could transform this part of the centre, it is not considered critical to the delivery of the framework in the short term. Indeed it is important that it remains as an anchor store whilst the future of the Queensmere/Observatory shopping centre is being resolved.

5.2.5 In the medium term there may be an option to partially remodel the western, Brunel Way side of the building which would retain most of the store but improve its appearance and provide an active frontage for Brunel Way. This would also provide more space for the MRT route proposed along Brunel Way.

5.2.6 The future access to the car park needs to be reviewed in conjunction with the Transport Vision’s proposal to downgrade the use of the A4 and to reduce traffic on Brunel Way as part of the Strategy’s key objective of enhancing Brunel Way as key link to the High Street from the Station.

5.2.7 The Tesco site, together with the Network Rail car park, is also linked to other Transport Vision proposals. Firstly the proposal to create a bridge over the railway line east of the station to improve town centre access for the area north of the railway. In particular to provide an MRT route to the redeveloped Akzo Nobel site and onwards to north east Slough, the Hospital and possible northern expansion of Slough. There are a number of MRT route options which will need to be explored through the work on the Transport Vision. This bridge link could also provide the opportunity for an additional passenger entrance into the railway station from the east.

5.2.8 If the Tesco site is comprehensively redeveloped there is the opportunity to provide a route for the MRT through the middle of it towards the High Street instead of using Brunel Way. This would form part of a visionary idea to provide a visual and direct link between the railway station and the eastern end of the shopping centre site and High Street.

5.2.9 Comprehensive redevelopment of the site also provides the opportunity for a mixed use, street based development to better integrate with and support the town centre. This can include a major food store, substantial residential development and potentially office uses on the Brunel Way frontage. Such redevelopment would also provide the opportunity to rationalise the existing station east car park and Tesco car park space to create a new town centre car park.



**5.3 Thames Valley University Site (TVU)**

- 5.3.1 Outline planning permission has previously been granted for a mix of uses on the TVU site as part of the Heart of Slough comprehensive regeneration scheme (See Plan B). This allowed up to 1,500 residential units and around 50,000m<sup>2</sup> of offices. The Heart of Slough Development Brief envisaged the site being developed with a series of high rise buildings, the tallest of which would be alongside the railway line to the north.
- 5.3.2 However the location of high buildings on the TVU site will have to take account of the potential adverse impact upon the setting of Windsor Castle as seen from the Copper Horse at the end of the Long Walk. This issue will have to be resolved through discussions with Historic England and other interested parties.
- 5.3.3 The opportunity should be taken to exploit views of Windsor Castle and the surrounding countryside that can be obtained from Slough town centre not just for residents but also for visitors. This can involve providing penthouse flats and facilities with public access in high rise buildings.
- 5.3.4 The Development Brief also made clear that the TVU site would be a mixed use quarter

which complimented the town centre and the outline planning permission restricted the scale and type of retail development that could go on the site. It will be important to create vitality in the area by having a mix of uses which could involve major office development as well as ancillary retail and leisure uses.

- 5.3.5 The Network Rail land to the north is to be incorporated into the redevelopment. The scheme will include a new car park to serve the railway station and users of the redeveloped TVU site.
- 5.3.6 In terms of infrastructure the redevelopment will need to accommodate an MRT route from Bath Road to the Station and include a stop on this service. This route could go through the middle of the site but the preference is for it to be routed within but along the southern and eastern edge of the site adjacent to Wellington St/William St.
- 5.3.7 As part of this Framework’s proposal to better connect the centre with the suburbs and reduce the use of the private car, the redevelopment must provide for a pedestrian/cycle link through the site and over the branch line railway from the town centre to Lansdowne Avenue and beyond.

**Figure 4: Wider Central Area**



## 6 Cultural Centre

*The centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities.*

*We will bring forward plans for a new arts, entertainment and cultural offer at the former **Adelphi Cinema** site, while protecting the building's heritage.<sup>12</sup>*

- 6.1.1 Building upon the work that is already being done in Slough to support the arts and creative industries, there is the opportunity to develop a Cultural Centre focused upon arts and leisure.
- 6.1.2 The Curve is the main venue for community based activities in the centre. The Council will be bringing forward plans for a new arts, entertainment and cultural offer at the former Adelphi Cinema site on the Bath Road.
- 6.1.3 The existing cinema can also be replaced with a new purpose built one as part of the regeneration of the Queensmere and there will also be the opportunity to introduce more cultural uses within the revitalised High Street.
- 6.1.4 A significant increase in cultural facilities and activities can therefore be provided which can enhance the quality and attractiveness of the centre and bring in more activity which will boost the evening economy.

Figure 5: The Curve



<sup>12</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P12)

## 7 Housing in and around the Town Centre

- A** *To meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need of 913 dwellings per annum within the Borough or as close as possible to where the needs arises within a balanced housing market.*
- C** *To support innovation, growth and regeneration and ensure the Town Centre is the focus for high density housing and major retail, leisure, office and cultural development.*
- G** *To encourage sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport, reduce the need for travel, make non car modes the best choice for short journeys and tackle traffic congestion.*
- N** *To protect maintain and enhance those elements of the built and natural environment of local or historic value.*

*By encouraging investment, regeneration, innovation and high standards of design we will have created distinct environments with high quality public realm that creates a sense of place.<sup>13</sup>*

*We will continue regenerating our town; bringing forward detailed plans for the Montem Leisure Centre site, the Canal basin and the former Thames Valley University Site.*

*We will work with partners to shape a regeneration plan for the former Horlicks factory.<sup>14</sup>*

### 7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 The other main element of the activity led strategy is to promote major housing development in and around the centre which, in addition to providing much needed accommodation, will help to support the town centre economy.
- 7.1.2 Having more people living in or near the town centre will create additional footfall for local retail and leisure businesses and help support a range of community and cultural uses or activity. In order to help to achieve this it will be necessary to carry out public realm enhancements to encourage residents to walk from edge of centre housing areas and help them feel an affinity with the town centre.
- 7.1.3 We have identified sites and areas within the Centre of Slough that could accommodate around 9,000 new homes (Areas of Change on Plan D). These are in a variety of locations which include the central area, infilling sites,

redevelopment of existing buildings and large sites on the edge of the town centre or beyond such as Horlicks, Akzo Nobel and the Canal Basin site. The sites are periodically reviewed and some may change or more be added.

