

Review of the Local Plan for Slough

Issues and Options
Consultation

16 January - 27 February 2017

Housing topic paper - RLP19 - January 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This topic paper has been published as part of the Slough Borough Council Consultation on the Issues and Options for the emerging Local Plan 2016-2036. The purpose of this topic paper is to present the background evidence for the Housing elements of the Review of the Issue and Options Consultation Document.
- 1.1.2. The evidence has been drawn from a number of sources including independently commissioned studies. It should be read in conjunction with the other Topic Papers which include the Housing Capacity Study.

2. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.1.1. The Issues and Options Consultation Document has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.1.2. The Framework requires that local planning authorities identify objectively assessed housing need (the OAN) and through their Local Plans, translate those needs into land provision targets. A key objective of the Framework is to 'boost significantly the supply of housing' (NPPF 47). LPAs are expected to plan positively and to be consistent with the NPPF, and should take account of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 2.1.3. To deliver the required wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, the NPPF policies instruct that LPAs should:
- plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);
 - identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and
 - Where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need in order to create mixed and balanced communities. (from NPPF 50)
 - To that end, the initial step for Local Planning Authorities (LPA) such as Slough Borough Council is to make objective assessments of the needs for market and affordable housing. LPAs should work jointly with neighbouring authorities who share the same housing market

area. They should then use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.

- 2.1.4. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which:
- meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change;
 - addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes); and
 - caters for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand; (from NPPF 159)
- 2.1.5. The LPA should subsequently prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.
- 2.1.6. It is of note that both of these use 'need' and 'demand' as synonyms, although it may be argued that these are not the same. Therefore it is important to note the guidance on methodology.
- 2.1.7. Affordable Housing is defined in Annex 2 to the NPPF as "social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision."

2.2. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- 2.2.1. The Issues and Options Consultation Document has also taken account of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).
- 2.2.2. The PPG provides guidance for the use of a standard methodology for assessing housing and economic development needs. This integrated approach to assessing both housing and economic development needs has superseded the earlier approach whereby economic development and housing needs were assessed in separate studies. These studies however continue to provide valuable evidence for plan preparation provided that the local authority is able to demonstrate that both housing need and economic development factors have been taken into account in arriving at the conclusions of the other relevant assessment.

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- 2.2.3. The PPG notes that 'establishing future need for housing is not an exact science; no single approach will provide a definitive answer'.
- 2.2.4. A Housing Market Area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. It might be the case that housing market areas overlap (para. 010). Guidance is provided as to methodology for defining the housing market area and undertaking the needs assessment, including for affordable housing need.
- 2.2.5. Authorities should work jointly with neighbours, in line with the Duty to Co-operate, so that assessments of development needs cover market areas that straddle local authority boundaries. This is because needs are rarely constrained precisely by administrative boundaries. In terms of para 011, three sets of factors should be used to determine the Housing Market Area: house prices and rates of change in house prices, household migration and search patterns, and contextual data such as travel to work area boundaries, retail and school catchment areas.
- 2.2.6. Paragraphs 015-021 of the PPG deal with overall housing need - the total number of net additional dwellings to be provided over the plan period, both in the market and affordable sectors. Paragraphs 015-20 set out a step-by-step method for calculating that need, indicating that the starting point should be the household projections published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG). Plan-makers may sensitivity-test and adjust those projections in the light of local circumstances, and they should also take account of the most recent demographic evidence. Employment trends should also be taken into account in order to assess whether an alternative level or distribution of housing provision is necessary to support economic growth.
- 2.2.7. Paragraph 021 discusses that total need should be broken down by age group (with emphasis on older people), type of household (emphasis on family housing), size (number of bedrooms), special requirements (people wishing to build their own homes, disabled people, students) and tenure – although private renting is the only tenure specifically mentioned. (These factors are known collectively as 'housing mix and tenure'.)
- 2.2.8. Paragraph 017 states that plan makers should assess the likely growth in job numbers having regard to the growth of the working age population in the HMA. In the circumstance that the supply of economically active working age people in the area is less than the projected job growth, it is necessary to consider how the location of new housing and infrastructure development could help address problems of constraint such as skills shortages or excessive commuting.

- 2.2.9. Paragraphs 022-029 of the PPG again provide instructions for a step-by-step calculation of affordable housing need. This methodology differs from that used to assess overall housing need.
- 2.2.10. The assessment itself should take no account of constraints on development, such as the availability of land, viability of development, infrastructure or environmental impacts. These factors should be considered when setting policy targets but they have no bearing on need.

3. LOCAL POLICIES

3.1. Slough Core Strategy

- 3.1.1. The Council's current housing policies are set out in the Core Strategy 2006-2026 which was adopted in 2008.
- 3.1.2. Two of the Strategic Objectives of the plan are:

"B To meet the housing allocation for Slough identified in the South East Regional Plan, whilst also preventing the loss of existing housing.

C To provide housing in appropriate locations which meets the needs of the whole community; is of an appropriate mix, type, scale and density; is designed and built to high quality standards and is affordable."

- 3.1.3. Core Policy 4 (Type of Housing) states:

"High-density housing should be located in Slough town centre.

In the urban areas outside of the town centre, new residential development will predominantly consist of family housing and be at a density related to the character of the surrounding area, the accessibility of the location, and the availability of existing and proposed local services, facilities and infrastructure.

Within existing suburban residential areas there will only be limited infilling which will consist of family houses that are designed to enhance the distinctive suburban character and identity of the area.

All new residential development will be constructed at a minimum density of 37 dwellings per hectare. Densities less than this may be permitted on small sites, where the character is low density or there are other site constraints.

There will be no net loss of family accommodation as a result of flat conversions changes of use or redevelopment.

All sites of 15 or more dwellings (gross) will be required to provide between 30% and 40% of the dwellings as social rented along with other forms of affordable housing.”

- 3.1.4. The rate of housing in Slough was affected by the down turn in the economy at the beginning of the Core Strategy period. Nevertheless we have successfully delivered a level of housing in excess of that which was originally planned (an average of 450 net additional homes per year 2006/07 to 2015/16). This has resulted in the housing target being increased from 315 a year to 550. The supply of affordable housing has been affected by viability issues but has still managed to deliver a significant amount of social rented housing as required by the Core Strategy (30 % of net new home completions have been affordable housing in the period 2008/09 - 2015/16; 45% of the affordable housing has been gained via the planning system i.e. via Section 106 planning obligations).
- 3.1.5. The policy of only allowing family housing in the suburban areas has been supported in appeal decisions and successfully maintained the stock of larger units.
- 3.1.6. This shows how we have proactively promoted the provision of the required scale and a mix of housing to meet local needs in Slough. The Issues and Options consultation provides the opportunity to consider whether we need to review the current policy approach to housing.

3.2. The Slough Housing Strategy

- 3.2.1. Slough Borough Council's Housing Strategy was approved on 21st November 2016. It is a strategy for the next five years and is based in the council's Corporate 5 year plan objective that:

“There will be more homes with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough with the necessary infrastructure to support and sustain our community”

- 3.2.2. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and its conclusion that 927 additional houses are needed per year underpin the strategy. The justification for this is considered in detail in section 4 below.
- 3.2.3. The Housing Strategy sets out additional evidence not considered by the SHMA, but which provide further support for the conclusions of the SHMA.
- 3.2.4. In particular, the immediate pressures on families in housing need are indicated by the Register. Although the register now lists only those in most urgent need, the figure of 2000 means a long wait for applicants. In 2015/16 households had waited an average of 2.65 years

for a one bedroom home and 3.9 years for a three bedroom and 5 years for a home of 4 bedrooms or more.

- 3.2.5. Growing numbers of families in temporary accommodation are considered to indicate a growing trend for families on low or modest incomes falling into homelessness. This is often due to rising rents and static or falling levels of benefits making it more difficult to find and maintain accommodation in the private rental sector. Following the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which capped the level of Housing Benefit available, the gap between the LHA and market rents has grown. As an example, the maximum Housing Benefit available for a 2 bedroom flat in Slough is £840 per month. The average market rent, in contrast is £1,100 per month. For some families, the Overall Benefit Cap, which restricts the total amount of benefit which can be received, acts as a further reduction on the help available with rent.
- 3.2.6. At March 2015, SBC had 156 households in temporary accommodation. In March 2016 the figure was 225 and by September 2016 had risen to 300. This indicates a rate of affordable housing need well beyond that discussed in the SHMA. DCLG figures for homelessness acceptances in each local authority as 4.43 per 1000 of the population. This is comparable to the rates found in London boroughs.
- 3.2.7. Slough already has the eleventh highest incidence of overcrowding of all local authorities in England. Private renting is also the least secure form of accommodation and we know that many residents are renewing and recycling their private sector tenancies on short term six month agreements. As a result, many are becoming increasingly vulnerable to homelessness.
- 3.2.8. The problem is exacerbated by temporary accommodation placements in Slough from other local authorities, which have also been growing. Over the past three years Slough has been notified of 450 placements into the borough by 28 different authorities including all of the other Berkshire authorities, South Bucks and 11 London Boroughs. This is one more factor which serves to increase the difficulty for local households in the market. Competition from London Boroughs both makes it more difficult for Slough households to find accommodation in the market and more difficult for the Council to find housing for its homeless families.

3.2.9. **Council's actions for house building**

- 3.2.10. The strategy acknowledges that Slough's total housing need, including affordable and market housing for sale or rent, will have to be met by a number of different agencies.
- 3.2.11. The council will take a pro-active role in housing delivery through its own building programme. Through a combination of direct delivery and provision by partners on behalf of the council it

will prioritise available funds and council assets for the delivery of affordable housing. This will include delivery on general fund land owned by the council and on housing revenue account sites.

3.2.12. The strategy proposes to deliver housing through its joint venture delivery vehicle, Slough Urban Renewal and other partnerships. The council will also use its strategic role to assemble sites and actively use the leverage of its own assets to promote and help deliver housing development and regeneration.

3.2.13. The strategy commits the council to delivering or facilitating an average of 200 quality new homes per year over the five year life of the strategy and beyond including affordable housing. Developing a balance of new housing to own and to rent is considered a key objective for supporting economic growth and to enable residents to build their lives and careers in Slough.

3.2.14. The council aims to facilitate opportunities to ensure that a full range of housing is available to respond to housing needs at all stages in people's lives. This will include the provision of affordable homes for the range of income groups who need it, homes for people with special needs and vulnerable groups within the community.

3.2.15. Provision of affordable housing

3.2.16. The council will promote a range of market and affordable housing. It is determined to maximise the provision of affordable housing, primarily through rental.

