

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee **DATE:** 21st February 2018

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

UPDATE ON EMERGING PREFERRED SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE LOCAL PLAN FOR SLOUGH 2013-2036

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the work that has taken place to further develop the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan including the identification of the Strategic housing sites that will be needed to implement the Spatial Strategy. It also identifies further work that will be required to progress the plan.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to resolve that:

- a) The progress on the Review of the Local Plan for Slough be noted;
- b) The proposed Strategic Housing Sites set in Table 1 and in Appendix 1 be agreed;
- c) The proposed work on the Green Belt Assessment, Planning Strategy for the Centre of Slough, Employment Topic Paper and the Joint Growth Study be agreed;
- d) The Interim Sustainability Appraisal be subject to selective consultation.

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

This will have an impact upon the following SJWS priorities:

4. Housing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The emerging spatial strategy will help deliver the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.
- Our residents will have access to good quality homes.
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents

4. **Other Implications**

- (a) Financial

The proposed work can be met from existing budgets.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
That the actions set out in the report be approved.	Failure to progress the Local Plan will affect the Council's ability to plan for development in the most sustainable way.	Agree the recommendations.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

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

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no equality impact issues.

(e) Workforce

There are no specific workforce implications arising from this report.

5. **Supporting Information**

Introduction

- 5.1 Members will be aware that the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy for the Review of the Local Plan for Slough was reported to the Planning Committee meeting on 1st November when it was approved subject to further testing and consideration.
- 5.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update about what further testing has been carried out and what progress has been made in developing the Local Plan.
- 5.3 It was envisaged that we would have reached the position of being able to approve the Spatial Strategy at this time but this has not been possible for a number of reasons.
- 5.4 Firstly the transport model, which was commissioned in November 2017, has been delayed and is not now expected to be available until March. This has also delayed the formulation of the Transport Strategy.
- 5.5 We need the new model to test the scale and distribution of development and the ability of individual junctions to cope with the anticipated growth in traffic. It will also allow us to carry out air quality modelling. We also need the transport model to help develop the Transport Strategy for the centre of Slough and the Borough as a whole.
- 5.6 Secondly, while discussions are continuing there has not been as much progress on some key sites such as the Queensmere and TVU as we had anticipated. Other major sites are now being brought forward at the same time and so there is the opportunity to produce a more detailed Spatial Strategy for the centre of Slough to coordinate the proposed developments and the linkages between them.

- 5.7 Finally Heathrow Airport have recently published a consultation on the proposed third runway. Since this is an important part of the “emerging” Spatial Strategy we need time to consider the full implications of what is being proposed.
- 5.8 This report therefore provides an update on the progress that has been made in developing the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy. It identifies the “Strategic” housing sites that will be needed to implement the Plan. It provides more details on key ones that are now coming forward such as Akzo Nobel, Horlicks and Langley Business Centre. It provides further information on the technical work that has now been produced to support the emerging Strategy including the latest version of the Sustainability Assessment that has now been published. Finally it sets out what the next areas of work will be, including the preparation of a Planning Strategy for the Centre of Slough, a Green Belt Assessment and the transport modelling.

The Development of the “Emerging” Spatial Strategy

- 5.9 The development of the “emerging” Spatial Strategy took account of a number of factors including the results of the public consultation on the Issues and Options report, the identified spatial development principles and available evidence.
- 5.10 It also took account of the major uncertainties which are facing Slough, such as the future of Heathrow Airport and the fact that there is no reasonable option which would allow all of the assessed housing and employment land needs to be met within the Borough boundaries.
- 5.11 Taking account of the Local Plan “Vision” and “Objectives” the overall aim of the strategy is to deliver balance, cohesive growth which meets local needs as far as is possible given all of the constraints to development.
- 5.12 The “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy, as agreed at the November Committee, is shown in the Key Diagram in Appendix 3 and can be summarised as one of:
- Delivering*** major comprehensive redevelopment within the “Centre of Slough”;
- Selecting*** other key locations for appropriate development;
- Protecting*** the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs;
- Accommodating*** the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigating the impact;
- Promoting*** the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a “Garden Suburb”;
- 5.13 It is recognised that some of the key elements of this strategy, such as the proposals for Heathrow airport and the northern expansion of Slough are outside of the Council’s control. It is, however, considered that they are of such significance for the future development of the Borough that they have to be addressed in the Preferred Spatial Strategy.
- 5.14 In approving the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy it was recognised that more details were needed about the key sites that are needed to deliver it and that these and the overall strategy needed more testing.

- 5.15 As a result we have now carried out further work to identify the “Strategic” housing sites that will be needed to implement the Spatial Strategy and specify the type of development that could be provided upon these sites.
- 5.16 It is recognised that additional housing sites, including some which are in the Green Belt, will be needed. As a result the methodology for the proposed Green Belt Assessment has also been produced for comment as the next stage in deciding which sites can be brought forward for housing.
- 5.17 We have also published the final version of the Slough Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) study. The output from this has informed the development of the Spatial Strategy by identifying the centre of Slough as the most accessible location within the Borough. It also shows that most of the suburbs are currently relatively inaccessible regarding public transport.
- 5.18 Importantly we have we have produced an interim Sustainability Appraisal of the “emerging” Spatial Strategy which will now be released for consultation with Specific Consultation bodies and Duty to Cooperate bodies. This shows how sustainability issues have informed the development of the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy.
- 5.19 As part of the ongoing work in producing the Local Plan it is proposed that four main areas of work need to be carried out. The first is the production of a Transport Strategy for the Local which takes account of the results of the transport modelling that we will be carrying out. The second is the preparation of a Planning Strategy for the Centre of Slough which will seek to coordinate the development of the key sites in a comprehensive way. The third is to jointly commission with Windsor & Maidenhead and South Bucks, a Growth Study for the area in order to try to resolve some of the strategic issues that the respective Local Plans are trying to address. Finally we will produce an Employment Topic Paper which will look at how we can develop the employment policies in the Local Plan. Amongst other things this will have to look at the emerging proposals for the expansion of Heathrow Airport.
- 5.20 All of this is explained in more detail below.

Strategic Housing Sites

- 5.21 In approving the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy it was recognised that more details were needed about the key sites that are needed to deliver it. As a result 24 "Strategic" have been identified for residential development.
- 5.22 The sites have been included on the list for a combination of reasons such as:
- They contribute towards plan objectives in one way or another in particular regeneration or directing growth to the centre of Slough and for some, scope to provide family homes.
 - Already the subject of a planning application.
 - Already identified allocations on the Proposals Map of 2010.
 - The owners put the site forward as part of the ‘call for sites’ exercise last year.
 - Site has potential for development or redevelopment as assessed by planning officers.