- 7.1.4 There may be scope for further windfall sites to come forward but it should be noted that not all sites close to or within the centre are intended for or are suitable for redevelopment. There are some character areas and “Stable Residential” areas where redevelopment would be inappropriate.
- 7.1.5 How these different categories of sites will be treated is explained below.
- 7.1.6 It should be noted that although we have identified a large number of potential housing sites, we have not yet tested whether this scale of development can actually be delivered within a small, constrained geographical area.

<sup>13</sup> Slough Issues and Options Document (2017, P13)

<sup>14</sup> Council Pledge 2019-2020



- 7.1.7 Comprehensive development is needed to ensure good quality design, and optimise the scale of development on the site whilst respecting its surroundings. Big sites designed as one, are more likely to achieve the regeneration benefits wanted, such as image change, and accommodate a substantial number of new homes. Merging of small sites may enable larger scale and better quality development compared to piece meal site by site development.
- 7.1.8 Some small sites can be redeveloped individually if there is a comprehensive masterplan to co-ordinate design and ensure piecemeal development does not disadvantage reasonable redevelopment of the next door sites or wider infrastructure needs such as new transport links.
- 7.1.9 Because most of the sites in the centre will be developed at a high density it will be difficult to get family housing. This will be sought wherever this is practical. Where flats are provided, it is important that they are designed in a variety of forms, within distinct housing areas, in order to accommodate a range of house hold types in terms of affordability and socio-economic mix. This could include the provision of penthouses at the top of tall buildings which can exploit the views of Windsor castle and the surrounding countryside.
- 7.1.10 Having a range of housing will support the Local Plan objective of making Slough a place where people want to “work, rest, play, and stay”. Having a mix of residents will also help to boost the range and type of facilities that the town centre can support.

## 7.2 Location of Development Sites and Areas

- 7.2.1 The sites and areas for residential development are located within the current retail and business area in the town centre or in selected areas on the edge of the town centre or near arterial routes radiating out from the centre. Most are within 1 km distance of either the centre of the High Street or the railway station. The identified sites and areas are shown as Areas of Change (Plan D). Not all areas in the centre of

Slough are intended for or are suitable for redevelopment. Stable Residential areas on plan are not promoted for redevelopment. Areas between the Stable Residential and Areas of Change are not specifically identified for substantial redevelopment. These three categories are explained below. The areas and sites identified can accommodate about 9,000 new homes.

## 7.3 Stable Residential Areas

- 7.3.1 Some suburban areas are settled and no change, in terms of new development, is being promoted within them. They are established and have consistency in terms of character, providing family accommodation close to centre and contribute to providing a variety of accommodation in the centre of town. There is no specific regeneration benefit in redeveloping these “stable residential areas” and it is impractical to do so because of multiple ownership. Small scale infill is generally not viable or practical as garden areas are too small or it has an adverse effect on neighbours or the character of the area.
- 7.3.2 Suburban areas have already accommodated growth and will continue to do so through extensions and ancillary accommodation within gardens - ‘beds in sheds’. These areas have accommodated substantial additional homes and bed spaces over recent years.
- 7.3.3 “Herschel Village”, the area south of Herschel Street is a special area with a distinctive character. Whilst enhancements to this area will be sought no substantial redevelopment is being promoted and any proposal that do come forward will need to respect the character of the area.

## 7.4 Areas of Change – Residential Development Sites and Areas

- 7.4.1 Outside of the identified established, stable residential areas the strategy identifies “areas of change”. Within these areas are specific identified sites or areas for potential redevelopment (See Plan D). The identified sites and areas have been chosen for a variety of reasons. They have regeneration benefits such as the ability to improve image

of the town and level of activity. They have scope for large scale development which can optimise the number of homes built. They are considered to be likely to come forward and practical to development taking into account ownership and viability. They can also help to support the Council strategic objectives such as promoting viable public transport and walking routes.

7.4.2 The identified sites and areas for redevelopment are focussed on:

- The central area - a combination of TVU site; Queensmere/Observatory; parts of the High Street (above shops) and, if redeveloped, Tesco.
- Certain sites along arterial routes – Stoke Road, Mill St/Petersfield Ave.; Royal Mail, Canal Basin.
- Major sites dominated by a single owner - e.g. Horlicks and adjacent Stoke Gardens.

7.4.3 These sites are where owners have already expressed interest in redevelopment or where the Council has stated or indicated, as

part of its strategic planning role, that they have potential for and are suitable for beneficial redevelopment. This latter category includes sites or small areas that have poor appearance or contain several vacant buildings but are in strategic locations in terms of proximity to the station or town centre in particular the area north of the railway station.

7.4.4 Several identified redevelopment sites are proposed for mixed use development. Other residential sites might also have mixed uses in the form of ground

### 7.5 Areas not Identified for Redevelopment

7.5.1 Areas within the centre but not identified for substantial redevelopment are not promoted for comprehensive or high density redevelopment. Any proposals that are submitted in these areas will need to take account of the Council's normal policies and guidelines and any other identified parameters for development.

Figure 6: TVU



Figure 7: Horlicks



## 8 Framework Delivery Principles

### 8.1 Managing Development

8.1.1 The following section sets out key principles that all development will have to comply with in order to deliver the Framework. These are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with all of the Council's existing policies and guidelines, inclusive of those referring to Section 106 planning obligations. In addition guidance specific to certain topics or sites may be issued to expand upon the elements of this Framework. In particular further guidance will be issued on ( i ) the scale and form of development for certain sites and ( ii ) where sites are affected by or need to take account of key bits of infrastructure, in particular for transport, to accommodate growth and implement the Framework, Transport Vision etc.

8.1.2 The Framework is primarily land use based but all new development must address environmental policies and the scale of development proposed for the town will need to be tested against these policies. Key considerations are air quality and climate change. The Council has a Low Emission Strategy which must be taken account of. The location and design of new development needs to take account of air quality issues. The effect of new development on air quality in terms of transport, travel and emissions needs to be addressed. Climate change policies need to be addressed and these are expected to change in the near future. It is likely that new buildings will need to be built to be 19% better than building regulations in terms of carbon emissions. And the design of new homes will need to minimise the risk of overheating.

#### Coordinating Development

8.1.3 The Framework promotes redevelopment and some large scale development. However in the interest of good planning any redevelopment scheme was take account of its neighbours in terms of effect on existing uses or the effect on reasonable and viable redevelopment of adjacent plots.

Redevelopment of multiple plots must be comprehensive or if that is not practical a comprehensive design is needed before redevelopment schemes for individual plots are approved.