3.2.17. It will however also look for opportunities to facilitate low cost home ownership such as through the Local Authority Partner Purchase Scheme (LAPP). This is a modern shared ownership scheme. It is aimed at buyers who can afford mortgage repayments, but who cannot afford to buy a property outright, or who may not have the large deposit often required. The scheme is available on properties for sale up to the value of £400,000 and within the Slough postcode area. LAPP helps people to buy up to a 70% share of a home by obtaining up to a 90% loan to value mortgage on their share. Slough Borough Council will buy the remaining 30%. The buyer will then pay rent to the council for this share of the property. It is hoped that the scheme can eventually be expanded to help 100 Slough households into home-ownership.

3.2.18. The Council will also promote affordable rented housing at a range of rents from traditional social rents to that within the reach of households on middle incomes. This responds to a need for affordable housing for households who could afford to pay 80% of the market rent but who cannot afford to house themselves in the market, and are not within the income levels that would allow them access to council or housing association housing through the traditional

social rental routes. The strategy acknowledges that properties to meet the needs of this group are scarce in Slough.

- 3.2.19. The council will seek market housing schemes to provide some affordable housing through planning obligations. Where possible it will look to use its Subsidiary Housing Companies to support and encourage private sector development of new homes.
- 3.2.20. The housing strategy includes proposals for the renewal of existing housing estates with the dual objectives of improving the environment and quality of the housing in the estates and also increasing the number of homes.
- 3.2.21. The Council recognises that Housing Associations already make an important contribution towards housing in the borough and in particular the provision of social housing. 7% of households in Slough rent their homes from Registered Providers (Housing Associations.) The council proposes to encourage the potential and the capacity to deliver more new homes.
- 3.2.22. The council's new Subsidiary Housing Companies will be used to assist in providing homes for vulnerable groups within the community

3.2.23. Private rental sector

- 3.2.24. In addition to the strategy objective of working to ensure that the council can meet new housing need, the council will direct resources to ensuring that housing in the private sector - particularly the private rental sector - meets the needs of residents. The proportion of Slough households living in privately rented homes is increasing. The latest information suggests that over 25% of households now rent their home from a private landlord, higher than the national figure of 17%. Most landlords provide good quality homes which are well-managed and cater for a wide range of income groups.
- 3.2.25. While most private sector homes provide a good standard of accommodation, there are also some severe problems;
- Nationally, conditions in the private rented sector are worse than in other housing tenures. A third do not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard;
 - Many tenants in Slough are living in overcrowded conditions;
 - Research by Shelter nationally shows that over half of tenants had experienced severe conditions problems over the previous 12 months because their landlord has not dealt with repairs in their property
 - Poor housing conditions, particularly associated with the private rented sector, have an adverse effect on public health and well-being and exacerbate health inequalities; 9% of parents said their children's health has been affected

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- The energy efficiency standard of a home and inadequate heating systems can lead to fuel poverty for low income households and further exacerbate the health effects of living in poor quality housing
- A number of elderly, disabled or vulnerable residents, particularly owner occupiers, now need support or adaptations to their homes to allow them to continue to live independently
- In a small minority of cases, landlords are deliberately keeping their properties empty. The Council is proactively working on 14 sites and 7 of these are at an advanced stage towards a Compulsory Purchase Order.

3.2.26. The council is currently working with the Building Research Establishment to collect data for a more comprehensive picture of the private rental sector.

3.2.27. The Council itself has a range of partnership arrangements with private landlords, particularly where it is preventing families becoming homeless or placing residents in private rented accommodation as an alternative to expensive and unsuitable Bed & Breakfast hotels. Private sector homes are a vital resource when there is not enough permanent social housing available.

3.2.28. The Council has statutory and regulatory and enforcement powers available. The use of these powers of regulation will be extended following the announcement in October 2016 that Government will expand the mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs.) It is estimated that there are approximately 3,500 Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Borough. The number will be clarified later in 2016 by BRE research. At present 64 HMOs are currently licensed under Mandatory Licensing and a further 42 HMOs under the Chalvey Additional Licensing Scheme

3.2.29. Council homes

3.2.30. The housing strategy for council owned homes has already been touched on in regard to the proposals for new homes – the commitment to building an average of 200 new homes per year on council land including HRA land, including new affordable housing across the range of affordable housing types.

3.2.31. Slough Borough Council owns and manages 7,100 rented properties across the borough and is the freeholder for a further 1,700 leasehold homes to which it also provides services. It is proposed that over the next 7 years there will be £100m investment programme in existing homes as well as £40m invested in building new council homes.

3.2.32. The award of a new repairs and investment contract to start in 2017 will provide a focus for improved services to tenants.

- 3.2.33. However, there are threats to the viability of the HRA, and the capacity for the council to develop new plans for house building as well as managing and improving the councils housing stock. These have mainly been brought about by Government policy. These include the mandatory 1% reduction in rents for 4 years from 2016/17, a requirement to make a payment to the Government following the sale of “higher value” voids; and Pay to Stay which will mean tenants with a household income of over £31,000 paying a higher rent.
- 3.2.34. All of which will have a major impact on the future of council homes in the Borough.
- 3.2.35. In response, the council will publish a new 30 year baseline business plan for the Housing Revenue Account and undertake a comprehensive survey of the condition of the Council's housing stock, for completion by January 2017. In the light of the results of the condition survey and the implementation of the provisions of the Housing and Planning Act, it will produce an updated HRA Business Plan in March 2017. And in partnership with residents, undertake a formal asset management review and option appraisal of the Council's housing stock for completion by December 2017. It is still intended to complete the existing programme of 190 new homes on Housing-owned land and seek to continue the programme beyond 2020.
- 3.2.36. **Housing for vulnerable groups**
- 3.2.37. The SHMA includes a study of the need to also have a strategy for dealing with the housing needs of a growing number of people with vulnerable people and those with special housing needs, for example, young people, older people and people, people with disabilities. The Housing strategy draws on evidence both from the SHMA and the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA).
- 3.2.38. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) estimates that that the number of people over the age of 65 in Slough will increase by 40% in the next 10 years. The SHMA estimates that between 2013 and 2036 the number of people aged over 85 will increase by 120%. The JSNA also estimates that in 2012, 9,322 residents between the ages of 16 and 65 had a physical disability.
- 3.2.39. The council also proposes to work with partners, particularly with Adult Services, Public Health and the CCG, to develop services to allow elderly and disabled residents to live independently in their home and reduce the impact of poor housing on the health of borough residents. It also proposes some more specific initiatives as part of a strategy for the older person's housing in the Borough.
- 3.2.40. There are 2 Extra Care Schemes already in Slough for residents over the age of 55 who have some care and support needs. Housing and Adult Social Care services are working together to

develop up to 3 additional extra care schemes on a mixed tenure basis including flats for sale. Extra Care Schemes will help residents to continue to live in self-contained accommodation which allows them to maintain their independence, dignity and personal choice. Other options for providing accommodation with care are also being considered.

3.2.41. Slough already has a considerable resource for people with a disability in its stock of social housing which has already been adapted or is capable of being adapted. However, the monitoring of adaptations which have been carried out and the matching of vacancies to the requirements of individual residents needs to be improved.

3.2.42. Within the direct new build programme on council land, the Council has made provision for new units for people with learning difficulties.

3.2.43. Alongside this are a range of proposals for improving and integrating advice, adaptation services and use of digital technology to enhance person centred care in the home; all of which are aimed to help people to live more comfortable and safe lives in their homes.

3.2.44. **Conclusions**

3.2.45. Although it only covers a five year period, the Council's Housing Strategy is a key document that has to be taken account of in the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document in that it identifies many of the issues and provides some potential solutions for the future planning of Slough.

3.2.46. It highlights the ongoing need to provide affordable housing and to regulate the private rented sector. It also explains what actions the Council is going to take in the short term to provide additional housing to meet local needs.

4. East Berkshire and South Bucks Strategic Housing Market Assessment

4.1.1. The key housing evidence for the preparation of the Review of the Local Plan for Slough is set out in Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Berkshire and South Bucks which was produced by GL Hearn and published in February 2016.

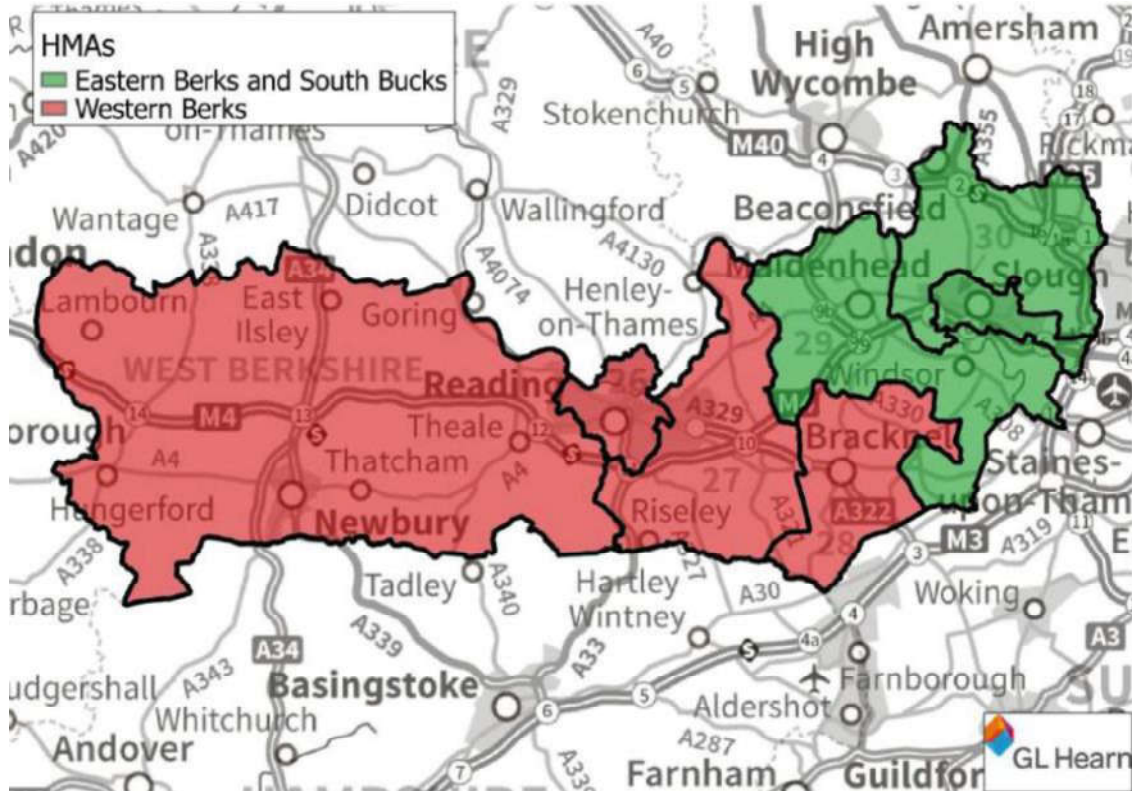
4.1.2. This detailed study was jointly commissioned by Berkshire Authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership in order to define the relevant Housing Market Area (HMA) or Areas and provide evidence on the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) for all the local planning authorities. The findings of the report have been accepted by each of the

Berkshire Authorities and the OAHN figures from the report are being used for plan making by all these authorities.