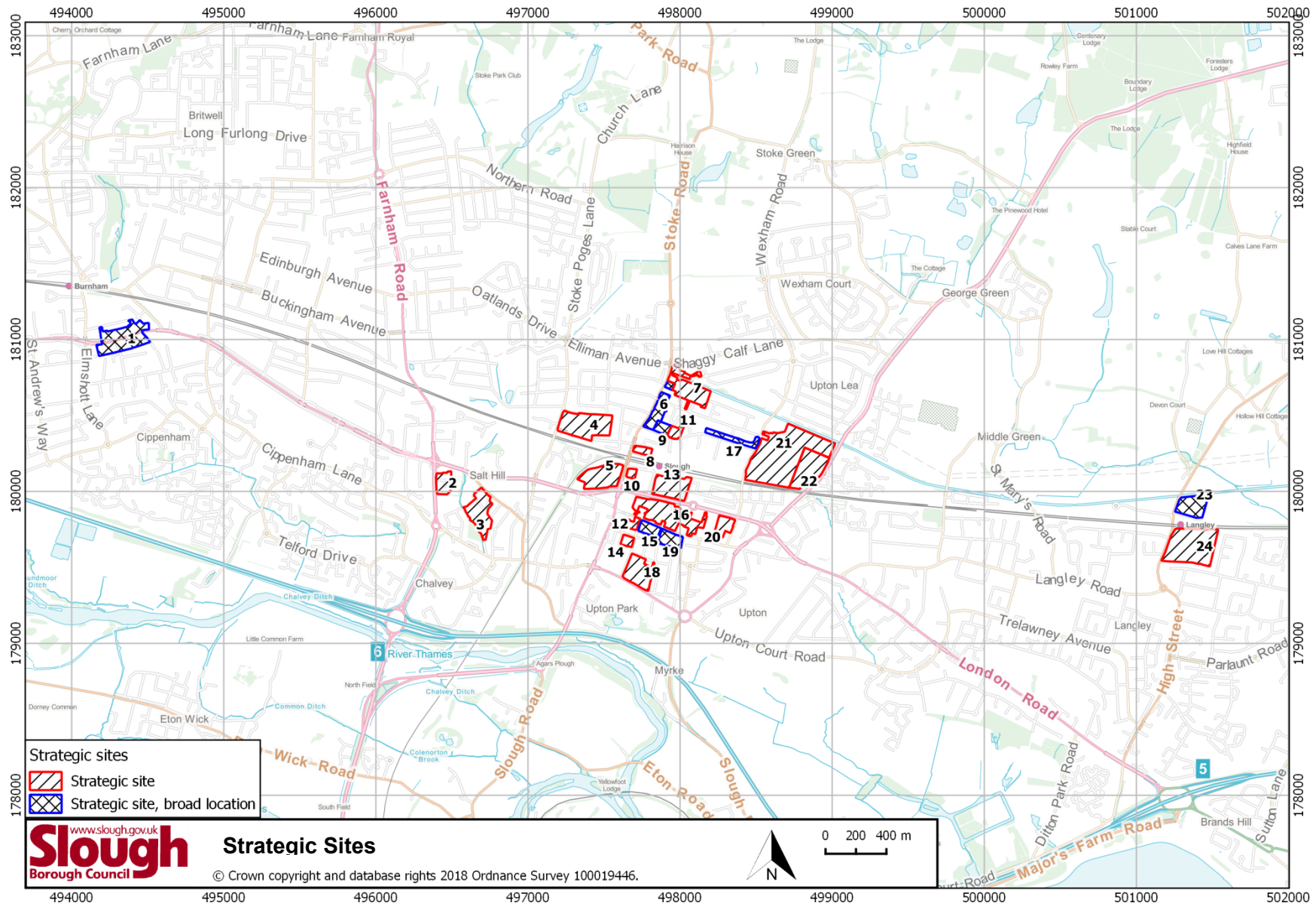
- No national designations, such as green belt, constrain development.
- 5.23 The "Strategic" sites are primarily those that will make the biggest contribution towards meeting housing targets and housing need. Only the sites capable of achieving about 100 or more homes have therefore been included. There are other, smaller sites that fall into the above categories which also contribute towards the estimates of future housing numbers in the housing trajectory that is reported to Planning Committee. The list does not include sites that already have a detailed planning permission (across the whole site).
- 5.24 The list covers specific well defined development sites where there is usually one site owner or a dominant owner. It also includes seven sites referred to as 'broad locations', such as the part of the southern side of Slough High Street or east of Stoke Road. These 'broad locations' are not being put forward as areas for complete demolition but substantial redevelopment could take place if designed in a comprehensive and coordinated way across a significant part of the identified 'broad location'. Furthermore most of the 'broad locations' are in multiple ownership and some are not expected to be redeveloped for many years.
- 5.25 It should be noted that some sites would be mixed use, not solely used for residential use. They could have retail, leisure, commercial or community uses within them.
- 5.26 The majority of the sites were referred to or highlighted as key sites in the January 2017 Issues and Options document and so have been the subject of some public consultation. The two notable exceptions are the Horlicks factory and Tesco's superstore site. The reason for this is explained below.
- 5.27 All of the "Strategic" housing sites comply with the principles of the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy that was agreed in November. Nineteen of the sites are within Centre of Slough spatial option as outlined in the 1st November 2017 Committee report. This includes the Akzo Nobel/National Grid sites and Canal Basin site which were previously identified as separate options. All of these will be considered further in the proposed Planning Strategy for the Centre of Slough.
- 5.28 The remaining five sites constitute selected key locations for development. None of the Green Belt sites identified in the Issues and Options document have been brought forward at this stage because they need to be considered further in the Green Belt Assessment study.
- 5.29 All the sites will or could contribute towards meeting the objectively assessed housing need over the life of the new Local Plan (to 2036). The sites, if agreed and assessed in more detail, can form the basis of the future strategic site allocations within the new Local Plan. How many homes each site might accommodate has been estimated, but these figures are approximate in most cases and have been produced to inform work on the overall capacity of the Borough. They should not be treated as targets or commitments. Further studies of the sites will refine some of the individual capacity figures in the future. It is estimated that the "Strategic" sites listed could accommodate at least 7,000 homes. About 6,000 would be in the centre of Slough.
- 5.30 The list of specific sites and 'broad location' sites are below with a location plan.

Table 1: Strategic Sites; Development Sites and Broad Locations

No. on plan	Ward	Broad Location	Site Location	Proposal	Town Centre
1	Cippenham Green	BL	Trade Sales and Bath Road, Cippenham	Residential or residential led mixed use.	
2	Chalvey		Land to east of Tuns Lane, Tuns Lane (Fire stn, houses, flats)	Comprehensive residential redevelopment including new /relocated fire station.	
3	Chalvey		Montem Lane (leisure centre and car park)	Residential development. Houses and flats and Ice Arena overflow car park.	
4	Elliman		Horlicks, Stoke Poges Lane	Residential development plus community uses, open space, and employment use. Including conversion of historic building and new build behind.	
5	Central		TVU and car park, Wellington St/William St	Comprehensive redevelopment for residential use, offices, neighbourhood retail, restaurant, cafe, bar and public realm enhancement.	TC
6	Central	BL	Stoke Road East	Residential/mixed use	
7	Central		Canal Basin, Stoke Road	Residential development; ground floor commercial uses, canal site public space and public open space.	
8	Central		Stoke Road Bus Depot, Stanley Cottages	Residential.	TC
9	Central	BL	Mill Street North	Residential led mixed use and	

				cycle path to Fleetwood	
10	Central		Formr Octagon, Brunel Way	Mixed use regeneration scheme. Residential and hotel with commercial units.	TC
11	Central		47-58, Mill Street	Flats and houses	
12	Central		132-134, High Street, Slough	Residential with some commercial units.	TC
13	Central		Tesco, Wellington Street	Mixed use. Town Centre uses including car park ,food store and residential. Improved access to station and public realm improvements.	TC
14	Central		Aspire 2 Site, Corner of Church Street and Herschel Street	Residential and some commercial units.	TC
15	Central	BL	High Street South Side, Church Street to Park St	Residential and retail	TC
16	Central		Queensmere/Observatory, Wellington Street	Comprehensive redevelopment for retail, leisure, residential.	TC
17	Central	BL	Petersfield Avenue North (business units)	Residential	
18	Central		Upton Hospital	Comprehensive redevelopment for health and residential use.	
19	Central	BL	High Street South Side, Park t to Alpha Street	Residential and retail	TC
20	Central		Post Office Sorting Office, Wellington Street	Residential or mixed use: business and residential.	TC
21	Central		Akzo Nobel, East of Wexham Road,	Residential and employment uses plus community uses, open space. And road link through site..	
22	Central		National Grid, Uxbridge Road	Comprehensive residential and employment plus community use, open space and road link through site.	

23	Langley St. Mary's	BL	Canal Wharf, Langley	Residential/mixed use	
24	Langley St. Mary's		Langley Business Centre , Station Road	Comprehensive development for residential and employment including retail, community units.	



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- 5.31 More detailed work will be carried out on the sites to specify what is necessary to make development acceptable or to ensure proper planning of the area. Three of the sites are, however, likely to be brought forward in the short term and so it is considered necessary to identify specific site requirements at this stage in order to inform prospective developers/purchasers about the Council's requirements. Detailed site requirements for the Horlicks site, Akzo Nobel/National Grid site and Langley Business Centre have therefore been included in Appendix 1 for Committee approval.
- 5.32 In summary residential led mixed use development is wanted for all three sites. High quality design is wanted including specific attention to the public realm and long term maintenance. Whilst many apartments are expected each site must include some family houses and an appropriate proportion of affordable housing. The form of the development can be high density but not town centre in appearance i.e. primarily street based development and no tall towers and active frontages. Open space must be integral to the schemes and essential neighbourhood/community uses must be on site if not nearby. For the Horlicks site retention of the main historic building is wanted and a link to the town centre. For Akzo Nobel/National Grid a link road for buses, and may be cars, is wanted west-east through the site plus retention of the existing research and development use on site or within the town. Plus enhancement of links to the town centre and station. The Langley Business Centre will need some retail to complement Langley village centre and improve pedestrian/cycle access to the railway station. Medium rise development is wanted for most of the site.