8.1.4 Following on from paragraph 4.3.10, it is particularly important that future development south of the High Street is coordinated and takes account of the following:

- Many of the sites on the south side are narrow and it will be necessary in a number of circumstances for the promoters of specific sites to work together, particularly in relation to rear servicing and to optimise redevelopment opportunities.
- Proposed heights of development should not lead to overshadowing or loss of sunlight to the High Street. (Even a small loss of sunlight could disadvantage the High Street environment particularly if multiple plots have buildings higher than now - bearing in mind the Frameworks emphasis on rediscovering the High Street it is appropriate to treat loss of sun light as a key consideration).
- Proposed developments on sites extending from the High Street to Herschel Street must be designed to enable a transition in height to be made reflecting the characteristics of the areas surrounding the site; Visual amenity is a key consideration. The Framework does not promote tall buildings in this area and the proximity of distinctive small scale heritage development south of the area (Herschel Village) limits opportunities for large buildings nearby.
- The Design of any proposed development must ensure that the amenities of the occupiers of current and future properties are protected.
- Redevelopment must be comprehensively designed or coordinated with adjacent

redevelopment opportunities/proposals to ensure good planning of the area. There is an expectation that several plots between Church St and Alpha St. might be redeveloped in the future. It is important that any one redevelopment does not disadvantage viable redevelopment of adjacent plots.

- 8.1.5 The stretch between Park St and Alpha St. is closest to the small scale Herschel Village area. Consequently visual amenity and issues regarding tall buildings are more sensitive on this stretch. The redevelopment of the Buckingham Gateway site west of Church Street has regeneration benefits but this will have to take account of the scale of development around it particularly on the High Street and Church Street frontages.

### 8.2 Transport and Connectivity

- 8.2.1 One of the purposes of the Framework is to develop land use proposals which will help to implement the Council's Transport Vision. It should be noted that it does not seek to cover the planning related issues that are being considered through the Transport Vision such as congestion and parking.
- 8.2.2 All new development should help to deliver one of the key aims of the Vision which is to achieve major improvements in the environmental quality and the ease of movement around the town centre through reducing flows on the A4 where it goes through the town centre. New development should also take the opportunity to restructure the street pattern in the centre by creating a high quality pedestrian and cycle network that is permeable, well-connected and easy to understand and navigate.
- 8.2.3 The development of Slough as a world class transport hub is a key component of the activity led strategy and so any development will have to take account of the need to improve linkages and pedestrian flows to the transport hub.

### Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)

- 8.2.4 One of the other key elements of the Transport Vision is the development of a Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system to serve the centre. The initial proposals for the routes of the MRT and the proposed stops are shown in Plan E. The final configuration will depend upon which sites come forward for development, the overall land use strategy for the centre and the practicality of building and operating an efficient MRT network. Sites affected by a proposed MRT route will have to accommodate within any redevelopment proposals.
- 8.2.5 A key objective is for MRT passengers to be able to interchange easily between routes, the railway and bus stations. The railway station forecourt is envisaged as being the main interchange which supports the development of this area as a transport hub.
- 8.2.6 In order to help with the proposal to "rediscover the High Street" it will be important that passengers have easy and convenient access to it and the redeveloped shopping and leisure facilities. Whilst it may not be appropriate for the MRT to take the route along the length of the High Street, accessibility can be provided by having a route along Wellington Street, Wexham Road and the eastern end of the High Street. The ultimate aim would be to take the MRT on a diagonal route through the shopping centre.
- 8.2.7 The proposed MRT route to the former Akzo Nobel site includes a route alignment option over the railway east of the station and through an existing employment site (south of Petersfield Ave.). This Framework does not propose to redevelop this area but the MRT route should be safeguarded to keep longer term redevelopment options open. This affects land owned by Network Rail, Tesco, and some private owners south of Petersfield Ave.
- 8.2.8 The Akzo Nobel site and adjacent Cadent and National Grid land are affected by the proposed MRT route to the north east of the town through to the Uxbridge Road. Any redevelopment of these sites will have to safeguard land for MRT and be designed to accommodate it.



### Park and Ride

8.2.9 The key objective of the Transport Vision is to reduce the reliance of the private car however the success of the town centre and business district will need to be supported by some car use. To restrict numbers but still support growth the first of five park and ride sites will be delivered to connect commuters with work place and shopping. The park and ride will also provide more strategic support for the wider area by connecting employees with access to Heathrow, South Bucks and Windsor.

### Walking and Cycling

8.2.10 Every proposed development will be assessed on the basis that it contributes towards the creation of safe, continuous and convenient walking and cycling networks, particularly where they can provide a missing link or remove a barrier.

8.2.11 The redevelopment of the opportunity sites in the town centre can be structured to repair the urban grid, improving connections both within the centre and between the centre and the surrounding areas. The linkages proposed are primarily pedestrian connections, although there is potential for some routes to provide local vehicular access. The need for additional local connections will also be explored, in order to strengthen and improve existing connections, as well as introducing new linkages.

8.2.12 The plan will achieve new and improved linkages throughout the central area, including between the High Street and Wellington Street through the shopping centres, linking into at-grade crossings on Wellington Street. The aim is to provide high quality linkages which are available for use 24 hours per day, although it is recognised that it may not be practical to permit public access throughout the night to all the internal shopping centre streets.

### Wider Network; Connecting the Suburbs to Town Centre

8.2.13 The aim is to create direct, high quality linkages between the town centre and surrounding areas. These are achieved by identifying key desire lines and improving attractiveness of routes (permeability,

legibility, way marking, public realm, safety, pedestrian priority crossing points, landscaping/greening) and creating new routes where desire lines are currently blocked. Plan F is a diagram to indicate broadly where the desire lines are.

8.2.14 These improved links can help make residents feel connected to town centre, and use it for their daily needs. This footfall will support the town centre economy and reduce the use of the private car in line with the aims of the transport vision. Increasing activity will also help support the Council's health agenda.

8.2.15 The linkages also provide the opportunity to make nearby parks and open spaces (such as the canal) easily accessible from the town centre, for visitors, office workers and residents. This contributes to improving the image of Slough and making town centre living an attractive proposition.

8.2.16 The key routes are:

- North from Station to Canal Basin (and bridge over railway)
- Station to Horlicks and Stoke Poges Lane.
- TVU to west to Salt Hill Park
- Centre to Herschel Park and beyond to Jubilee River (past Church and Upton Hospital).
- To Lascelles Park - via Upton Road or Via Sussex Place
- To Petersfield Ave for residential development on Akzo Nobel site

## 8.3 Urban Design and Placemaking

### Network of Streets/Street Blocks

8.3.1 All new development will have to contribute to the proposal within the Framework to restructure the layout of the town centre in order to create smaller, more permeable and active street blocks, particularly at ground floor level.