4.2. Housing Market Area

- 4.2.1. One of the requirements for the preparation of a Local Plan is to define which Housing Market Area it sits in. The initial work to define the HMAs confirmed that South Bucks District should also be considered within the Berkshire study area even though South Bucks District Council (SBDC) decided not to be a party to the commission.
- 4.2.2. Having considered a wide range of data including house prices, migration and commuting flows the SHMA concluded that there are two Housing Market Areas within the study area. These are the Western Berkshire HMA which includes Bracknell Forest, Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire and an Eastern HMA which includes Slough the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) and South Bucks (SBDC).
- 4.2.3. The SHMA notes that of the three factors outlines in the PPG, in practice migration and commuting data are often key data inputs to defining HMAs. House price analysis highlights the extent to which the London Housing market influences the market. This results in an east west distinction within Berkshire as a whole which shows that RBWM and South Bucks have higher house prices with a stronger relationship to London than other parts of Berkshire. Slough has lower house prices but this is considered to be a reflection of localised house quality.
- 4.2.4. Migration evidence shows that in the eastern Berks and South Bucks grouping there is a relatively high self-containment (69%) but if the influence of London is removed it increases dramatically to 78-86%. This highlights a much stronger London influence in this group than for the Western Berks group and takes the self-containment rates above the typical 70% threshold.
- 4.2.5. There is a similar relationship with regard to commuting patterns. The commuting resident self-containment rates for the Eastern berks South Bucks area is 71% when Greater London is removed although the job self-containment is around 57% reflecting the in commuting to Slough (6139 from London, 3618 from South Bucks and 5865 from RBWM).
- 4.2.6. The study specifically studied that situation with regard to data available for South Bucks before concluding that this area's best fit was within an HMA along with the East Berks authorities rather than a Buckinghamshire HMA. This is shown at Page 102 of the SHMA report Feb 2016.

Figure 1: Housing Market Areas (2015).



Source: GL Hearn © Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100019153

- 4.2.7. South Bucks has subsequently decided to produce a joint Local Plan with Chiltern District Council which is in a different Housing Market Area. It is possible to prepare a plan for an area which contains two Housing market Areas but the Councils have decided that for plan making purposes the two Districts need to be in the same Housing Market Area. As a result they carried out a new study which concluded that the “best fit” is for South Bucks to be included in the Buckinghamshire Housing Market Area. It is recognised that this does not change the functional geography of the area.
- 4.2.8. As a result South Bucks and Chiltern Councils do not agree that South Bucks should be in the Eastern Berkshire/South Bucks Housing Market Area.
- 4.2.9. The NPG acknowledges that Housing Market Areas can overlap (NPG 010). The Duty to Cooperate should mean that even where there is some dispute in regard to the boundary of the HMA, the housing needs of an adjacent authority should be taken into account where evidence indicates that household demand, and preferences for all types of housing, reflect the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.
- 4.2.10. This decision by South Bucks and Chiltern Districts to change the Housing Market Areas administrative purposes does not invalidate the findings of the Berkshire and South Bucks

SHMA produced by GL Hearn which is being used as the evidence base for the preparation of the Review of the Local Plan for Slough.

4.3. Assessing Housing Need

4.3.1. Having identified the Housing Market Area one of the key purposes of the SHMA is to identify what the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) is for each local Plan area. The conclusion of the Berkshire and South Bucks SHMA produced by GL Hearn is that Slough's OAHN is 927 dwellings a year.

4.3.2. As a result one of the Objectives of the Local Plan is "to meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need of 927 dwellings per annum within the Borough or as close as possible to where the needs arises within a balanced community". The validity of this figure can be seen from the following analysis:

4.3.3. Overall population trends

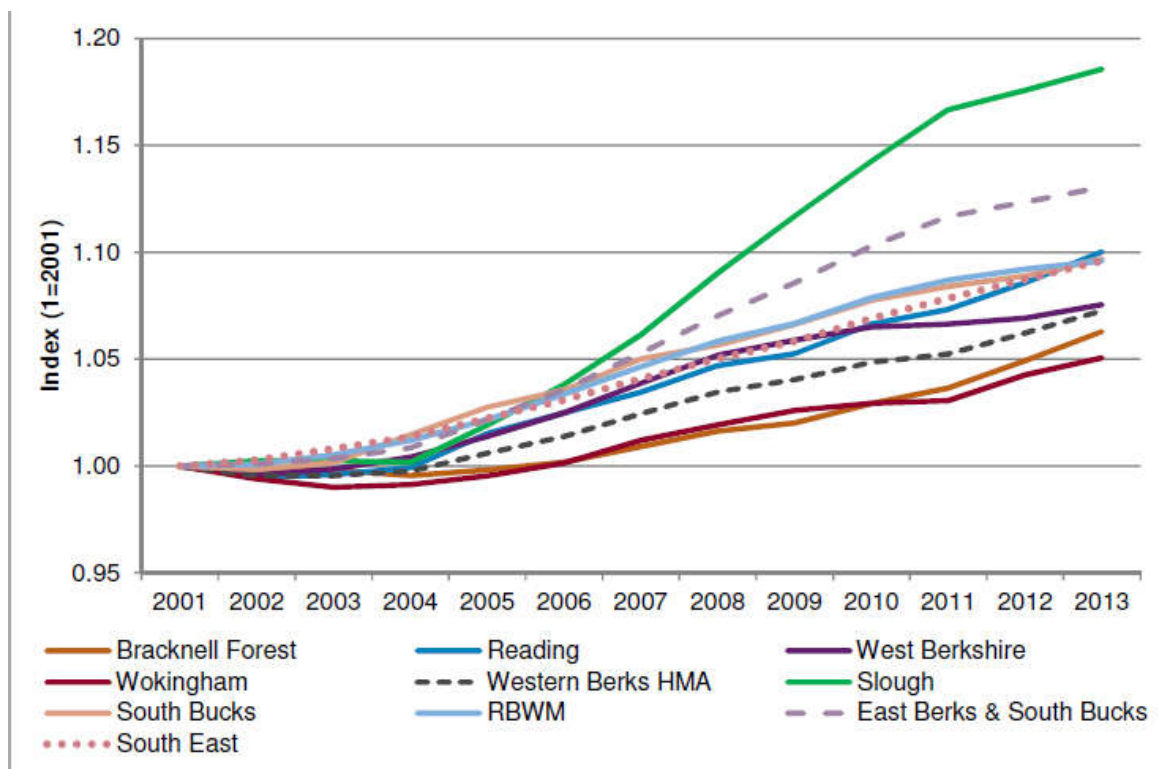
4.3.4. The most significant factor underpinning estimates of housing need during the plan period is the population. The Strategic Housing market area study used population estimates based on the 2012 sub-national population projections updated to take account of the 2013 mid year population estimates.

4.3.5. The SHMA uses the sub national population projections to show at table 39 that Slough's population is likely to grow from 143,024 in 2013 to 177,553 in 2036. The projected population increase of 34,529 will represent a 24.1% increase during the plan period to 2036. This population projection underpins the housing need assessment used for plan making in the Slough Local Plan review.

4.3.6. The Berkshire Authorities agreed to accept the findings of OAHN recommendations, of the SHMA for the purposes of local plan making

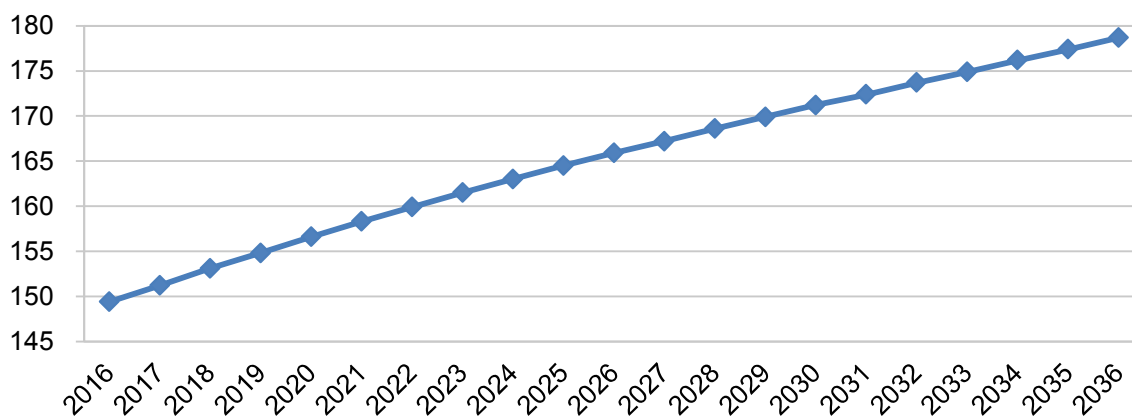
4.3.7. The population of Slough has grown at a higher rate than any of the other local authorities in Berkshire.

Figure 2: Benchmarking Population Growth, 2003-13 (figure 32 SHMA).



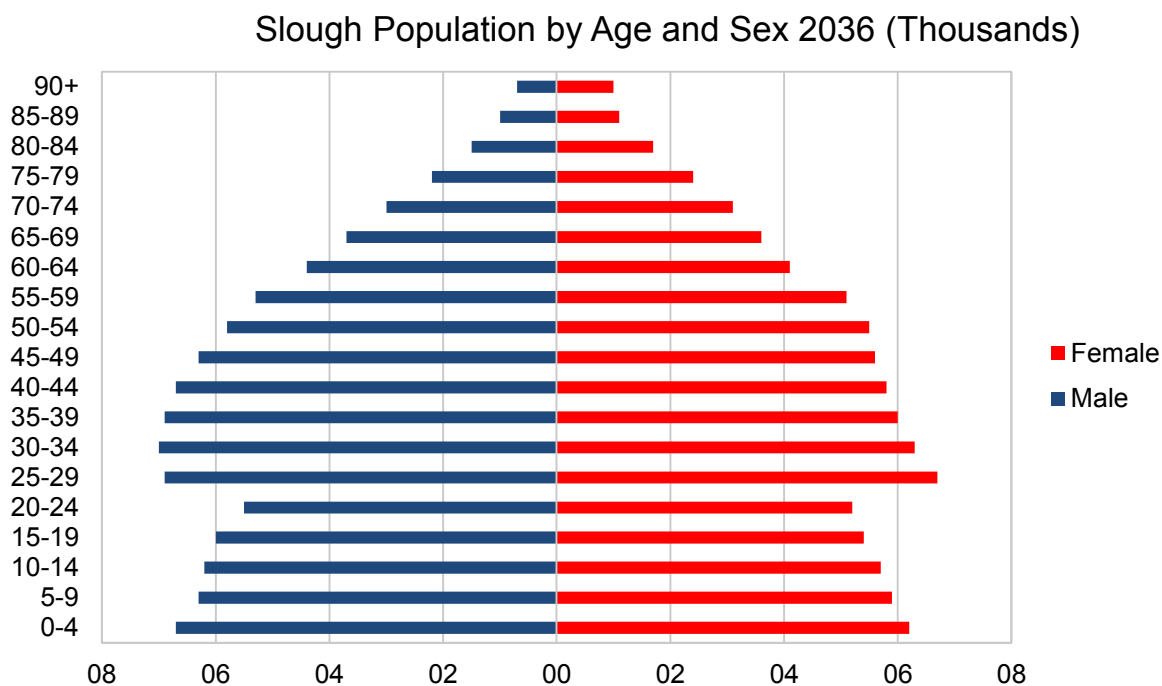
Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates from SHMA figure 32 (pg 106)

Figure 3: Population projections for Slough 2016-2036.