Green Belt Assessment Study

- 5.33 In addition to the "Strategic" housing sites identified above, there is the potential for residential development upon some existing Green Belt sites within Slough.
- 5.34 The possibility of releasing further Green Belt land in Slough for housing was considered as Option I in the Issues and Options consultation document. In doing so two broad areas were discounted. The Colnbrook and Poyle area was not considered suitable for housing because it is subject to a number of environmental constraints and the Government has announced its support for building a third runway in this location which would make it even less appropriate to build new housing there.
- 5.35 As a result the Council will continue to apply the highest level of restraint upon development in the area through Green Belt and Strategic Gap policy until a decision has been made about the future expansion of Heathrow. If any land subsequently becomes available for development it would be considered for airport related development.
- 5.36 In addition the area of land to the south of Slough has not been considered as being suitable for housing development because it contains the M4 motorway, Jubilee River and Slough sewage works.
- 5.37 This meant that the 10 Green Belt sites for possible housing development identified Issues and Options Document were:

St Anthony's Field, Farnham Lane

North of Muddy Lane, Stoke Poges Lane
Wexham Park Hospital School of Nursing, Wexham Street
Land to rear of Opal Court, Wexham Street
Land east of Wexham Park Hospital
Land East of Rochford Gardens
Bloom Park, Middlegreen Road
Land East of Market Lane
Land south of Castleview Road
Upton Court Farm

- 5.38 A limited number of responses were received to this element of the Issues and Options consultation. It is now proposed that all of these sites should be subject to a more detailed Green Belt Assessment. The proposed methodology for this will be the subject of consultation.
- 5.39 It is proposed that the study should be carried out on the basis that the shortage of land for housing in Slough constitutes the “exceptional circumstances” that are necessary to alter Green Belt boundaries through the review of a Local Plan as set out in paragraph 83 of the NPPF.
- 5.40 This means that we are accepting that there will be harm to the Green Belt, but still have to consider whether there are any overriding factors which mean that the sites should not be developed for housing.
- 5.41 Whether or not a site should be developed for housing will not just be determined on Green Belt policy grounds. Some of them have other policy designations such as public open space and Historic Park and Garden which would have to be taken into account. The availability and deliverability of the sites will also have to be considered.
- 5.42 Although the outcome of the Green Belt Assessment cannot be pre judged it is unlikely to provide a major source of new housing land, at least in the short term. Any sites that could form part of the proposed Northern Extension of Slough will have to be phased and integrated into this accordingly.

Estate Renewal

- 5.43 One of the other options for providing more housing, as identified in the Issues and Options document is through Estate Renewal. The decision not to bring forward the option of carrying out wide spread intensification of the suburbs as part of the emerging Spatial Strategy does not prevent comprehensively planned redevelopment taking place within Council Estates.
- 5.44 The Council has recently carried out a stock condition survey of all of the dwellings that it owns. The results have indicated that there may be a need to invest £240m over the next 30 years on maintenance.
- 5.45 Whilst the Asset Management Strategy focuses on maintaining the stock to a decent standard, the Council continues to have aspirations to build more homes and remodel the existing stock to increase capacity.

- 5.46 This can take place in a number of ways ranging from developing surplus garage courts through to redeveloping high rise blocks such as Tower House and Ashbourne House. There may also be capacity to build additional stories onto existing low rise blocks through a process known as “top-hatting”. This is a practice which is becoming increasingly popular with social landlords but requires careful consideration.
- 5.47 It is expected that option appraisal work will be completed in the next six to nine months at which stage we will have a much better idea as to what the likely supply of new housing will be from Estate Renewal projects over the Plan period.

A Planning Strategy for the Centre of Slough

- 5.48 The first element of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy is to deliver major comprehensive development within the “Centre of Slough”. In addition to all of the Strategic Housing sites identified above, this is also where major employment and the regeneration of the shopping centre will take place.
- 5.49 Although the centre has significant capacity for comprehensive regeneration, it is also constrained by a number of factors such as traffic congestion, poor air quality and a lack of green infrastructure and open space.
- 5.50 There is a core area which contains a number of sites, the redevelopment of which will be critical for the success of the centre as a whole. This consists of the Heart of Slough, including the former TVU site, the Queensmere/Observatory shopping centre and the Tesco superstore site.
- 5.51 Proposals for the redevelopment of the Queensmere/Observatory centres to create a major new retail, leisure and residential centre are still being developed. Proposals for the development of the former TVU site are also being developed by the Council and SUR.
- 5.53 There are no current proposals to redevelop the Tesco site. The Issues and Options consultation document stated that if it came up for redevelopment during the plan period it was considered to be a good location for any additional town centre uses along with some residential above.
- 5.54 We will not know what additional town centre uses will be needed until the scale and mix of the proposed development on the Queensmere/Observatory and TVU sites are known. It is, however, becoming clear that the future of the Tesco site needs to be looked at now in the interests of comprehensive planning.
- 5.55 Outside of this core area there is also a need to ensure that all of the other sites are developed in a comprehensive manner and that all of the necessary linkages and infrastructure are provided.
- 5.56 It is not considered possible to be able to produce a full detailed Master Plan for the centre of Slough at this stage but there is a need for a high level Planning Strategy which coordinates development and sets out the necessary standards and quality of design that will be required.

Employment Topic Paper

- 5.57 One of the key decisions taken in producing the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy was not to release any more employment land for housing.
- 5.58 The Issues and Options document had included Option G, which was to redevelop Existing Business Areas for housing. Whilst this would increase the supply of housing in the Borough in accordance with Objective A, it conflicts with other Objectives such as the need to create 15,000 new jobs and ensure that Slough’s economy creates wealth, has a diverse economic base and supports business start-ups.
- 5.59 The Issues and Options document included proposals which involve the loss of employment within the centre of Slough, Langley, Akzo Nobel, Canal Basin and New Cippenham Strip (Bath Road and Trade Sales land).
- 5.60 In total seven of the Strategic Housing sites which have been identified as part of the “emerging” Spatial Strategy are on Existing Business Areas as defined in the Proposals Map for the Core Strategy
- 5.61 It should be noted that in addition to those listed above this now includes the whole of the Horlicks site which was not specifically included in the Issues and Options consultation document, although the disused playing field was included as a potential housing site. Whilst the loss of employment is to be regretted, and loss of an Existing Business Area would be contrary to current policy, it is considered that the best way of preserving the historic landmark building is to convert it to predominantly residential use. Details as to how it should be developed are set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.62 Core Policy 5 (Employment) states that there will be no loss of the defined Existing Business Areas to non-employment generating uses. This policy will continue to be applied to all of the remaining Existing Business Areas which have not been identified as Strategic Housing Sites. Proposals for suitable residential development on the Strategic Housing sites which are within the Existing Business Areas will be supported as departures from the Development Plan.
- 5.63 It is proposed to produce an Employment Topic Paper will set out in detail the evidence for adopting this approach.

Sub Regional Growth Study

- 5.64 One of the important elements of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy is to promote the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a “Garden Suburb”. This would involve building in South Bucks District which is not within our control. As a result it will be necessary to promote this through the Chiltern/South Bucks Local Plan. These Councils are currently opposed to the northern expansion and so it is necessary to find a way in which it can be progressed.
- 5.65 The land is in the Green Belt and so it will be necessary to demonstrate that there are sufficient exceptional circumstances to overcome the harm to the Green Belt that the development would cause.

- 5.66 Following the advice of the DCLG and an independent planning advisor it is proposed that there should be a Joint Growth Study for the area which would look at all of the constraints and opportunities for additional development in a holistic way across the Housing Market Area.
- 5.67 The exact form of the study has not yet been agreed between ourselves, Windsor & Maidenhead and South Bucks/Chiltern Councils. It is, however, envisaged that it will look at all of the options that have previously been put forward in the respective Plans, plus any others, which would be most suitable for delivering a range of growth scenarios. This would look at the strategic constraints in the area and what opportunities there are for creating the most sustainable pattern of development.
- 5.68 Although we have identified the Northern Extension of Slough as the preferred way of meeting Slough's unmet housing needs, this will have to be tested along with all the other options to see whether this is the best way of meeting the overall growth pressures in the area in the most sustainable way.
- 5.69 In order to progress the Growth Study a joint bid was made by Windsor & Maidenhead, South Bucks/Chiltern and ourselves to obtain money from the Government's Planning Delivery Fund. This was on the basis that the study would be carried out in two parts. The first, shortest part, would involve deciding what the geographical extent of the work should be. The bulk of the work would then be spent upon the study itself.
- 5.70 We have not yet heard whether the bid was successful. If it isn't, it will be necessary for the Authorities to fund the Growth Study.
- 5.71 Although the study will be too late to inform the Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan, which has been submitted to the Secretary of State, the results of the study could trigger an early review of the Plan if it shows that significant additional development is required in Windsor and Maidenhead.
- 5.72 It is not anticipated that the results of the Growth Study will inform the finalisation of the Chiltern/South Bucks Local Plan. It is anticipated that it could be considered at the Examination into the Chiltern/South Bucks Plan where it would help to determine whether there should be an immediate review in order to accommodate additional development.
- 5.73 As a result it is considered that the commissioning of a Joint Growth Study should be a top priority for progressing Local Plan work.