8.3.2 These blocks should provide easy pedestrian access and create a street network which can sustain a variety of building types and uses, and adapt over time.

8.3.3 The street blocks should generally be designed as perimeter blocks in order to:

- Provide building frontages to streets, with a clear distinction between the public fronts of buildings and the private backs;
- Avoid exposing blank building sides, car parking and rear servicing to the street;
- Provide enclosure to streets and spaces by developing buildings of an appropriate height
- Encourage use and overlooking of the public realm and pedestrian routes. Active uses should be provided at ground floor level along key pedestrian routes, with overlooking provided by windows at upper levels. Elsewhere, buildings should front onto the street; and
- Provide strong and consistent building lines to create well defined streets and spaces. Projections and setbacks from the building line can be used to add emphasis where the function of the resulting spaces can be clearly defined.

8.3.4 Plan C shows how the new street pattern can be used to create new active frontages in the town centre in particular north/south linkages between Wellington Street and the High Street. In addition an improved pedestrian street with active frontages can be created adjacent to St Ethelbert's Church, which links through to The Curve.

### Building Heights

8.3.5 All new buildings will have to be designed in a way which takes account of their impact upon the sky line and their surroundings.

8.3.6 The philosophy underlying the approach to tall buildings was developed in Heart of Slough Development Brief which identified a hierarchy of east west corridors along the High Street, the A4 Wellington Street and adjacent to the railway line.

8.3.7 It is recognized that opportunities exist for a variety of landmark buildings which will mark key views into and across the centre of Slough, and create a new and varied skyline for Slough. The building heights must have regard to sensitive long distance views,

particularly from Windsor Castle, as well as the setting of the Castle viewed from the Copper Horse and the setting of important local buildings such as St Ethelbert's Church and the railway station building.

8.3.8 The indicative building heights strategy is based on the following principles:

- Creating an elegant, consolidated skyline for the town centre to create a positive image in long views;
- Focusing the tallest buildings in the most sustainable locations near the railway station and retail core;
- Providing enclosure and definition to streets and spaces, including the creation of boulevards along the town's key arterial routes (in particular parts of Wellington St.);
- Respecting the existing "pedestrian" scale of the High Street; and,
- Respecting the settings of key landmark buildings.

8.3.9 The building height strategy demarcates the town centre into zones for tall buildings (Plan G):

- A higher rise zone along part of the south side of Wellington Street (Queensmere/Observatory site) stepping down to lower rise at the west (near the Church) and stepping down to the east.
- A medium rise area for the Royal Mail/BT site on Wellington Street.
- A higher rise cluster either side of the northern part of William Street and immediately south of the railway bridge (part of TVU and Octagon site).
- A medium rise cluster on the remainder of the TVU site, Tesco site, U&I site.
- Medium rise at Hatfield Road.
- Medium rise north of the station and south of Mill St. behind the Stoke Rd. frontage.
- Medium rise at Tower and Ashbourne House site.
- No tall buildings in other areas.

8.3.10 The precise height of buildings will be guided by further guidance to be issued in the future, site specific analysis including the setting of Windsor Castle viewed from the copper house. The latter matter may limit height on part of the TVU site. Medium rise means about 10 storeys for the purposes of this Framework. But this does not necessarily mean buildings less than 10 storeys and above typical heights of surrounding buildings will be acceptable outside the identified zones.

8.3.11 The Hatfield Road site is included as a location where comprehensive redevelopment may occur in the long term. Tower and Ashbourne is identified solely because there are existing tall buildings on the site, there is a need for regeneration of the area and a tall building is necessary for redevelopment to be viable to achieve regeneration.

8.3.12 Tall buildings should only be allowed if they are of the highest standard of design, improve the urban realm in particular the public spaces around the base and they do not have an adverse impact upon neighbouring uses. It is also important that they provide high quality living standards for their residents and in particular address air quality issues. This may require tall buildings to be set back a significant distance from the edge of street.

8.3.13 Specific design policies:

- The layout and orientation of tall building blocks should avoid single aspect apartments facing north.
- They maximise views from apartments to the south towards Windsor Castle
- They should provide the opportunity for communal uses or public access to the top floors in order to make the most of views.
- They should take the opportunity to provide for penthouses on top.
- They should be orientation to minimise overshadowing over adjoining development.
- They should be designed to prevent excessive wind at ground floor.

- Particular attention should be paid to the design of the tops of tall buildings
- Be on large enough sites to include good quality public realm and provide wider regeneration benefits.

8.3.14 Tall buildings will be embraced but only in certain locations and only if they are in accordance with this Framework and subsequent adopted policies and guidelines.

#### **Public Space and Public Realm**

8.3.15 To deliver the proposals in the Framework public spaces will need to be created, enhanced and connected by a network of high quality streets. This is associated with movement and transport objectives of making walking and cycling attractive, together with the desire to improve the image of streets and contributes to better way finding.

8.3.16 The aim is to develop a high quality at grade network which is:

- Connected: provides a comprehensive network of linkages within the town centre and with surrounding areas;
- Convenient: provides pedestrians with direct and unobstructed routes;
- Comfortable: provides smooth, level, high quality footways and pedestrian facilities;
- Convivial: provides an attractive, interesting, stimulating and safe environment which promotes health and wellbeing; and,
- Creative: provides flexible spaces which can accommodate events, markets, street fairs.

8.3.17 Delivery will be through redevelopment of identified sites, the renewal of surfaces and street furniture, redevelopment of adjoining property (new facades to improve the appearance of streets), securing good quality maintenance (highway authority or private management of redeveloped sites), town centre partnership work to create a sense of ownership and street activity.

8.3.18 In addition there are opportunities to provide green links between the town centre and nearby high quality public open spaces, as



well as to introduce high quality green elements to key town centre streets. The approach includes:

- The introduction of street trees where space and services permit;
  - Buildings set back to provide planting at grade;
  - Buttress planting to provide screening where backs of buildings or service areas cannot be avoided;
  - Hedges and green/vegetated fences along boundaries;
  - Elevational planting incorporating green elements into building design; and,
  - Sustainable urban drainage – incorporation within initial designs and coordination with landscape and public realm strategies, retention of existing trees.
- Important listed buildings within or adjacent to the town centre such as the railway station, St Ethelbert's Church, St Mary's Church, and part of Upton Hospital;
  - Locally Listed buildings
  - Two Conservation Areas - Sussex Place/Clifton;
  - Road Conservation Area to the east and Upton Park/Upton Village Conservation Area to the south (add brief details, any aspects of particular relevance to town centre);
  - Herschel Village to the south of the town centre which, although not a designated Conservation Area, is a consolidated area of Victorian terraces laid out on the traditional grid providing a popular and high quality edge of centre residential area;
  - Herschel Park - Grade II Listed Park and Garden.