Source : 2012 SNPP and 2013 mid year estimate

Figure 4: Slough Population projection in 2036 by age groups.

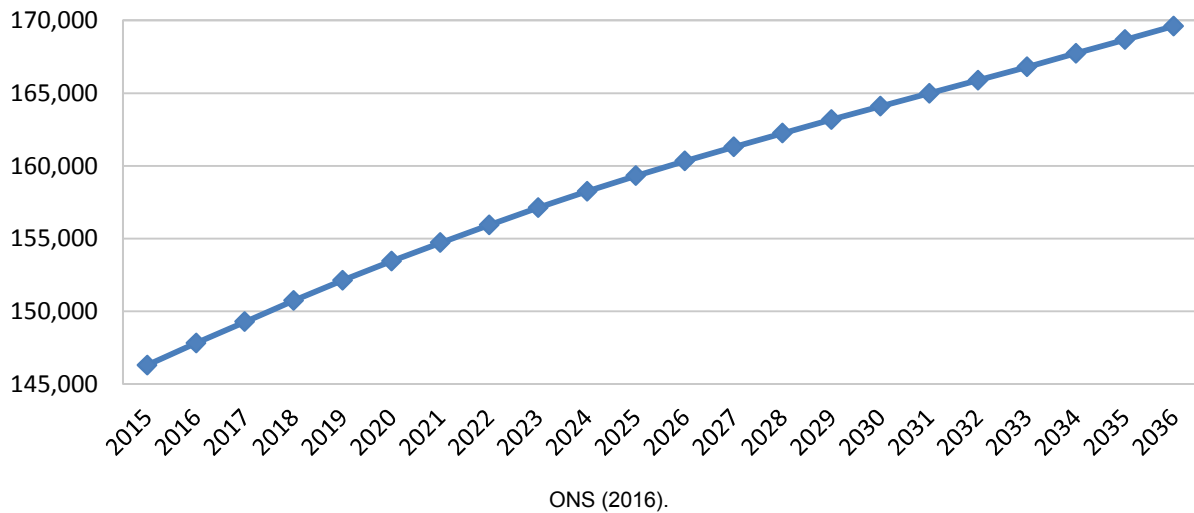


Source: 2012 SNPP and 2013 Mid year estimate

4.3.8. These figures were higher than the population and household projections published in May 2014 by the Office for National Statistics. Because most of the analysis in the SHMA study had been completed by this time the 2014 projections were published it was decided that the SHMA would not be altered and, as stated above, the Berkshire authorities decided to accept the findings of OAHN from the SHMA as a basis for plan making.

4.3.9. The ONS projections published since the SHMA was completed show that Slough’s population will be expected to increase by a smaller amount than estimated in the earlier projections. The most recently released projections (May 2016 based on 2014 based projections) indicated that between 2016 and 2036 the population is expected to grow from 147,821 to 169,611; an increase of 21,790 (14.75%). (see below)

Figure 5: Slough Population Projections 2015-2036.

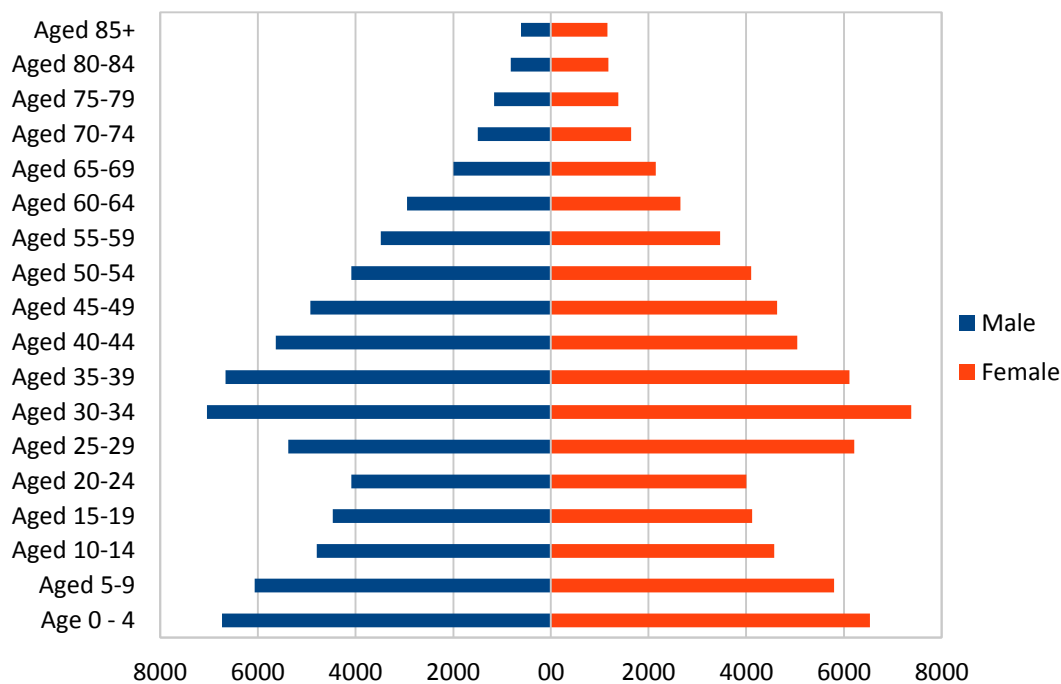


4.3.10. Population characteristics

4.3.11. Drawing all demographic analysis together for the whole study area, the SHMA report noted the following characteristics for Slough based primarily on the 2011 census data:

- Youngest population
- Most diverse population
- Smallest percentage of pensioner households (11.6%) (pg.117)
- Highest percentage of households with children (49.1%) (pg.116)
- 2nd highest percentage of student households(still just 0.2%)
- Highest percentage of large households (5+ persons) (14.9% (pg.116)
- Lowest qualified population
- Highest percentage of unemployed and unskilled residents
- Highest percentage flats and 1 bedroom homes
- 2nd highest percentage of houses in the private rental sector
- Highest percentage of social rented properties.

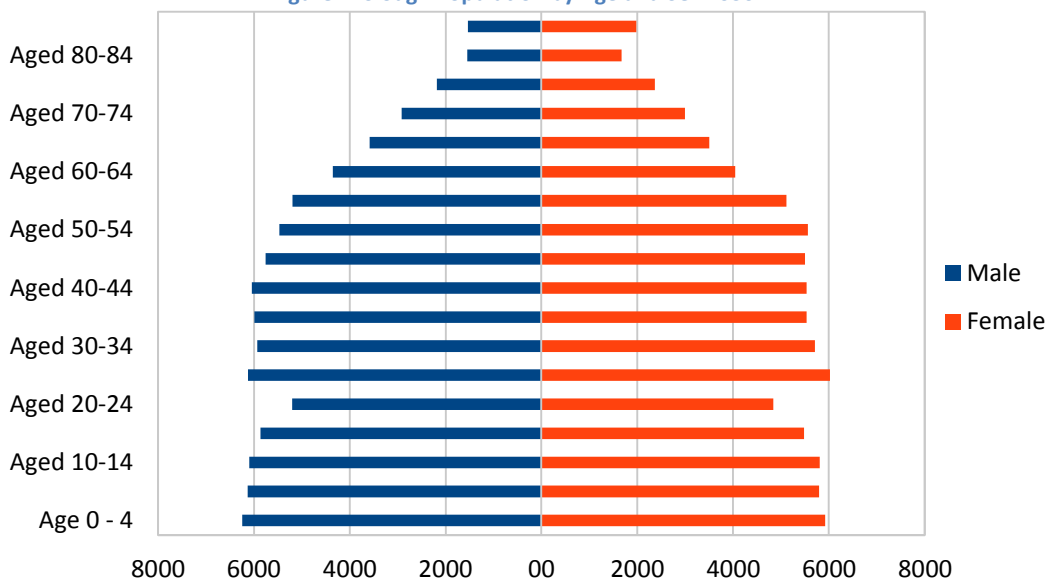
Figure 6: Slough Population by Age and Sex 2014.



Source: ONS (2016).

4.3.12. The main reason for the large projected increase in population is that Slough has a high number of people in the 30 to 40 age bracket and a large number of children under ten. In 2015 the fertility rate in Slough was 2.23 children per woman which is significantly higher than the national average of 1.82 children per woman¹

Figure 7: Slough Population by Age and Sex 2036.



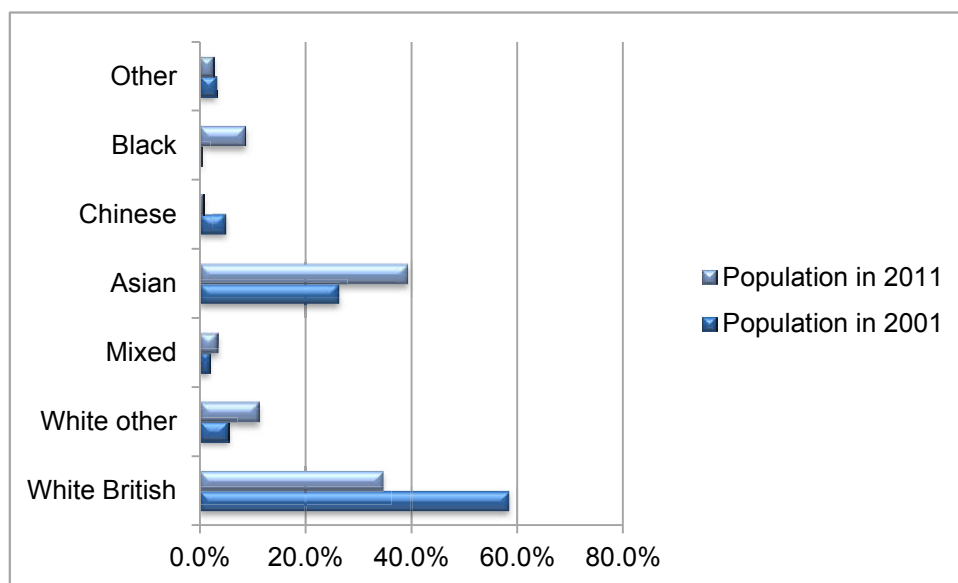
Source: ONS (2016).