Heathrow Expansion Public Consultation

- 5.74 One of the other key elements of the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy is to accommodate the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigate the Impact.
- 5.75 As part of this, it was agreed that the following planning principles should apply to any development at Heathrow which should:
- Protect Colnbrook and Poyle villages in a "Green Envelope"
 - Enhance the Conservation Area and built realm.

- Prevent all through traffic but provided good public transport and cycle routes to the airport
- Provide for the replacement of Grundons energy from waste plant and the rail depot north of the new runway
- Ensure that there are good public transport links into Heathrow from Slough.
- Enlarge the Poyle Trading Estate for airport related development but with access only from the M25
- Provide mitigation for the Colne Valley Park and ensure that existing connectivity is maintained through Crown Meadow.
- Develop tangible measures to improve air quality in the Heathrow area
- Ensure that all homes in the Borough that are eligible for noise insulation are provided for under the Quieter Homes Scheme.

5.76 Heathrow Airport launched a consultation on 17th January about the options for the proposed third runway and associated uses.

5.77 Although Officers have been working closely with Heathrow on technical issues we did not see the details of the proposed options until the public consultation began.

5.78 The consultation consists of two parts. The first part relates to the physical development that will be needed to build a new runway and operate an expanded airport. This includes:

- Three options for a location and length of the new runway on a fixed alignment.
- The potential locations for a new terminal east of Terminal 2, west of Terminal 5 or a new satellite terminal by the new runway
- The proposed realignment of the M25 150 metres to the west and lowering it by 7 metres in a tunnel and raising the runway
- Options for changes to local roads and junctions on the M25

5.79 Heathrow are also asking the public for views on its plans to manage the effects of expansion on local communities and the environment.

5.80 The second part of the consultation relates to redesigning the use of airspace in order to accommodate the new runway.

5.81 The consultation period runs for ten weeks and so it is not intended to formulate a response at this stage.

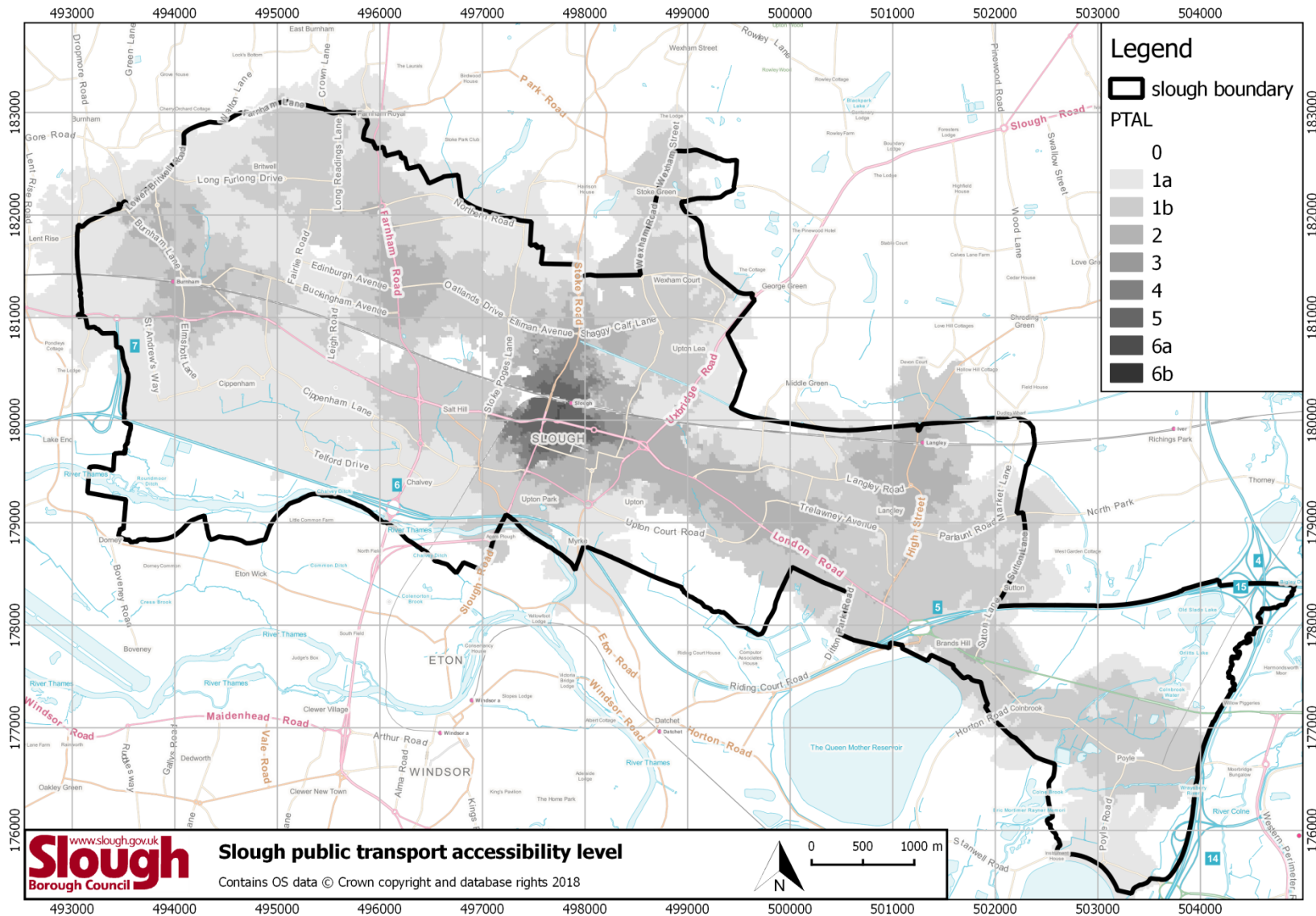
Public Transport Accessibility Modelling

5.82 The development of the “emerging” Spatial Strategy was based upon some basic spatial development principles. These included:

- Taking account of the different roles and character of different areas
- Making fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling

- Focusing significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable

- 5.83 In order to fully understand what the characteristics are of different areas of Slough we have developed a public transport accessibility model similar to the one used by the GLA. The initial results from the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) modelling were included in the November Committee report.
- 5.84 This has subsequently been refined and published in the final version of the Slough Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) study. The model produces an indicator from 0 to 6 for all areas where 0 represents the least accessible and 6 the most accessible. The levels 1 and 6 are also divided into two groups “a” and “b”.
- 5.85 The main conclusions from this are that the centre of Slough is the most accessible location within the Borough. This supports the part of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy which seeks to deliver major comprehensive development within the centre of Slough. The modelling also helps to identify what the extent of the “Centre of Slough” is in terms of accessibility.
- 5.86 PTAL is a well-known method used by Transport for London and London Boroughs and so can be used to compare areas. The study shows that Slough is similar to areas in the borough of Hillingdon. Parts of Slough town centre reach values as high as 5 and 6a, which is the same as areas around the Uxbridge station in Hillingdon. Areas around the stations of Burnham and Langley; and areas around Farnham Road and London Road (between the Town Centre and Langley) reach a maximum of 2. The rest of the Borough has values lower than 2. This supports the decision not to allow intensive redevelopment in the suburban areas that have poor public transport accessibility.
- 5.87 The modelling shows that Poyle Trading Estate has very poor accessibility with a score between 1a and 1b. This means that improved public transport to the Poyle Trading Estate will have to be provided as part of the mitigation measures for the proposed third runway at Heathrow.
- 5.88 The final Slough PTAL study is available on the Council’s website as part of the Local Plan evidence base.