8.3.19 Site specific public realm creation/enhancements proposed are:

- Brunel Way and its extension towards the High Street.
- The High Street and associated new spaces in the redeveloped shopping centre site.
- The east side of St. Ethelbert's Church and The Curve.
- TVU site.
- Station north forecourt including Railway Terrace.

8.3.20 In addition as outlined above there are proposals for connecting the inner suburbs to the town centre, and these connections will also have public realm enhancements.

### Heritage

8.3.21 The Framework seeks to use existing heritage assets to contribute to placemaking and improving the image of the town centre. The centre and adjacent areas has the following range of built heritage assets:

- Historic street pattern, intact in places and which the plan will seek to have restored where lost;

8.3.22 The Old Town Area at the western end of the High Street was identified within the adopted Local Plan due to the existence of a number of good traditional buildings grouped around the historic road pattern. Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan sets out criteria for development within this area which seeks to protect and preserve its character.

8.3.23 Through this Framework and subsequent new policies and guidance opportunities will be taken to identify key heritage assets for enhancement, protect their setting and use them as focal points or distinctive features in combination with wider public realm enhancements including nearby redevelopment proposals. This will include exploring opportunities to enhance existing locally listed buildings as an integral part of wider development schemes. Heritage assets, that help create distinctive and attractive local characters, even if they have no statutory protection, will be used as the basis for policies and design guidance that will help retain or enhance the character of the area.

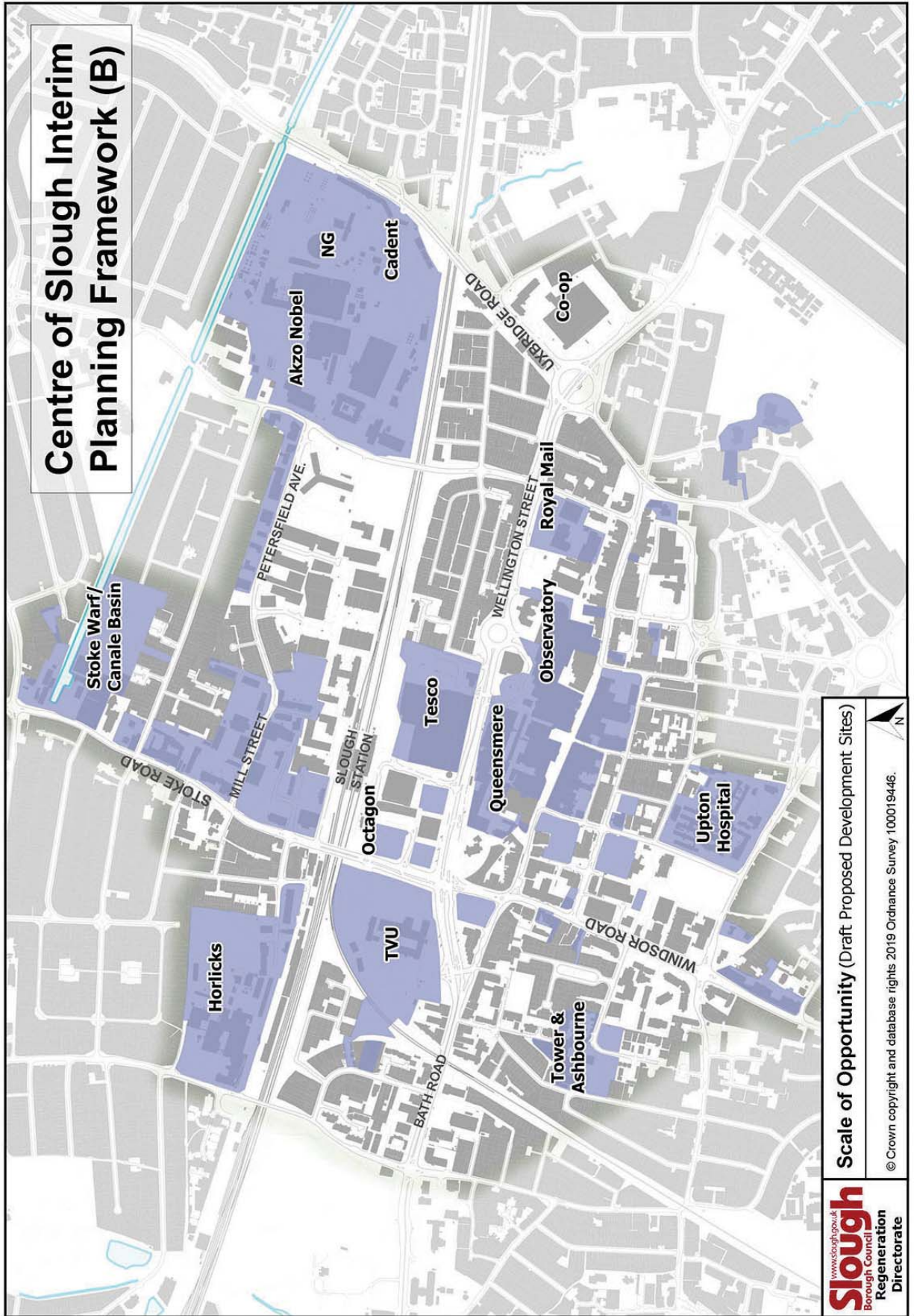
8.3.24 Examples of specific heritage assets or policy topics which could feature in future guidelines are:

- Improve the setting of St. Ethelbert's Church - east side.
- Improve the setting of the north side of the railway station.
- Upton Hospital workhouse - enhancement as part of conversion to a new use, improve the setting as part planned redevelopment of the rest of the hospital site, use the listed building as distinctive feature for the redevelopment.
- Herschel Village - prevent unsympathetic redevelopment within the area or adjacent.
- Old town area (buildings around the High St/William St./Windsor Rd cross roads) - criteria for development within this area which seeks to protect and preserve its character.
- Herschel Park - improve linkages to this historic and interesting area from the town centre.
- Identify key local vernacular and locally distinctive features to provide cues for future development, including in the Herschel Village area; and resolve any issues related to nearby conservation areas.