¹ Office for National Statistics, Birth Summary Tables, www.ons.gov.uk

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- 4.3.13. Life expectancy has risen the past decade and a male child born in Slough is predicted to live until the age of 87.4 years and a female child to 82.5. This is broadly similar to average rates for England Slough's rates do lag behind those of neighbouring areas, possibly reflecting differences in lifestyle and outcomes across the various communities (Slough Story)
- 4.3.14. Over the plan period, the age profile of the population will change. A comparison of the graph for 2036 in Figure 4 with Figure 3 for 2014 shows that Slough will have a much more balanced population with almost equal numbers of people in all age brackets up to 60. Although there will be relatively fewer people over 60 than other age groups there will still be a significant increase in the number of elderly people compared to today. This change in the age profile will have an effect upon the type of housing and services that we will have to provide.
- 4.3.15. The population of the East Berkshire and South Bucks HMA is more diverse than the Western HMA. This is primarily driven by Slough which has the lowest percentage of people who self-identify as white British. Comparisons between the 2001 and 2011 census data show that the proportion of the population who identify as Asian has grown as has the White Other and Black groupings.

Figure 8: Changes in ethnicity within the population 2001 - 2011.

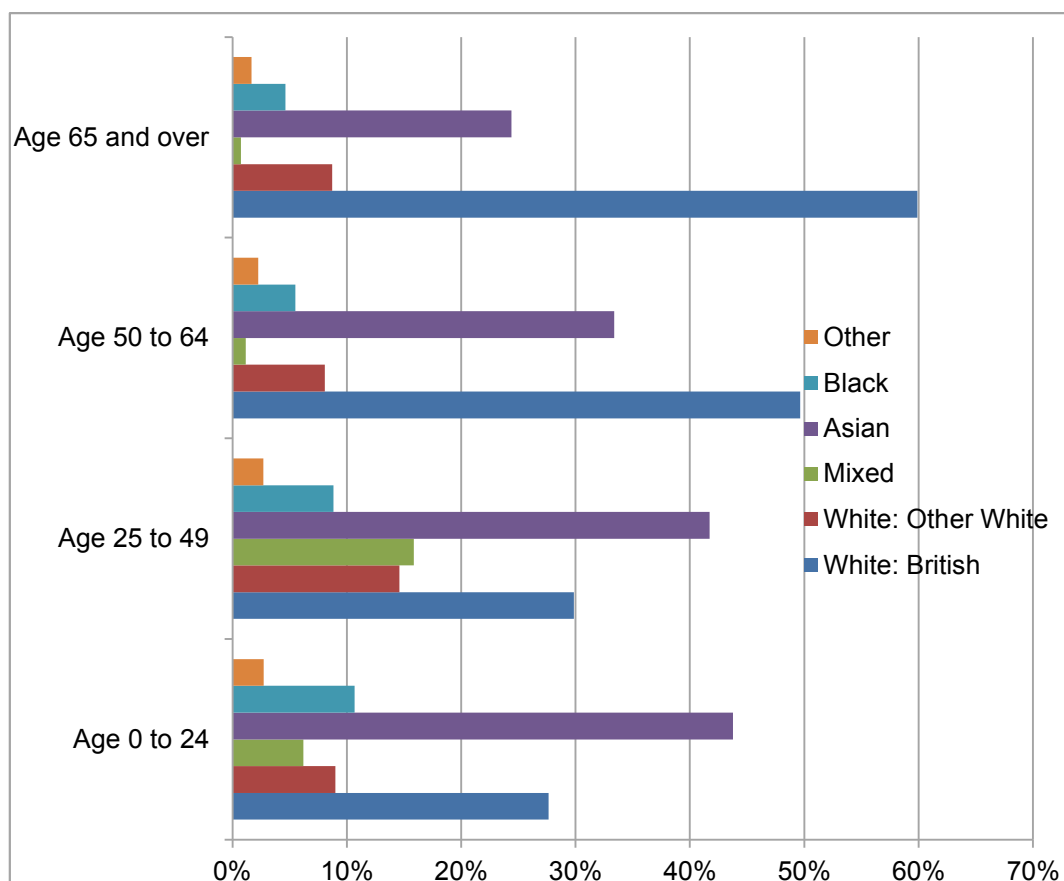


4.3.16.

Source: ONS Census data 2001 and 2011

- 4.3.17. When the population data is analysed by both age and ethnicity, it can be seen that the ethnic groups where there has been a higher proportionate growth, tend also to have a higher proportion of younger people in the population. The school census 2012 recorded over 150 languages spoken. In 15.5% of households no-one indicated English as their main language.

Figure 9: Slough population per age and ethnicity 2011.



ONS Census data 2001 and 2011

- 4.3.18. The SHMA uses the 2011 census to calculate that for the East Berks and South Bucks HMA area, 73.3% of the population aged 16 to 74 are economically active. That is, those of working age who are either in employment or not in employment but seeking work. This is higher than for the South East as a whole (72.1% and England and Wales (69.7%).
- 4.3.19. The comparable figure for Slough is 73.4% economically active or students, with 5.4% unemployed but seeking work. In terms of occupational profile, Slough has a smallest proportion of residents in the professional (34.8%) category compared to other areas within both the Berkshire HMAs although the level of skilled workers is higher.
- 4.3.20. Slough enjoys relatively high levels of community cohesion. In 2013 research found that 86% of residents (surveyed) felt ethnic difference in their local area was respected, and 81% agreed that people from different backgrounds do get on well together across Slough. This compares well with national comparisons and reinforces a perception that Slough is generally a welcoming place to live (Slough story).
- 4.3.21. Social mobility indices show that Slough scores well across all of the age groups in comparison with its neighbours, especially at the youth age. This demonstrates the impact of the

educational attainment and is important for longer term aspirations to ensure that Slough residents have the skills to allow them to access the new, higher paid jobs that will come with town centre office developments planned. For adults, the poorer ranking – similar to that of Hillingdon - is likely to be a reflection of the lower wage that Slough residents currently earn relative to the wages earned within Slough as a result of in commuting.

Table 1: Social Mobility Index 2016.

Overall rankings (out of the 324 local authority districts)

Area	Overall	Early years	School	Youth	Adulthood
Slough	35	238	95	13	100
Windsor and Maidenhead	101	223	143	177	11
South Bucks	197	240	316	32	63
Hillingdon	56	147	127	30	117

4.3.22. Household growth and demographic led need

4.3.23. The SHMA uses the concept of “headship”; the number of people who are counted as the “household reference person” to convert from population estimates to household projections.

4.3.24. It is helpful to restate the ONS (2016) definitions for a family and a household.

“A family is a married, civil partnered or cohabiting couple with or without children, or a lone parent, with at least one child, who live at the same address. Children may be dependent or non-dependent.

A household is one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room, sitting room or dining area. A household can consist of more than one family, or no families in the case of a group of unrelated people.”

4.3.25. The SHMA calculates that there were 51,980 dwellings in Slough using the 2011 census data and VOA data. The number of homes registered for council tax in the same period was 50,489 (slightly different definition of dwelling relative to the census). The number of household spaces was 50,766 with 1214 household spaces in shared dwellings. (SHMA table 25 page 115) The report notes (pt 4.43 page.149) that in reality there are a greater number of household spaces than homes in the study area, but that census data suggests that the difference between the two is fairly minor.

4.3.26. The projected number of households in Slough at 2036 will be 71,961, an increase of 37.6% since 2013 (SHMA table 41 page 144). The SHMA anticipates that expected rates of household growth across the whole of Berkshire will start to decline from 2016 primarily in response to natural change (aging in the population) and net migration. However in Slough there will continue to be strong household growth predominantly driven by population growth.

4.3.27. The report's analysis is that on the basis of demographic analysis based on population projections and headship rates, Slough will need to provide 855 new homes per annum.

Table 2: Projected household growth 2013-36 – 2012 based SNPP and 2012 headship rates.

	Households 2013	Households 2036	Change in households	Household change (per annum)	Homes (per annum)
Slough	52,300	71,961	19,662	855	875
East Berks and South Bucks	138,748	180,334	41,586	1,808	1,871

Source: SHMA table 42 page 150 derived from ONS 2014 and CLG data 2015.

4.3.28. To convert from household growth projections to homes, there needs to be an uplift to take account of vacant homes. For Slough the vacancy rate (measured as the proportion of household spaces that are unoccupied) is 2.4%. This is lower than the rate for any other local authority in the study area.

4.3.29. The household growth figures may be calculated on an alternative basis than used in the SNPP 2012 projection. The SHMA looks at the impact of migration using 10 and 12 year trends and also a calculation which looks more closely at unexpected population change (UPC). The last of these is of particular significance to Slough as attributable change is positive for both Reading and Slough - maybe due to migration in these urban areas. However, the study concludes that none of the three alternatives are as reliable as the 2012 SNPP.

Table 3: Projected household growth 2013-36. Alternative calculations of household growth projections.

Alternative calculations for Slough	Households 2013	Households 2036	Change in households	Household change (per annum)	Homes (per annum)
Using 10 yr migration trends	52,300	75,195	22,895	995	1,019
Using 12 yr migration trends	52,300	72,694	20,394	887	908
2012 SNPP with UPC adjustment	52,300	79,234	26,934	1,171	1,199
2012 based with London Sensitivity Analysis	52,300	71,736	19,436	845	865
2014 SNPP	52,300	67,977	15,677	682	698

Source tables 43,44 &45 SHMA report and CLG SNPP 2014 household projections published 2016; SNPP-Subnational population projections; UPC -unexplained population change.

4.3.30. The SHMA also undertook sensitivity testing to assess the impact on household growth of net migration to and from London by analysing trends from 2001/2 to 2012/13. For the study area as a whole, there is an increase in housing need of 3%, but Slough and South Bucks both saw a modest decrease.