Interim Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.89 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been carried out to assess the extent to which the emerging Spatial Strategy will help to achieve a set of environmental, economic and social objectives.
- 5.90 In November 2016 the Council consulted on a Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and a Sustainability Appraisal Framework to assess the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.91 That report identified that the key issue for the Sustainability Appraisal was to guide the Local Plan by considering the relative alternatives for meeting Slough's needs within the Borough, outside the Borough (either adjoining or further away) or not meeting the need in full.
- 5.92 In January 2017 the Sustainability Appraisal was used to carry out an appraisal of the Local Plan's Objectives and Spatial Options. The Issues and Options consultation considered most options would be needed to deliver the Local Plan "Objectives".
- 5.93 The SA report identified that the Local Plan "Objectives" were generally positive and compatible in terms of social, economic and environmental. It also said it would be difficult for Slough to meet its housing and employment needs in full because of a shortage of developable land, the problems of traffic congestion and environmental constraints.
- 5.94 As part of the on-going process we have now carried out an interim Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy.
- 5.95 Policy consideration, the results of the Issues and Options Consultation and the use of the Sustainability Appraisal have led to the view the Local Plan "Objectives" and "Vision" can be carried forward unaltered.
- 5.96 Objections to the northern expansion in the Issues and Options consultation said the Plan should look again at meeting Slough's housing needs in full within the Borough by putting more housing in the town centre, intensifying the suburbs and redeveloping existing business areas for housing. The results of the SA led to a policy decision not to carry this forward because of the negative effect on delivering the Local Plan objectives as a whole.
- 5.97 The SA also supported the view that i) Spatial Options A; B; C; D; E; H were most sustainable to deliver the Local Plan objectives and ii) a northern expansion of Slough was preferable to building elsewhere for meeting the housing shortfall.
- 5.98 These led to the key elements of the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy being:
- Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment within the "Centre of Slough";
 - Selecting other key locations for appropriate development;
 - Protecting the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs;
 - Accommodating the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigating the impact;
 - Promoting the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a "Garden Suburb";
- 5.99 The SA framework was then used to test the possible significant negative and positive effects of the five elements of the emerging preferred Spatial Strategy

- 5.100 The results showed that these generally scored positively against the SA objectives in particular in providing housing. Potential significant negative effects identified included impact on the environment and landscape and climate change.
- 5.101 The cumulative impact of concentrating development in the centre of Slough could have potentially significant negative environmental impacts. This will be addressed as we progress the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.102 The main conclusion that can be drawn from the testing of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy through the Sustainability Appraisal is that the five elements of the strategy are the most sustainable for seeking to meet the housing and employment needs. The adverse effects identified will be addressed in the next version of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 5.103 The Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy will be published on the website and subject to selective consultation with Duty to Cooperate partners and specific consultees.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The update on the emerging Spatial Strategy set out in this report and the actions proposes within it, are a further step forward in progressing the Review of the Local Plan for Slough.
- 6.2 The identification of Strategic Housing sites will also facilitate them coming forward for development through the planning process.

7 Background Papers

Review of the Local Plan for Slough Issues and Options Consultation Document.
(January 2017)

Sustainability Appraisal of Issues and Options (January 2017)

Interim Sustainability Appraisal Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan for Slough. (February 2018)

Slough Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) report. (February 2018)

8 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Site Requirements for Four Strategic Housing Sites

Appendix 2 – Non-technical summary of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy

Appendix 3 – Key Diagram for the Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan for Slough.

Site Requirements for 4 Strategic Housing Sites

Horlicks Site

Horlicks Site Background

The site owners, GSK, are decommissioning the site over the next few months and are in the process of marketing it including the former playing fields. GSK say about 90 people are employed on the site. A pre application scheme has been submitted and Officers have responded. Key points and paragraphs from the response are below. The pre app scheme shows 766 homes including some houses, a landscaped route through the site, which includes the war memorial, and conversion of the main historic building for apartments including some changes and additions to it.

The building is Locally Listed under the 2004 Local Plan. The conclusion from comments of the Council's conservation advisor are below regarding the new proposal in relation to the locally listed building :

Overall the key areas to focus on with regard to the preservation of the historic factory are its external form with the chimney to the east and the key interiors and elements of interest that are listed on p. 7 with the addition of the ballroom. The pre-application submission indicates that the proposal seeks to meet these criteria which is to be welcomed. Although the proposals are only schematic at this point, the proposal strikes a balance between preserving the most significant part of the factory site and the internal features of interest while seeking to regenerate the site and put the heritage asset to a new use.

In order to develop the plans further, great care should be taken with the heights of the buildings to the north of the historic factory and the apartment block immediately to the east in order to preserve the landmark status of the building. Option 2 of the layout of the site should be used in the further development of the site to allow for greater views of the factory from the north-west.

Historic England have been asked to consider the building for statutory Listing. It will be a few weeks before a decision is known. The Council's conservation advisor does not think there is a strong case for Listing except for the war memorial. The local listing does not prevent the owner from altering or taking the building down but GSK have said they do not intend to do this.

The adjacent Stoke Gardens has not been identified as a strategic housing site. However if it is redeveloped in a comprehensive way for either residential or preferably mixed use, it would provide a better looking approach to the Horlicks site.

Horlicks Site Key Site Development Requirements

Key points below; some points are expanded in the paragraphs below.

- Retain the main historic building and war memorial

- Setting of war memorial and historic building to be protected (particularly when viewed from Stoke Poges Lane and from William Street)
- New development to be primarily residential and include a significant proportion of family homes.
- Community and small scale retail use to serve the development
- Some employment use to be incorporated.
- In terms of character of development the site can be treated as a transition site between town centre and adjacent suburban area provided it is linked to the town centre via Stoke Gardens. The character of the development should not be town centre in terms of scale and appearance.
- New buildings to be no higher than 6 storey.
- Buildings to be lower than parapet of existing building.
- Open space minimum of 0.48 hectares and green infrastructure throughout the site.
- Pedestrian and cycle link to Stoke Gardens (access to town centre)
- Provide for public pedestrian and cycle access through site (Stoke Poges Lane to Stoke Gardens)
- Mitigation for loss of former playing field through recreation/landscape enhancements off site.
- Retain artesian well water flow to Salt Hill Stream.
- High quality design including public realm and building materials that last.
- Long term maintenance/management of public realm to be secured.
- Policy compliant affordable housing on site taking account of greenfield portion of site.
- Affordable housing to include some family homes.
- Development to be in accordance with the Council's planning policies and guidance including Section 106 planning obligation infrastructure etc. and any necessary air quality mitigation.

Key paragraphs taken from the Officers response to the pre app scheme are below to expand upon some of the points above.

Type of development

A substantial portion of houses are required on the site with most being family sized homes. A family home being one that can sleep a minimum of 4 people. Some larger homes are also wanted. In terms of flats any development should not be dominated by one bedroom flats/studios. Some family flats or maisonettes with gardens space are acceptable.

Private build to rent is acceptable for part of the development. For a site of this size the Council wish to see a variety of house types and variety of households accommodated. So it does expect private for sale housing as well as affordable and private rental.

If a proposed housing development is perceived as being aimed primarily at attracting either a narrow range of household types or households from outside the town it is less likely to be welcomed. The Council will wish to explore having an agreement with a developer that aims initial marketing to those living in the town or

having a link to it. And an agreement that aims to limit initial purchase of 'for sale' homes as buy to let property.