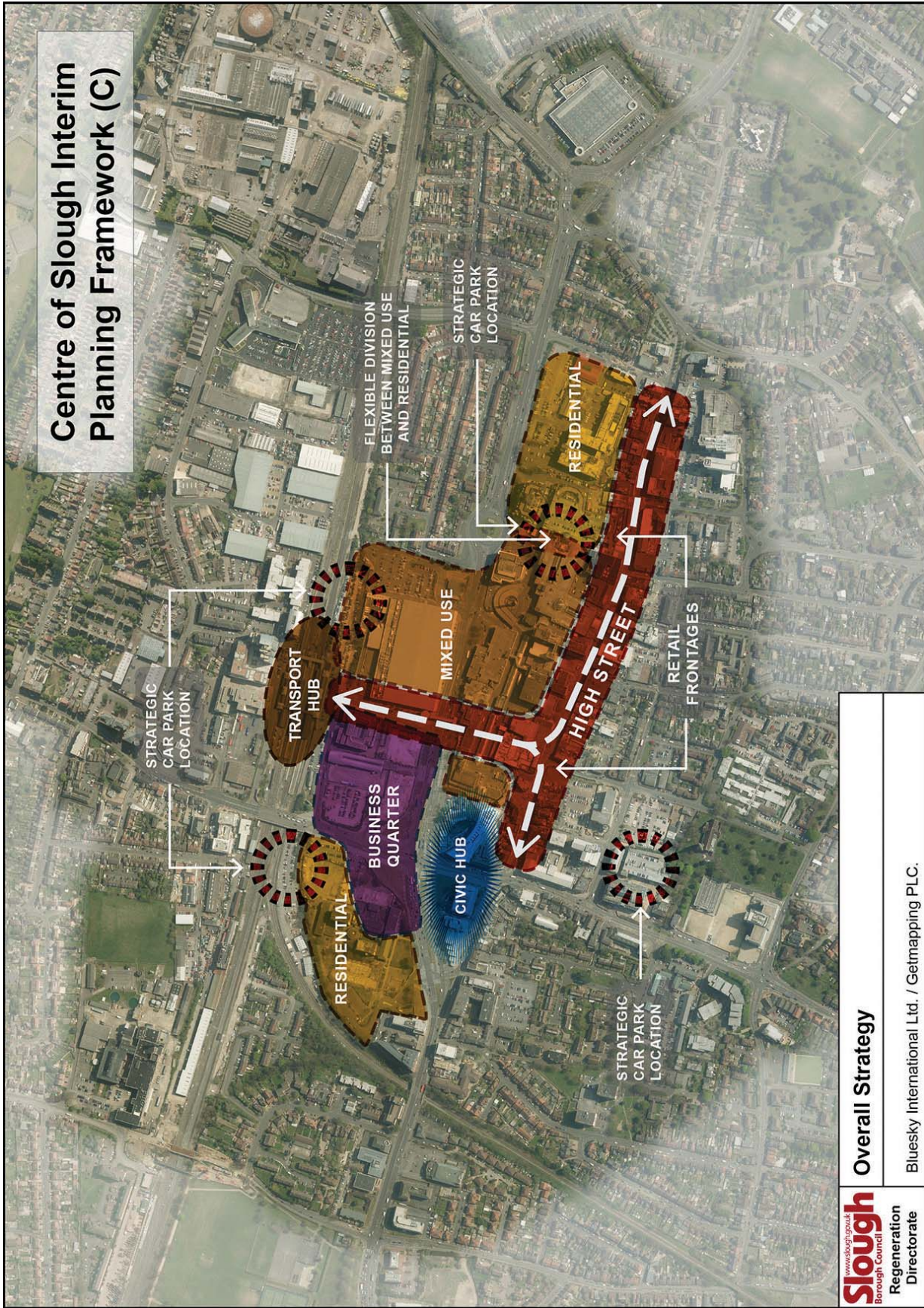




Plan B: Scale of Opportunity (Draft Proposed Development Sites)