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- 4.3.31. For completeness, the table above also includes the household projections for 2014 and 2016, which were published after the SHMA was completed and as per the agreement of Berkshire Authorities have not been used for calculating OAHN for the purpose of plan making.
- 4.3.32. The overall conclusion of the SHMA was that the 2012 based population projections provided a sound demographic projection.
- 4.3.33. **Economy led housing need**
- 4.3.34. The SHMA also considered the housing needed to meet the needs of the local economy in order to ensure that economic growth is not constrained due to a lack of housing.
- 4.3.35. The SHMA used data supplied by Cambridge Econometrics Employment by Industry Forecasts (Sept 2013) to assess both past employment trends and forecasts of future employment growth as this data also underpins the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan.
- 4.3.36. During the economic cycle 1990 – 2009, employment growth in Slough was fairly low; peaking in 2001 (94,400 jobs) and as low as 81,400 in 1993. The overall change in job numbers over the period was 1200 which was significantly less than both the neighbouring LA areas. The Borough experienced a shift away from manufacturing towards finance and information and communications - generally offsetting each other in terms of job numbers.
- 4.3.37. While acknowledging the uncertainty of forecasts for employment growth, depending on the period of the cycle chosen for trend analysis and the approach of the forecaster, the SHMA quotes the CE forecast for Slough. This anticipates a growth of 14,680 jobs over the period 2013 – 2036. Having examined various alternative forecasts based on more recent trend data and other factors such as knowledge of infrastructure investments, it settled on a 0.7% growth rate per annum for Slough. This level of growth is slightly higher than the forecast and above historic trends. This results in a forecast of 16,200 additional jobs by 2036 (table 59 Expected growth levels/distribution pg.195).
- 4.3.38. This is the level that is taken forward in the Review of the Local Plan for Slough as part of the assessment of economic led housing need.
- 4.3.39. Commuting data from the 2011 census shows that as expected for a compact urban area, Slough has a high level of in commuting.

Table 4: Commuting patterns in Slough.

Live and work in LA	24,062
Home workers	5,017
No fixed work place	6,560
Out commuting	31,918
In commuting	39,326
Total working in the LA	74,965
Total living and working in the LA	67,557
Commuting ratio	0.90

Source: 2011 Census

- 4.3.40. In translating the commuting data into growth in the labour force, the SHMA assumed that the ratio will remain the same as that shown by the 2011 census and that the same proportion of new jobs will be taken by in commuters. There is also an adjustment made to account for people who have more than one job which for Slough is 3.2%. It is therefore assumed that in order to meet the employment growth rate of 16,200 additional jobs in Slough between 2013 and 2036 the resident workforce would have to increase 14,094.
- 4.3.41. Using the 2011 census, the SHMA has calculated that for the East Berks and South Bucks HMA area, 73.3% of the population aged 16 to 74 are economically active, That is, those of working age who are either in employment or not in employment but seeking work. In Slough 73.4% of the population are economically active or students, with 5.4% unemployed but seeking work. Over time the trend has been for an increasing proportion of the population to be economically active (particularly females and people aged over 50). In contrast to all the other LAs in the study, the SHMA has calculated that Slough's employment rate is expected to continue at the current rate. Applying this to the additional workforce required to meet employment growth and then making adjustments from the demographic model to allow for migration, the SHMA calculates that in this economic-led housing growth model, the housing need in Slough will be 688 homes per year.
- 4.3.42. This is a significantly lower figure than derived from the demographic-led assessment of housing need (875 homes per annum). Therefore the SHMA concludes that there is no justification for a further uplift in the level of OAHN.
- 4.3.43. It should be noted that none of the forecasts take account of any growth as a result of the proposed development of a third runway at Heathrow which could create up to 77,000 new jobs. As a result the need for more housing may have to be revisited once a decision has been made about the expansion of the airport.

4.3.44. Affordable housing need.

4.3.45. Another factor which can influence what the supply of new housing should be is what need for affordable housing will be over the plan period. The SHMA used a methodology compliant with the guidance given in the PPG to determine whether there is a shortfall of affordable housing in the Housing Market Area. Taking account of the Lower Quartile private rents and market sales prices, the SHMA identifies Slough as being within the Thames and East Thames Broad Rental Market Area, along with RBWM.

4.3.46. The SHMA has estimated that Slough has 6,344 households living in unsuitable housing. It also estimated that the affordable housing need for newly forming households will be 743 per annum for the plan period. Alongside this, it is estimated, based on recent trends, that 282 existing households a year will fall into affordable housing need. This includes households who have entered the housing register and been housed within the year as well as households housed outside the register.

4.3.47. When the supply of affordable housing that is likely to become available from the existing stock is taken into account the SHMA estimates that there will be a net need of 671 affordable houses a year.

4.3.48. The net need estimate has been sensitivity tested for affordability at levels of 25% of average income, 30%, 35% and 40%. In Slough, if the 35% test is used the net need for affordable housing is 671 per annum which represents 77% of the demographically assessed OHN of 875 homes per year.

4.3.49. In order to ensure that sufficient housing is delivered in order to meet both housing need and affordable housing need, given that not all housing sites will be able to deliver affordable housing along with market housing, the PPG stipulates that an additional allowance should be considered to ensure that the required number of affordable homes will be delivered. The SHMA assumes 25% as an across the board expectation for affordable housing provision in market led housing schemes.

4.3.50. Market signals

4.3.51. Market signals land and house prices have been considered in the SHMA. Across the study area it was found that there were affordability pressures particularly in light of increasing house prices which have outstripped growth in earnings. Added to this is the increased number of concealed households (increasing from 1,046 to 2036 between the 2001 census and the 2011

census in Slough) and evidence of overcrowding in some areas. This is interpreted as indicating a supply and demand imbalance restricting household formation particularly for younger groups. The approach used by the SHMA to respond to these market signals has been to quantify housing rates if household formation rates were to return to the level in 2001. For Slough this would mean that an additional 52 Households would be expected to form, requiring an additional 51 homes.

4.3.52. Conclusions on Housing Needs

4.3.53. Taking all of these factors into account the SHMA concludes that the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for Slough up to 2036 is 927 dwellings per years made up from the following components:

Table 5: Objectively Assessed Need.

2012- based household projections (adjusted to reflect 2013 MYE)	London uplift	Economic uplift	Reversing suppressed household formation	Improving affordability	OAN (homes per annum)
875	0	0	0	52	927

Source: SHMA.

4.3.1. All of the analysis set out above confirms that 927 dwellings per annum is the correct figure for the Issues and Options Consultation Document to seek to plan for. This is consistent with the approach taken by all of the other Berkshire authorities who have used the Objectively Assessed Needs figures from the SHMA as the basis for the preparation of their Local Plans.

5. Type of Housing

5.1.1. Part of Objective A in the Issues and Options Consultation Document is to create a “*balanced housing market*”.

5.1.2. Objective B is “To provide new homes of an appropriate mix, type and tenure for Slough’s population that are designed and built to a high quality and environmentally sound standard”.

5.1.3. The following sections therefore set out the evidence for what sort of new housing should be planned for in Slough.

5.1.4. **Size of housing**

5.1.5. The SHMA notes that the 2012 based figures for household projections expect a decrease in the size of households in Slough over time. It notes that changes to household size are by suppressed household formation (such as suppression in the housing market) and also by population structure changes such as international migration and growth in BME communities. These recognise that such groups tend to be younger and more likely to be part of larger households, both of which characteristics are present in the population of Slough.

Table 6: Breakdown of household numbers in Slough ONS 2016.

Household Size	Number	%
All categories: Household size	50,766	100
1 to 2 people in household	26,817	53
3 to 4 people in household	16,375	32
5 to 6 people in household	6,340	12
7 to 8 or more people in household	1,234	2

Source: ONS 2016.

5.1.6. The biggest category in Slough is “1 person in household” which together with “2 people households” make up just over half of the total number comprising just over half of all households. 12% of households in Slough have from 5 to 6 people compared to the average of 7% of Windsor, South Bucks, South East and England. Only 2% i.e. 1,234 of households in Slough are larger than 7 people.

5.1.7. Spatial analysis of this data using output areas has shown that smaller households are spread across the borough with concentrations in some areas – especially for larger households.

- Some output areas are 60 to 90% composed of 1 to 2 people households.
- Some output areas are 40 to 60% composed of 3 to 4 people households.
- There are output areas with no presence of households larger than 5 people.
- There are no output areas with larger composition than 40% of 5 to 6 people households.
- There are no output areas with larger composition than 30% of 7 to 8 or more people households and where there is a higher concentration, these exist in small isolated clusters.
- There are output areas where households larger than 5 people are focused. Specially around the Town Centre (see maps below).

Table 7: Households by type, 2011.

Households by type	Number	%
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Single pensioner	4013	7.9%
All other pensioners	1899	3.7%
One person under 65	10434	20.6%
Couple no children	6150	12.1%
Families with children	24914	49.1%
All students	105	0.2%
Rest	3251	6.4%

Source: ONS 2011.

5.1.8. This data confirms the predominance of small households in Slough with the first four categories – single person households or couples making up 44% of the total. The SHMA postulates that the high levels of small households in Slough could be driven by a high level of international migrants who are typically younger.

5.1.9. The 2011 census provides data on occupancy rates for Slough. This shows that whereas 51% of households occupy accommodation with one or more spare bedroom, 21% have more household members than bedrooms. This data is important in relation to the Councils strategy for considering and delivering for the needs of lone parent families who are proportionately more reliant on social rented housing and extended families given the scarcity of large homes in Slough.

Table 8: Occupation rates in Slough, 2011.

Occupancy Rating	Number	%
All categories: Occupancy rating (rooms)	50,766	100
Occupancy rating (rooms) of +1 or more	25,655	51
Occupancy rating (rooms) of 0	14,567	29
Occupancy rating (rooms) of -1 or less	10,544	21

Source: ONS 2011.

5.1.10. The SHMA notes that there are a range of factors that influence demand for different size of homes including demographic changes (such as household size and age profile), future growth in real earnings and ability to save, economic performance and housing affordability.

5.1.11. Taking all of these factors into account the SHMAs recommended mix of new homes in appropriate sizes for Slough to meet need in the area is shown in the following table:

Table 9: Estimated size of accommodation required in Slough by number of Bedrooms (2013 – 2036).