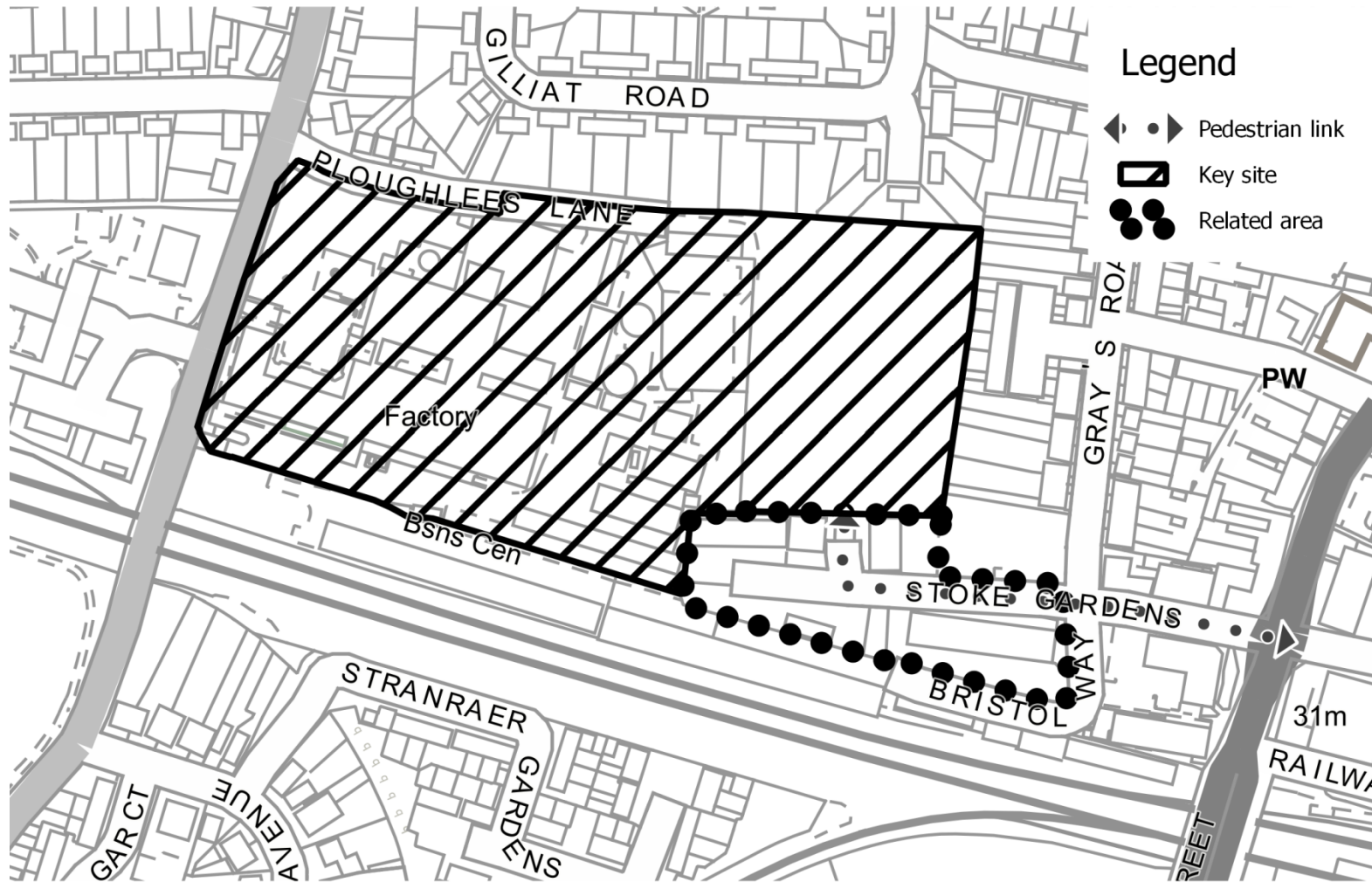
Heritage

If the building is not Listed, the Council will want to ensure demolition or damage to key parts of the historic parts of the main building do not occur prior to the grant of any planning permission for the site and building. The Council wish to control modification necessary for its economic conversion. The Council do recognise that some changes to the historic fabric can be made without significant damage to its overall character and that some changes are necessary to comply with current statutory building standards.

Scale and Massing

Provided the site has an appropriate direct link to the railway station and town centre, via Stoke Gardens, the site is considered a transition site between the town centre character and suburban area adjacent to Horlicks. Development density can therefore be substantially higher than that adjacent but should not be perceived as part of the town centre in terms of character i.e. no tower or point blocks. Street based development is wanted excepting that this concept needs adapting to ensure appropriate separation from the historic building and incorporation of green space.

Horlicks site



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Akzo Nobel/National Grid site

Akzo Nobel/National Grid site - Background

Both the Akzo Nobel and National Grid site were put forward by the owners as part of the Call for Sites exercise in 2016. They form part of Option C of the Issues and Options. Taking that option forward as part of the spatial strategy was agreed at the 1st November Planning Committee. The agent for the owner of Akzo Nobel has said the site will be put on the market soon. What is below is an adaptation of site requirements and issues etc. outlined in the Issues and Options document January 2017.

The Akzo Nobel site comprises the former ICI paint manufacturing plant and associated research and development buildings on the eastern side of Wexham Road. Paint manufacture has been moved to the north east but research and development may stay on the site or move to the adjoining Petersfield Ave site that contains offices and laboratories. The site abuts the canal to the north and the railway line to the south.

The National Grid site is the former gas works. It now comprises a gas company depot accommodating a mixed range of office and storage buildings, open storage and parking areas with a gas holder in the north-west corner of the site. The site is currently operational but the gas holder is due to be decommissioned and removed. The owners have not been in contact with the Council recently; Cadent has been separated out from National Grid as a gas network company and it is understood they now control most of the site. Whether or not they are prepared move their depot soon is not yet known.

The combined sites provide a rare opportunity for a substantial new neighbourhood to be created near the town centre. The fact that only two land owners are involved should simplify the process of getting comprehensive development.

The proposed option, as put forward in 2016, is to comprehensively redevelop the two sites primarily for residential plus supporting uses (local retail, education, open space, community facilities) and some employment use. A mixture of family homes, small homes and flats including affordable housing. The canal-side north end is expected to be houses with flats near the railway end. Whilst street based housing and flat development is wanted there may be scope for some taller flats (over 5 storeys) on the southern part of the site. This could optimise the use of the site to help meet housing demand but control of the quality and mix of house types and tenures will be crucial if this type of development is chosen. The site is large enough and sufficiently separated from other neighbourhoods for the new development to have its own character.

Akzo Nobel/National Grid site - Key site development requirements

- New development to be primarily residential and include a significant proportion of family homes.
- Provide a wide range of homes and tenures to attract a wide range of households.
- Affordable housing to be policy compliant. Affordable housing to include some family homes.
- Provide education, retail and community uses on the site. (there may be a need for a primary school on the site)
- Retention of research and development facility in Slough.
- Provide some employment use.
- Wexham Road and Uxbridge Road should be used for access.

- The existing Uxbridge Road site access may need to be moved away from the railway bridge.
- A road link through the sites from Wexham Rd to Uxbridge Road is required for buses and cyclists. Use by cars can be considered if it assists with the Council's future transport strategy.
- Enhance routes to the railway station and town centre. Visual appearance, pedestrian and cycle route access enhancement to railway station via Petersfield Avenue and to the town centre via either the latter or Wexham Road bridge.
- Access to the canal to access local recreation spaces and the tow path out to the Colne Valley Regional Park.
- Deal with soil contamination. Decontamination may take some time because of the past use of the site.
- Include 100/A Wexham Road within site if practical.
- Take advantage of the canal side environment for homes to look out onto it and enhance the canalside area.
- In terms of character of development the site can be treated as a transition site between town centre and adjacent suburban area provided it is linked to the town centre.
- The character of the development should not be town centre in terms of scale and appearance.
- Street based development wanted i.e. no tall buildings or point blocks.
- New buildings to be generally no higher than 6 storey; no higher than 3 storey near the canal.
- Open space and green infrastructure to be in accordance with Council's policy.
- Ensuring comprehensive development i.e. both sites considered together but also ensuring each site can be developed individually in case redevelopment of one site is delayed.
- High quality design including public realm; use building materials that last.
- Long term maintenance/management of public realm to be secured.
- Development to be in accordance with the Council's planning policies and guidance including Section 106 planning obligation infrastructure etc. and any necessary air quality mitigation.

Context notes re the above

The Akzo Nobel site is in a reasonably sustainable location because of its proximity to the railway station and town centre. Consequently residents in any new development are likely to be less reliant upon the use of the private car than elsewhere. For this to be achievable firstly new residents need to feel they are connected to the town centre. Secondly alternative modes of travel need to be attractive. It will be essential that links to the site are improved and residents are within walking distance of key community facilities, such as shops, school, community space, so that the new neighbourhood can tie in with the 'living locally' concept of the new local plan.

Off site enhancements can be assisted if Petersfield Avenue property is improved or redeveloped. Part of the north side of that road is a strategy development site.

The combined sites could take between 1,000 and 1,400 homes. Reaching these numbers is depending upon how much land is retained for employment.

Langley Business Centre

Langley Business Centre - Background

Part of Langley Business Centre was included in the Site Allocations DPD where it was allocated for a new supermarket. It also recognised that the site could incorporate an element of residential, financial and professional services, cafes, drinking establishments or takeaways.

A proposal for a Morrison's supermarket on the site was not considered to be acceptable for design and layout reasons and has not been subsequently pursued.

It is no longer considered that there is a need for a supermarket on the site.

The Langley Business Centre was included in the Issues and Options consultation document as part of Option B (expand the centre of Langley). This involved developing the area around the Langley railway station as a new high density residential area which would contain some employment, retail and leisure uses which complement the Harrow Market District Centre.

The Langley Business Centre would contain the proposed new ancillary retail and leisure uses with flats above. This would be linked by an improved pedestrian link to the Harrow Market Centre to the south. It would also retain or re-provide some business uses.