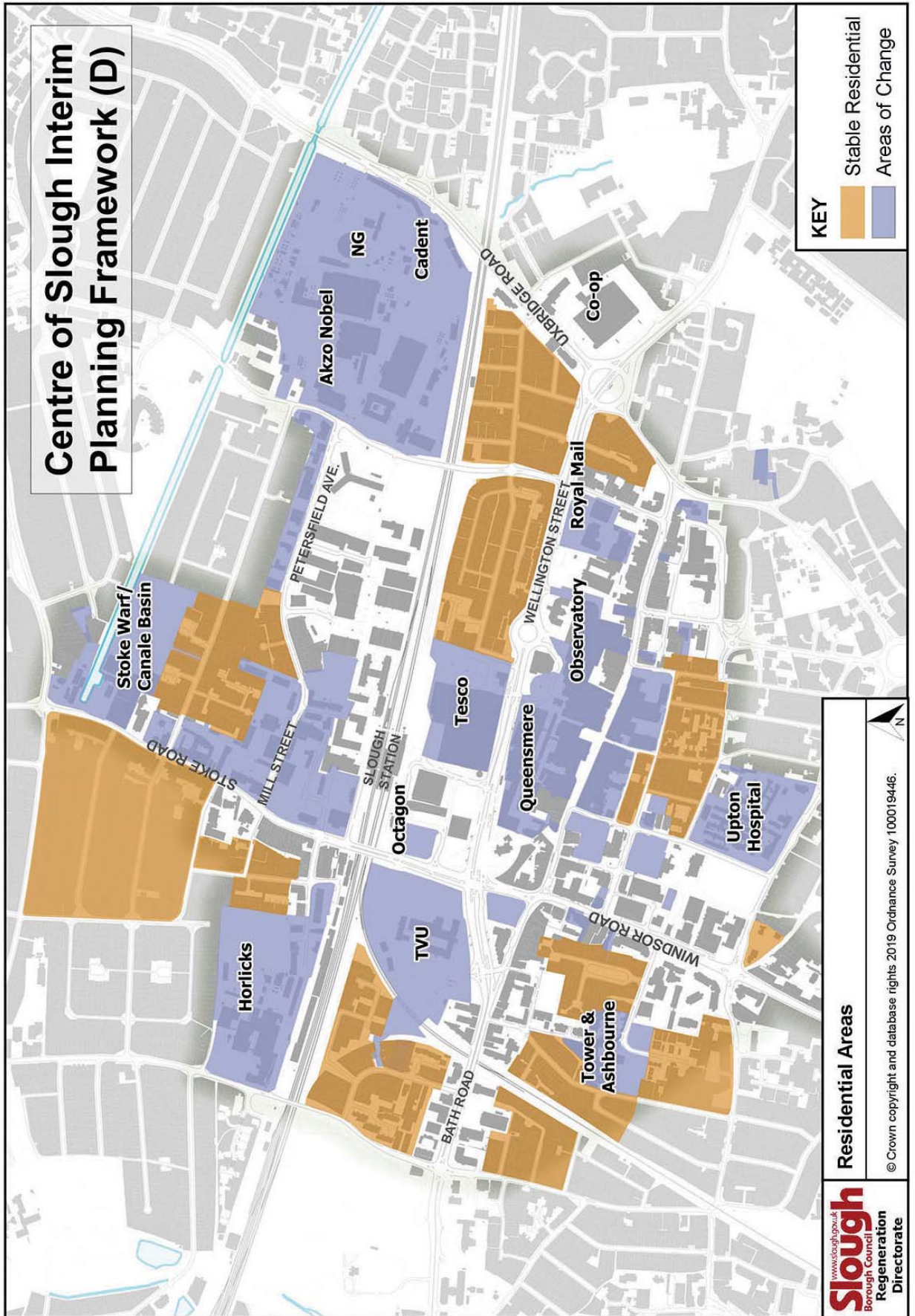
**Slough**  
Regeneration  
Directorate

**Overall Strategy**

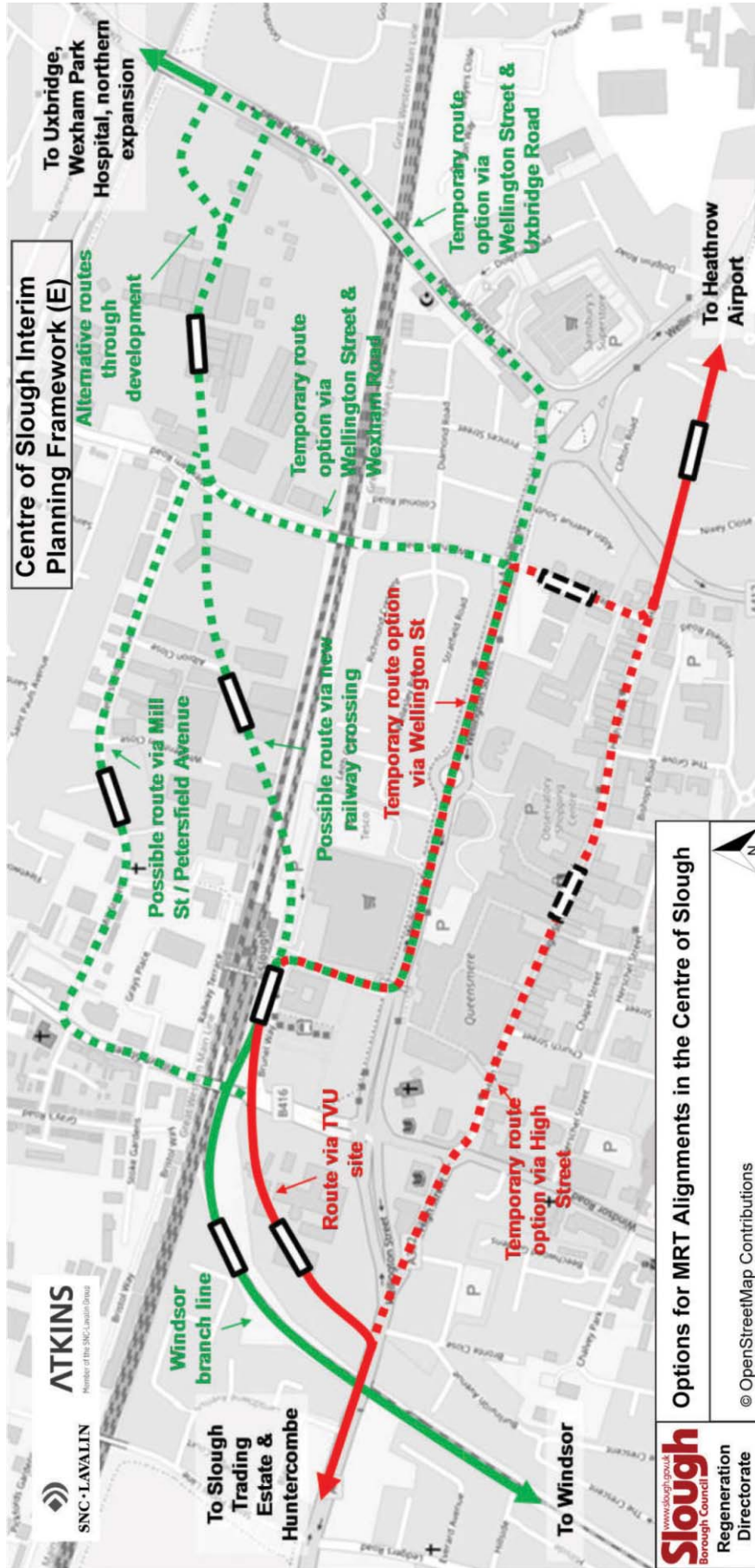
Bluesky International Ltd. / Getmapping PLC.