Housing by Tenure	No/%	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4+ Bedrooms	Total
Market Housing	No	2,086	4,125	7,240	2,536	15,988
	%	13.0%	25.8%	45.3%	15.9%	100%
Affordable Housing	No	2,269	1,637	1,180	243	5,329
	%	42.6%	30.7%	22.1%	4.6%	100%

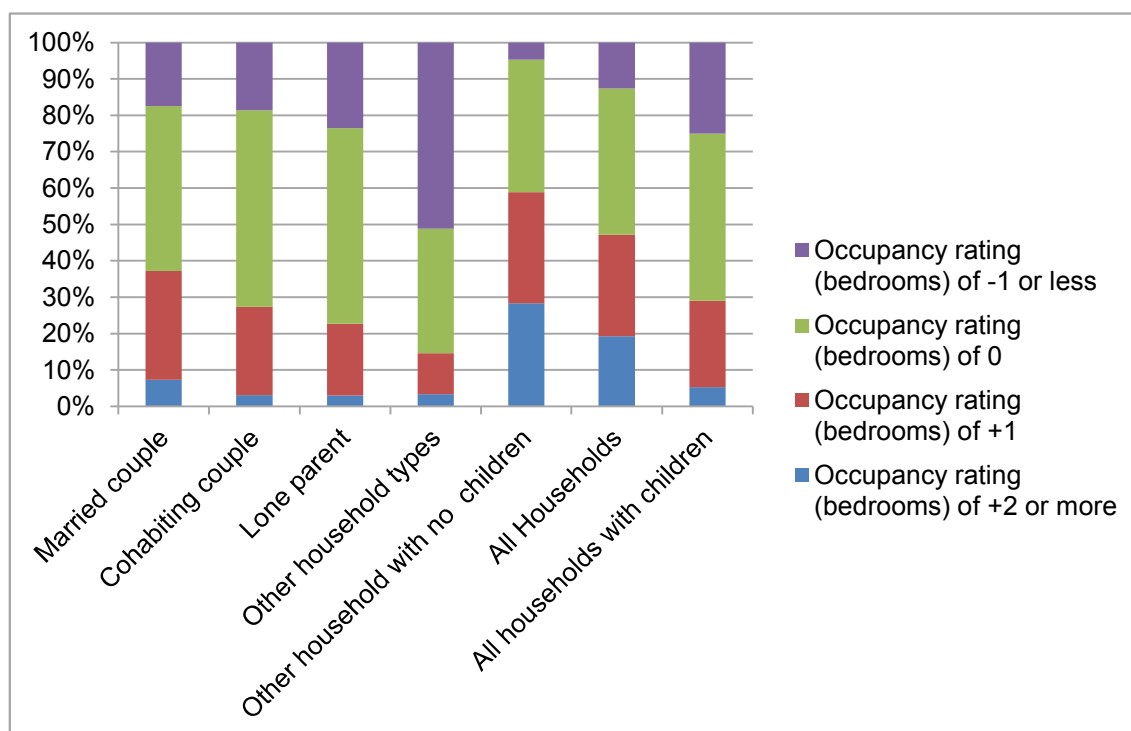
Source: Tables 107 and 108 SHMA pg 295 & 296

5.1.12. Need for family housing

5.1.13. The Table above shows that 61% of new market housing will need to be 3 bedroomed or more and that 27% of affordable housing will need to be of a similar size. This highlights the need for more family housing in Slough.

5.1.14. The SHMA shows that Slough has the highest proportion of households with dependent children at 39% of all households. The demographic projection used by the SHMA suggests that in Slough the number of children (aged 15 and under) is expected to rise by 3,140 or 9.3% between 2013 and 2036. Across the whole study area it is found that households with children are about 6 times more likely than other households to be overcrowded. For the Eastern Berks and South Bucks HMA, the occupancy rates show that the overcrowding is particularly significant for “other” Households with dependent children where there is overcrowding (-1 or more) in 51.2% of such households.

Table 5: Occupancy rating and households in Slough with dependent children.



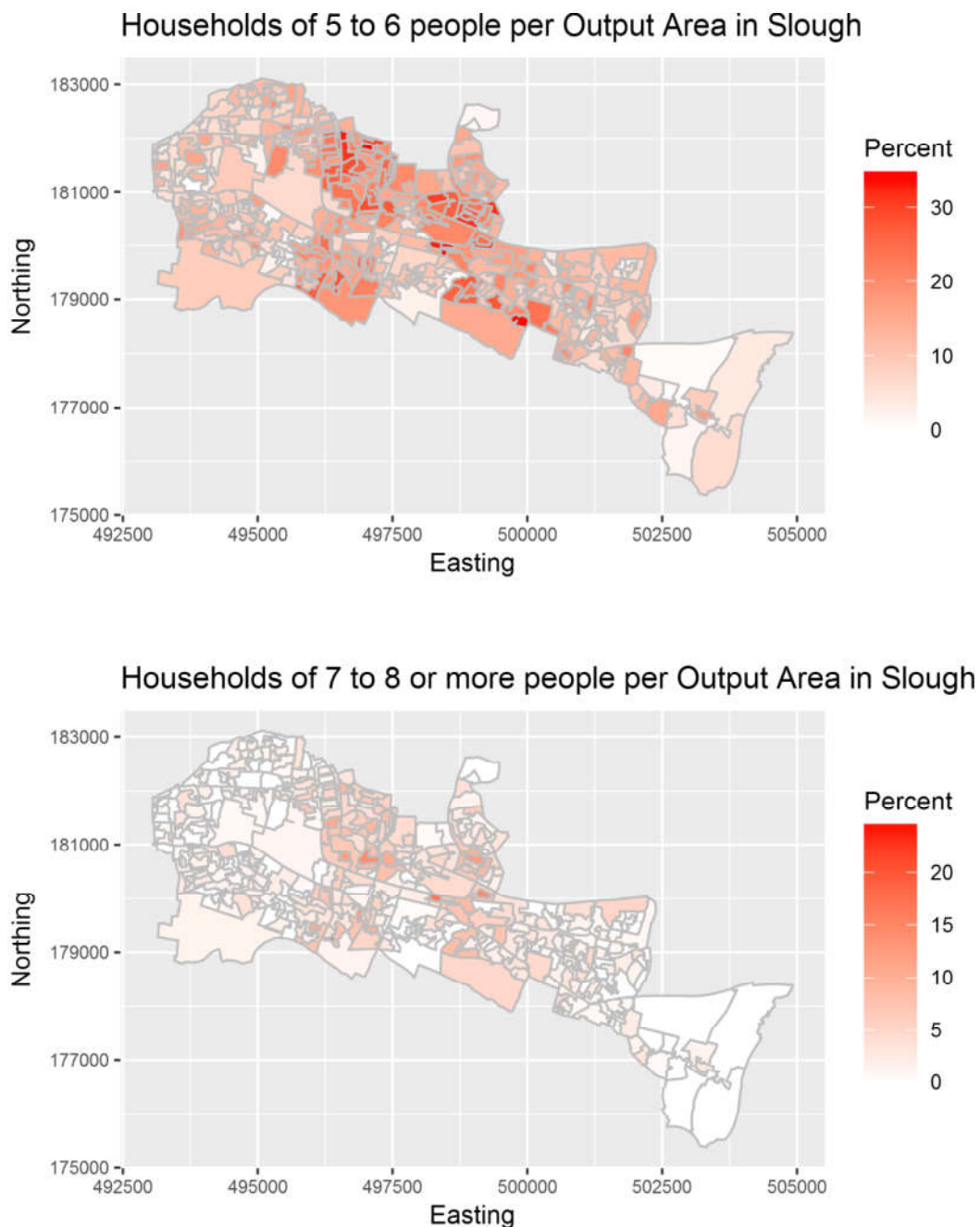
5.1.15.

Source: Census 2011.

- 5.1.16. As a result of this need for family housing in Slough the SHMA recommends that there should be more three and four bedroom houses. It also recognises the possible need for still larger homes to suit families living in extended family groups.
- 5.1.17. The strategic conclusions in the affordable sector recognise the role which delivery of larger homes can have in releasing supply of smaller properties for other households. The mix identified through the SHMA should inform LA wide policies. The mix on any one site should also have regard to the character of the site and its locality. The delivery of this mix will depend on a portfolio of sites coming forward over the plan period.
- 5.1.18. Lone parents with dependent children are frequently reliant on affordable housing across the whole study area. Household formation data tends to indicate that here will continue to be an increase in the number of lone parent families. It is likely therefore that a proportion of the two/three bedroom flats that will be delivered in the future will be occupied by families, and therefore it will be important to ensure that facilities are available for children to have access to outdoor leisure and facilities to ensure well-being and healthy development.
- 5.1.19. **Existing residential areas in Slough**
- 5.1.20. In the light of the identified need for more family housing it is important to consider how the existing housing stock is being used and may change over time.
- 5.1.21. The residential areas of Slough are mostly characterised by fairly homogenous suburban development with individual homes (detached, semi-detached or terrace housing) within individual plots of land. These follow the street pattern with homes generally located near the front of the plots and gardens to the rear. There are also a number of Council housing estates. These have similar buildings to the private market housing areas. In both there are some blocks of flats.
- 5.1.22. At the 2011 census 10% of dwellings were detached homes, 28% semi detached, 28% terraced , 30% flats in purpose built blocks, 3% flats in converted houses or a shared house such as an HMO and 1% flats in a commercial building.
- 5.1.23. The SHMAs estimates of size of accommodation required which is set out in Table 9 above does not analyse need for larger homes in excess of 4 bedrooms. However the figures for household size in Slough in Table 6 above indicate the 6340 or 12% of existing households have 5/6 members and 1,234 or 2% have 7 or more members.

5.1.24. The housing stock in Slough has relatively few purpose built homes of a size to accommodate households of this size. Overcrowding is acknowledged as a problem in Slough, but some homes have been adapted through extension to accommodate these larger families. Spatial analysis of where these large families live is interesting in terms of showing that they tend to be concentrated within a few areas mostly near the centre of the Borough.

Figure 10: Households distribution in Slough 2011.



Based on ONS 2011.

5.1.25. These areas have already absorbed a large proportion of the population growth in recent years. The Council has looked into the phenomenon of “beds in sheds” i.e. households living in or sharing poor conditions in ancillary buildings in the rear of residential properties such as are found in many London boroughs with high levels of migrants. In Slough the proliferation of ancillary buildings in rear gardens was found to be most often providing accommodation to members of the main household in response to the need for large housing types that are hard to find at affordable levels in Slough.

5.1.26. The supply of new houses does not fit with the need for family accommodation. Around 60% of dwellings constructed in recent years have been flats. This is largely in response to the increased value of sites as well as market conditions. It is estimated that if present trends continue approximately 80% of new homes would be flats. As a result any consideration of which of the proposed Spatial Options should be built needs to take account of their ability to provide family housing. One of the Objectives of the Local Plan is to provide a “*balanced housing market*”. Part of this will involve ensuring that we have a range of family housing in future.

5.1.27. **Housing for particular groups**

5.1.28. The SHMA considers the special housing needs of several groups including the elderly, and specifically those requiring specialised care, households with disabled people requiring special needs accommodation, black and minority ethnic households and households with dependent children.