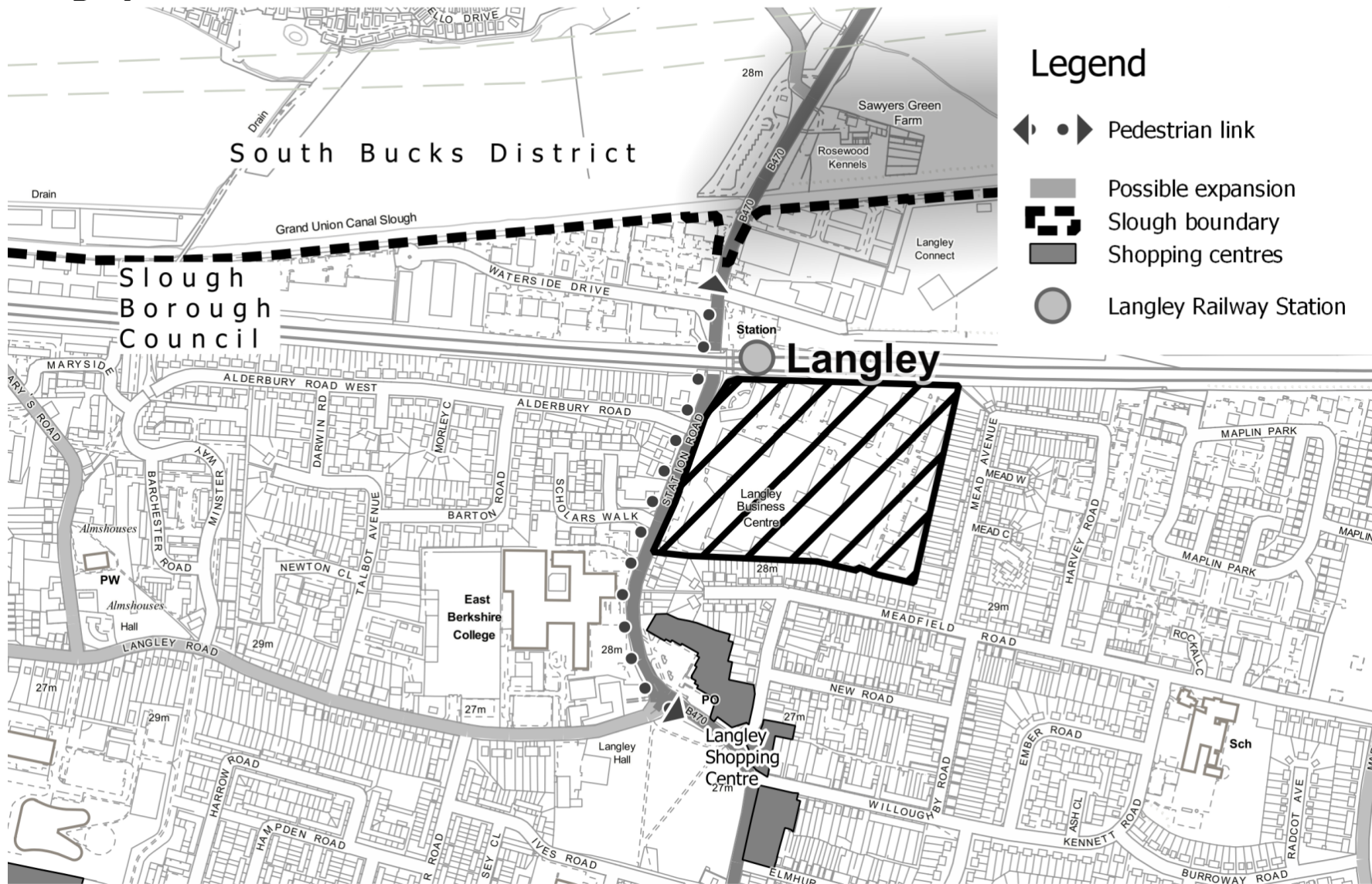
The option of expanding the centre of Langley has now been taken forward in the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy as one of the selected key locations for appropriate development. The Langley Business Centre has been identified as a Strategic Housing site which will help to deliver the Spatial Strategy. The current owner is looking at redevelopment options.

Langley Business Centre Key site requirements :






- Mixed use scheme of primarily residential development plus retail and office development with public open space and ancillary facilities.
- Provide a wide range of homes and tenures to attract a wide range of households.
- Affordable housing to be policy compliant. Affordable housing to include some family homes.
- Street based development wanted.
- Low rise family housing along the southern and eastern perimeters adjacent to existing residential areas.
- Medium rise apartments on the rest of the site with barrier blocks alongside the railway line that can help to reduce noise from the railway to the rest of the site.
- There may be scope for a taller landmark building on the north west corner of the site.
- Open space and green infrastructure to be in accordance with Council's policy
- Station Road to have an active frontage with a range of small scale retail and leisure uses.
- The quality of the pedestrian route to the Harrow Market to be improved along with other environmental improvements.
- Highway access to be on Station Road and any necessary off site improvements to the highway network will have to be provided.
- Improve access to the railway station along Station Road and the path from Mead Avenue. Take account of new footbridge to be installed and incorporate, subject to Network Rail's approval, better direct access to platforms from south.
- High quality design including public realm; use building materials that last.
- Long term maintenance/management of public realm to be secured.

- Development to be in accordance with the Council's planning policies and guidance including Section 106 planning obligation infrastructure etc. and any necessary air quality mitigation.

Langley Business Centre



Legend

-  Pedestrian link
-  Possible expansion
-  Slough boundary
-  Shopping centres
-  Langley Railway Station

APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2: Non-technical summary of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Emerging Spatial Strategy.

Introduction

This non-technical summary sets out how the sustainability appraisal process has been used in the formulation of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy.

It summarises the process to date and then includes an assessment of Alternatives and the resulting emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy presented to Planning Committee in February 2018.

The report will be made available for technical comment with a range of parties for their views in order that the results can be used in the evolution of the emerging Spatial Strategy to the Local Plan.

The Sustainability Appraisal Process

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has to be carried out during the preparation of a plan in order to promote sustainable development. The process assesses the extent to which the emerging plan addresses sustainability issues in a Slough specific Sustainability Appraisal Framework. This highlights potentially significant social economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan, including through the consideration of reasonable alternatives.

The Sustainability Appraisal process November 2016- Jan 2017

In November 2016 the Council consulted on the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (incorporating a Habitat Regulations Assessment) and a Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

The Report identified that the key sustainability issue for the SA was to guide the Local Plan by considering the relative alternatives for meeting Slough's needs within the Borough, outside the Borough (either adjoining or further away) or not meeting the need in full (2.4.2).

The SA report identified that the Local Plan Objectives were generally positive and compatible, but the challenge was how to balance competing pressures for scarce resources, particularly to deliver the Objectively Assessed Housing Need and employment land requirements to meet its economic potential and that both of these will put pressure on the environment (para. 3.4.1) particularly as a result of transport pressures, climate change, health and pollution (3.4.5).

The analysis of the issues facing Slough showed, "it will be very difficult to meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need and employment needs because of a shortage of developable land, the problems of traffic congestion and environmental constraints" (para.5.2.3).

The Issues and Options consultation considered most options will be needed to deliver the Local Plan Objectives. As such the SA concluded that, "while the consultation document contains a number of options in most cases they do not represent alternatives" (para. 5.2.3) and it would be difficult for Slough to meet its housing and employment needs in full.

The Sustainability Appraisal process Jan 2017- Feb 2018

As part of the on-going process we have now carried out an Interim Sustainability Appraisal of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy agreed for further testing in November.

This has involved integrating the results of the SA of the Issues and Options and using the SA Framework to consider what Spatial Options to carry forward, alternatives to the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy; and the emerging strategy’s five elements.

The results of the Consultation, the Sustainability Appraisal and further policy consideration has resulted in the agreement that the Local Plan Objectives and Vision are positive to carry forward unaltered. This then left the decision about what combination of Spatial Options to carry forward to deliver it.

The Sustainability Appraisal process also requires a ‘do nothing’ approach and the consideration of ‘reasonable alternatives’.

The “do nothing” approach is not considered reasonable because of the Council’s aspirations to deliver the Vision for Slough in 2036, and the statutory requirements for Local Plans.

It was then considered that the Sustainability Appraisal sufficiently supported the Policy decision to carry forward Spatial Options B,C,D,E and H in all alternatives.

Responses to the Issues and Options consultation considered however that Plan should look again at meeting its housing needs in full within the Borough through revisiting the capacity of the town centre, suburbs and existing business areas to accommodate more housing (Spatial Options A, F and G respectively). The SA also identified that these options scored well against the SA objective to provide sufficient housing.

Option J2 was also considered not to form a significant element of the emerging strategy due to the quantum of housing that could be delivered on the sites; and testing of this option by Windsor and Maidenhead who would be responsible for delivering it.