Plan D: Residential Areas

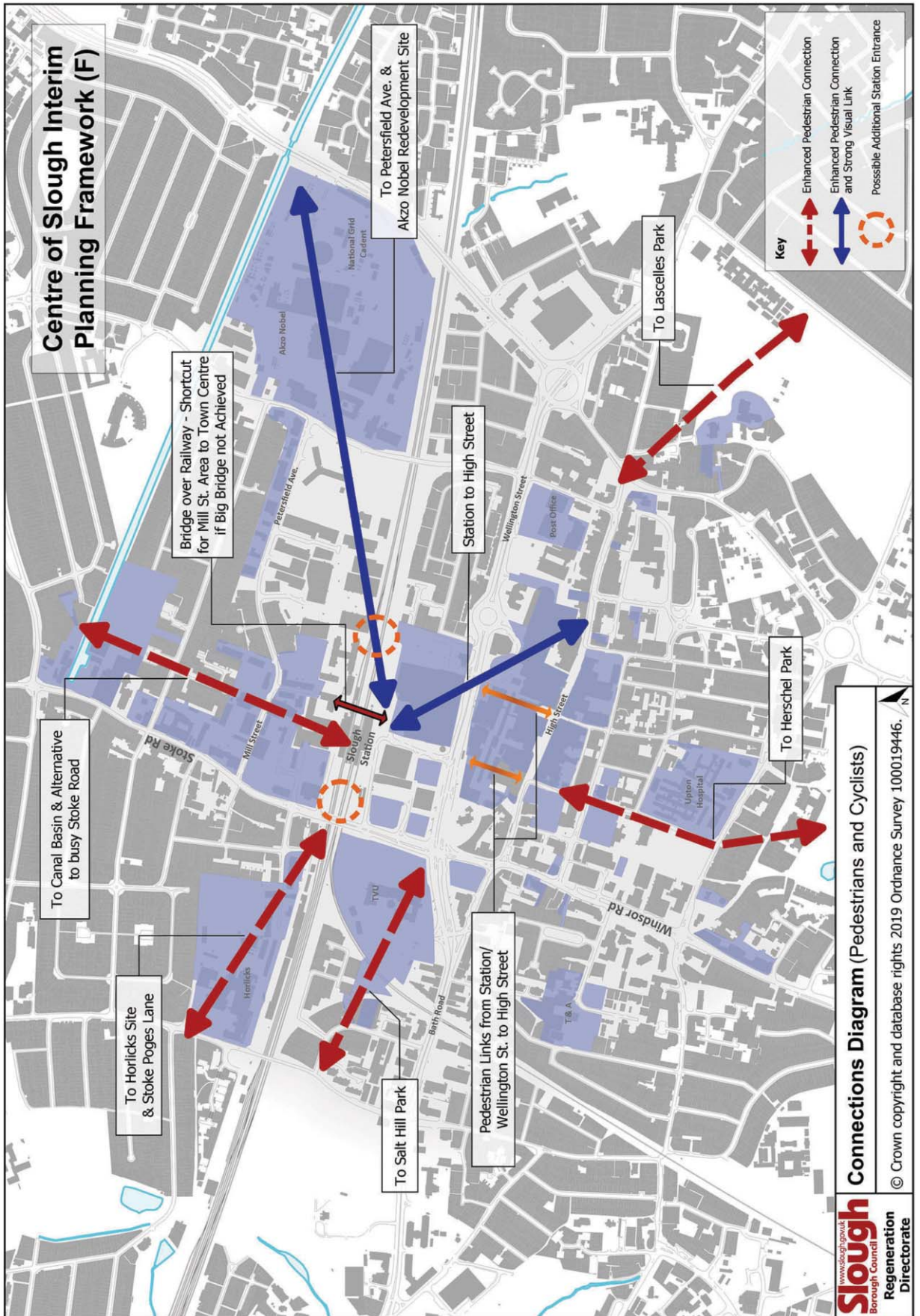


Plan E: Options for MRT Alignments in the Centre of Slough



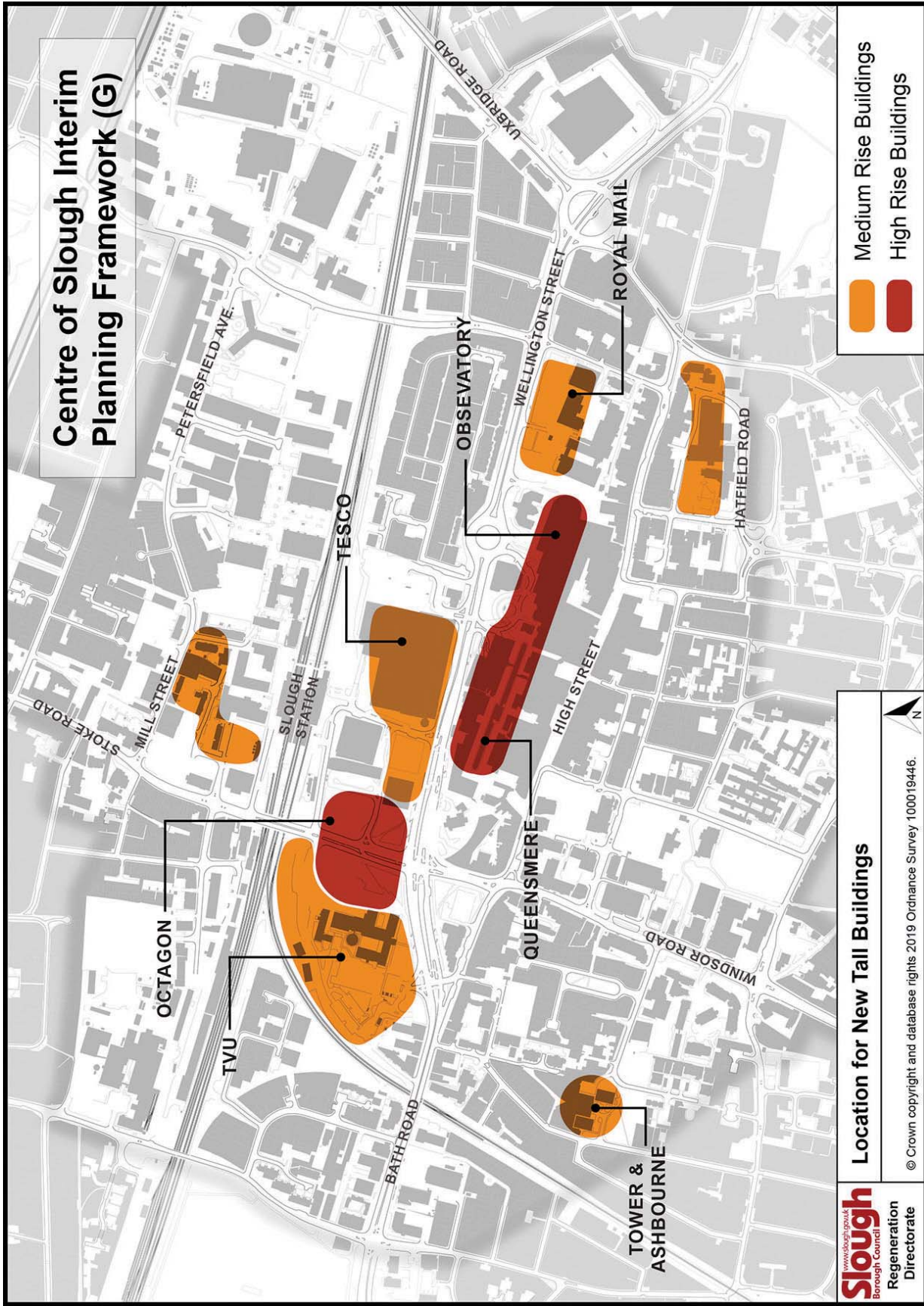


Plan F: Connections Diagram (Pedestrian And Cyclists)





Plan G: Location for New Tall Buildings



# Centre of Slough - Interim Planning Framework