As a result, given Objective A of the Local Plan is to meet its housing needs in full as close to where they arise as possible, further testing has led to the view that at present there are three Alternatives:

- a) Meeting more housing needs within the Borough through intensification of Spatial Option A, and carrying forward F and G
- b) Planning for a shortfall in the Borough through Option K meeting employment land and housing needs elsewhere outside the Borough
- c) Planning for a shortfall in housing in the Borough through not carrying forward Spatial Options F and G and Option J meeting housing needs adjoining the Borough in a northern expansion

Alternative (a)

Meeting housing needs within the Borough through a combination of (i) increasing the quantum of housing development in the town centre; (ii) intensifying the suburbs and (iii) redeveloping Existing Business Areas for housing

A decision was made not to carry forward this Alternative as the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy because of the combination of the negative impacts of this Alternative on the SA Objectives, and the negative effect it would have on the Spatial Options to deliver the Local Plan objectives as a whole.

This is explained below.

- (i) Increasing the quantum of housing development in the town centre.

The findings of the Issues and Options SA identify that the potential risks of Spatial Option A (expand the centre of Slough) are that the scale or location of development causes a significant negative impact on the transport network including public transport, or an increase in pollution (para. 3.3.4). The SA considers that the scale of development proposed in Spatial Option A scores well for transport and accessibility, economy and housing, but that resulting pollution could impact on the Air Quality Management Area.

The interim assessment shows that given the development currently being planned for in the town centre it is not sustainable to propose a significantly higher quantum of housing. This is because of the importance of the town centre for delivering a range of services in a sustainable way to serve the Borough as a whole and in order to avoid negative impacts set out in the SA Objectives regarding transport, climate change, economy, health and townscape.

- (ii) Intensifying the suburbs Spatial Option F: Intensification of the suburbs has the potential to deliver elements of Local Plan Objective B.

The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options scored this option negatively in terms of sustainable transport due to the suburbs having poor public transport accessibility. This would mean higher dependence on private car use which raises significant negative sustainability issues of increased traffic congestion. It also showed that there could be a significant adverse impact on the townscape (SA objective 8).

The Interim assessment shows that the decision in Alternative c) not to allow any further intensification of the suburbs, as part of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy, will have a positive effect upon transport and landscape objectives but a negative impact upon SA Objective 7 which is to provide more housing.

- (iii) Spatial Option G Redevelop Existing Business Areas for housing

The assessment of Option G (Redevelopment existing business areas for housing) in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options identified there was a conflict between the need to provide land for housing (SA objective 7) and the need to protect existing employment land (SA objective 14).

The Interim assessment shows that the decision in Alternative c) not to release any more employment land for housing as part of the “emerging” Preferred Spatial Strategy will have a positive effect upon retaining employment but a negative impact upon SA Objective 7 which is to provide more housing.

Conclusion

Using the review of the Sustainability Appraisal has highlighted that the combination of these options will have significant adverse impacts. Therefore there is no reasonable option or combination of option that will enable Slough to meet all its housing and employment needs in full.

Alternatives b) and c)

Planning for shortfall in the Borough through

b) Building in other areas outside of Slough through Spatial Option K (meeting development needs elsewhere outside the Borough) or

c) Planning for housing shortfall in the Borough through carrying forward all options except Spatial Options F, G and J2 and meeting housing needs adjoining the Borough in a northern expansion.

The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options showed that Alternative b) Spatial Option K could have a significant negative impact on transport, housing and well-being (SA objectives 1,5 and 7) depending where the development was located.

Alternative c) considers the relative merits of a northern expansion (Spatial Option J1) over meeting the needs for development elsewhere. When the Northern expansion of Slough was previously assessed it was found that there could be a significant adverse effect upon SA Objective 3 climate change, SA objective 6 cultural heritage and SA Objective landscape. This remains the case with the new Interim Assessment.

Policy consideration of the Area of Search in J1 (set out in the document “Slough Northern Extension”) has led to the view that the option to promote a northern expansion of Slough is preferable to building elsewhere for delivering the Local Plan Objectives. This option could reduce the negative impacts on SA Objectives 1, 5 and 7.

Alternative C and the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy

Policy consideration of the SA report on the Issues and Options and the Consultation on the Issues and Options have led to the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy.

The Local Plan approach of focussing development mainly on previously developed land within the existing urban area is considered to deliver the most sustainable option for growth; with a testing of Green Belt releases where this does not deliver a balance of social, economic and environmental development.

The Emerging Spatial Strategy is therefore to carry forward the Local Plan Vision and Objectives and develop Spatial Options A; B; C; D; E; H; I; and J1 into a set of five elements for the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan:

- Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment within the “Centre of Slough”;
- Selecting other key locations for appropriate development;
- Protecting the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs;
- Accommodating the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigating the impact;
- Promoting the northern expansion of Slough in the form of a “Garden Suburb”;

The SA framework was then used to test the possible significant negative and positive effects of the five elements of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy. These are outlined below and will be used to inform the next stage of the process.

A summary of the assessment is given here

Delivering major comprehensive redevelopment within the “Centre of Slough”

This element of the strategy scores positively for providing housing (SA objective 7). There could be a significant adverse impact on the townscape (SA objective 8) due to concentration of many tall buildings as a result of key sites being developed within a compact area. It could have significant positive or adverse impacts on transport (SA objective 8) as locating major development in the most accessible locations will reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of travel. However the scale of development could cause significant increase in traffic congestion due to the increased trip generation from new offices/retail and leisure uses.

Selecting other key locations for appropriate development

This consists of Option B Langley, D2 Cippenham, D3 Chalvey, E Estate renewal, and H release of Green Belt for housing.

Expand the Langley Centre, to include land around the railway station and a new residential neighborhood on the Akzo Nobel and National Grid sites west of the Uxbridge Road) score positively against housing (SA objective 7). Both score negatively against economy (SA objective 14) due to the loss of employment land.

Canal basin, New Cippenham Central Strip, Bath Road, Chalvey regeneration sites scores well against housing (SA objective 7).

Housing development on greenbelt land is in conflict with SA objective 8 landscape due to the loss of green open space. This will have an impact on biodiversity (SA objective 2). However it will have a positive impact on providing housing (SA objective 7).

Estate renewal scores positively against housing (SA objective 7).

Protecting the built and natural environment of Slough including the suburbs

Protection of the suburbs scores positively against landscape (SA objective 8). Protection of the built and natural environment scores positively against a range of objectives including climate change (SA Objective 3), cultural heritage (SA Objective 6), and landscape (SA objective 8).

Accommodating the proposed third runway at Heathrow and mitigating the impact

Although Slough is supportive of expansion of Heathrow the Implementation of the third runway is dependent on the Government's decision on the Development Consent Order that will be submitted by Heathrow Airport Limited. This means that planning for it forms an important part of the Emerging Strategy, but a full assessment will happen when more information is available.

At present positive impacts include job opportunities for Slough Local residents and inward investment (SA objective 4 economy). Negative impacts are those on landscape and townscape (SA Objective 8) due to the scale of development. The risks of increased air pollution from airport related development and traffic and thus a negative impact on climate change (objective 3). Some areas are also liable to flood. This could also involve the release of Green Belt for employment in the Colnbrook and Poyle area (former Option I).

Promoting the northern expansion of slough in the form of a garden suburb

This proposal is dependent on development taking place to the north of Slough outside of the Borough, which can only be brought forward through the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan.

For Slough this is the most sustainable option of meeting housing needs as close to where they arise (scoring positively against the SA housing objective 7). This will ensure we have a balanced housing market by providing a mix of high density housing in the town centre and a range of housing including family units in the northern expansion. This will help to balance out the affordability issues within the area.

However this will mean that green belt and open land is built which scores negatively against (SA objective 8).

Summary

The results showed that these 5 key elements generally scored positively against the SA objectives in particular in providing housing. Significant negative effects identified included impact on the environment and landscape and climate change.

The cumulative impact of concentrating development in the centre of slough may have significant negative environmental impacts. This will need to be mitigated where possible through policies as we progress the emerging Local Plan.

The key sites which will be required to implement the "emerging" Preferred Spatial Strategy have not been assessed individually. This is more appropriately done at a later stage when more information is available about their combined effect.

The Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Spatial Strategy has looked at reasonable alternatives. This included the option to meet the housing needs in Slough Borough boundary or meet the needs elsewhere.

The SA Scoping report assessed the 'do nothing' which scored negatively against the SA objectives for Transport and accessibility, Economy, Housing and Use of resources. This alternative was not taken forward in the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy as this would not enable Slough to meet the identified Local Plan objectives.

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the testing the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy through the Sustainability Appraisal is that the 5 elements of the emerging Spatial Strategy are the most sustainable for seeking to meet housing and employment needs. The adverse effects identified will be addressed in the next version of the Sustainability Appraisal.

The Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy will be published on the Slough website and subject to consultation.

APPENDIX 3