5.1.29. The population aged over 65 in Slough is projected to grow by 88% up to 2036 compared to the 24% growth in the population as a whole (based on 2013 figures, as before); this includes a 120% growth in the over 85s. Census data showed that in Slough older people households constituted 11.6% of households.; considerably fewer than in the other East Berks and South Bucks HMA areas. Given that the number of older people is expected to increase in the future and that the number of single person households is also expected to rise, this suggests that will be a significant increase in the demand for affordable housing from the aging population. Whilst older households who are homeowners now will probably be able to access their housing needs in the market, in Slough nearly 33% of older households live in social rented accommodation. Older households also typically under occupy their dwellings; in Slough 73.5% have 1 or more additional rooms. By tenure, 2,533 households with occupancy of +2 are owner occupied, 336 social rented and 102 private rented as recorded in the 2011 census. The SHMA does not give details of the proportion of older people living within larger family groups

- 5.1.30. As might be expected this population has a higher number of health (particularly dementia) and mobility problems. The incidence of this will be expected to grow with the aging population. In Slough the number of people with dementia problems is likely to increase by 816 or 91.5% and those with mobility issues 2,182 or 98.4%.
- 5.1.31. The aging proportion of the growing population will have needs for sheltered housing, extra care housing and registered care provision. The SHMA quotes the Housing Learning and Improvement Network who estimate that across the whole study area there are 8,267 specialist housing units; equivalent to 128 units per 1,000 people aged over 75, with the majority in the public sector. In Slough most of this specialist accommodation is in the affordable sector; 459 of the total of 585. At a rate of 128 specialist units per 1000 population over 75, the total projected need to 2036 will be 1,094 units with a net need of 509 units over and above existing supply. This is at the lower end of the calculated need considered in the SHMA. In terms of tenure for specialist housing, the SHMA calculates that 53% could potentially come from the market sector. This is lower in Slough than in any of the other LAs in the study area. In terms of registered care housing, Slough is not considered to have any additional need for registered care housing, having a small surplus through to 2036.
- 5.1.32. The SHMA points out the need to ensure that housing mix policies should also give consideration to demand for bungalows and other forms of accessible housing to meet the needs of the aging population. Given the relatively high levels of under occupancy for this population group, providing attractive specialist housing may also free up under occupied housing to add to the stock for families.
- 5.1.33. The analysis of housing needs for people with disabilities is similar to that for elderly people. According to 2011 census data, 11,388 households (22.4% of all households) contain someone who has a long term health problem or permanent disability (LTHPD). Slough stands out in the study area as having a relatively high prevalence of disability within all age ranges. When this is applied to the demographic data it is estimated that an additional 10,072 people with LTHPD will have housing requirements. In Slough 29.7 people with LTHPD currently live in social rented housing, indicating a further need for provision of affordable units suitable to meet this need.
- 5.1.34. The SHMA notes the high proportionate growth of the Asian population in Slough. The study draws links to the relatively higher level of households living in market rented homes and the likelihood that these households will be affected by the changes to the Local Housing Allowance. It also highlights that BME households are more likely to be overcrowded with 18.8% of these households having a negative occupancy.

5.1.35. As part of a demographically balanced housing market, the needs of young people are also explored in the SHMA. Young people may find barriers to accessing housing given typically low incomes and potentially difficulties in securing mortgage finance due to deposit requirements. Additionally, LHA payments may limit choice for under 35s requiring private rented homes. In Slough there were 10,640 households headed by someone aged under 35 at the last census. This is projected to rise to 10,877 by 2036. This is in contrast to other LAs within the HMA and is due to the younger age profile in Slough at present. The consequence of not providing for this demand may be an increase in concealed households and overcrowding in some areas as non-dependent children may need to remain living with parents for longer periods. These groups currently occupy a higher proportion of private rented housing.

5.1.36. The need for affordable housing

5.1.37. The SHMA has estimated that excluding existing social housing tenants (as these would release an existing affordable unit were they to move to an appropriate new home) Slough has 6,344 households living in unsuitable housing. 65.1% of these are estimated to be unable to afford market housing without subsidy (based on income data adjusted to reflect a lower average income for those living in unsuitable housing). For Slough, the adjusted figure for estimated current affordable need is 4,132 households.

5.1.38. By examining the rate of newly forming households and assuming a lower average income for these, the SHMA estimated that the affordable housing need for newly forming households will be 743 per annum for the plan period. Alongside this, it is estimated, based on recent trends, that 282 existing households a year will fall into affordable housing need. This includes households who have entered the housing register and been housed within the year as well as households housed outside the register.

5.1.39. On the supply side, the SHMA follows PPG guidance to look at both social and units in the intermediate sector that become available through relets of existing affordable rental or sale of intermediate units. Trend data is used to show that for Slough 534 affordable housing units will be available per annum.

Table 11: Estimated level of affordable housing per year in Slough.

Current need	180
Newly forming households	734
Existing households falling into need	282
Total need	1205
Supply from existing stock of affordable housing	534
Net need	671

Source: SHMA table 81 pg 228.

- 5.1.40. The identified need for 671 new affordable housing units per year in Slough represent 72% of the Objectively Assessed Need of 927 dwellings per year. Although it is not realistic to provide such a percentage it does point to the need for the Local Plan to set a high target.
- 5.1.41. The supply of affordable housing will be affected by viability issues which will vary from site to site. As a result when considering the various Spatial Options consideration should be given to promoting greenfield sites which should be able to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing.
- 5.1.42. The SHMA considers the need for different types of affordable housing – intermediate, affordable rent and social rent. Of the total affordable housing need per annum for slough (1,205) the SHMA estimates that 225 households will be able to afford 80% of market rents, while 980 households will not (for these purposes affordable rented and social rented are considered together). Thus of the total affordable housing need, 19% could potentially afford intermediate type housing. The SHMA makes a further assumption that 80% of these could potentially be a market for shared ownership and shared equity homes with the remainder needing a rental property.
- 5.1.43. The requires size of the new affordable housing is set out in Table 8 above.
- 5.1.44. Further details of the need for affordable housing as identified in the Council's Housing Strategy is set out in Section 3.2 above.

6. CONSTRAINTS TO HOUSING SUPPLY

- 6.1.1. There are a number of constraints to the provision of additional housing which are identified in the Issues and Options Consultation Document. Some of these are capacity constraints. Others are policy constraints.

6.1.2. The following section looks at two of the major constraints which are the shortage of developable land and the role of the Green Belt.

6.2. Scarcity of land

6.2.1. One of the Objectives of the plan is “To meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need of 927 dwellings per annum within the Borough or as close as possible to where the need arises within a balance housing market.”

6.2.2. The extent to which this will be possible is one of the major questions in the Issues and Options Consultation Document. The companion document, The Housing Capacity Study will deal with supply issues in more detail; examining the rate of delivery in recent years, the sites which the Council have already given a commitment that they are suitable for housing and other issues relevant to the delivery concerns.

6.2.3. This section will look at evidence that has informed the Issues and Options document in regard to the strategic issues arising from the built up nature of Slough and the choices that are set out in the options.

6.2.4. The central problem is that Slough is an urbanised area, almost the whole of the area within the boundary being already occupied by some form of building. The exceptions to this being the pockets of open space within the town, some remaining green belt land on the periphery and land at the Colnbrook and Poyle areas which is subject to flood risk and other environmental constraints and is where the expansion of Heathrow airport is proposed.

6.2.5. The existing density of occupation of Slough is far higher than the neighbouring LPAs and more reflective of many outer London Boroughs.

Table 12: Estimated and projected Population density 2016 and 2036.

	Area Hectares	Population projection 2016	Density (number of persons per hectare) 2016	Population projection 2036	Density(number of persons per hectare) 2036
Slough	3254	147,821	45.4	169,611	52.1
Windsor and Maidenhead	19651	149,409	7.6	167,043	8.5
South Bucks	14128	69,749	4.9	81,811	5.8
Hillingdon	11570	304,218	26.3	380,184	32.9
London	157215	8,832,370	56.2	10,740,505	68.3
South East	1906965	9,024,481	4.7	10,343,529	5.4
England	13027843	55,218,701	4.2	62,403,948	4.8

Source: ONS 2016.

- 6.2.6. Windsor and Maidenhead has a similar total populations but a much greater area, more dispersed settlement pattern and consequently lower overall density. The impact of the projected population growth shows the extent of the challenge in terms of finding suitable areas in which to accommodate the growing population.
- 6.2.7. Most of the options set out in the Issues and Options Document rely on the redevelopment of previously developed land. As most of the land in the strategic housing options is or has been used for employment uses, there is an obvious challenge in regard to balancing the need to provide for housing growth with the need to also provide for the growth of the economy. The Employment Issues topic paper sets out the evidence of the identified need for economic development and the “existing and future supply of land available for economic development and its sufficiency and suitability to meet the identified needs.” (NPPF para 161).

6.3. Green Belt Development

- 6.3.1. A number of the Spatial Options in the Issues and Options Consultation Document involve development taking place in the Green Belt. This is currently constrained by Green Belt policy which states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In order to put these proposals into context it may be helpful to understand the context.
- 6.3.2. There has been a long history of Green Belt releases for housing in Slough. The Cippenham Meadows development was built upon Green Belt land which was released through a Structure Plan.
- 6.3.3. Part of Maplin Park in Langley was released from the Green Belt in the Local Plan for Slough (1992).
- 6.3.4. The Local Plan for Slough (2004) released six sites from the Green Belt for housing including land at Wexham, Castlevew and Ditton Park. It also released Wexham Nursery from the Green Belt which was not planned for housing at the time but is now being developed for housing.
- 6.3.5. The Core Strategy (2006) put some land back into the Green Belt on the basis that this had no development potential. This mainly consisted of parks and open spaces on the edge of the urban area.
- 6.3.6. Other non-housing development has taken place in the Green Belt without making any changes to the boundary.

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- 6.3.7. In all of these cases it has been necessary to demonstrate that there are very special circumstances to overcome the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 6.3.8. The national Planning Policy Framework states that Local Planning Authorities should only alter Green Belt boundaries in exceptional circumstances through the review of a Local Plan.
- 6.3.9. Given the possible shortage of houses over the new plan period we have to consider releasing more Green Belt land for housing which is why it is being put forward as an option for public consultation in the Issues and Options document.
- 6.3.10. There are no proposals for housing development in the Colnbrook and Poyle area. Where the Council has refused major development in the Strategic Gap/Colne Valley Park area, such as the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at Colnbrook and the Solar farm at Poyle, this has been supported by the Secretary of State on appeal.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1. This Topic Paper sets out the evidence relating to housing matters in the Issues and Options Consultation Document for the Review of the Local Plan for Slough.
- 7.1.2. Part of the “Vision for Slough” set out in the Issues and Options Consultation Document is that we will take a proactive approach to meeting our housing needs locally in order to make Slough a place where our residents feel a sense of belonging and are able to live in good quality and affordable homes.
- 7.1.3. This Topic Paper explains how we have previously taken a proactive approach in the Core Strategy in order to provide the required scale and a mix of housing to meet local needs in Slough.
- 7.1.4. It also shows how, through implementation of the Council’s Housing Strategy, we intend to take an even more proactive approach to support our ambition of providing more homes of improving quality across all tenures. Sets out the Council’s proposals for house building which will facilitate an average of 200 quality new homes a year for five years across all tenures.
- 7.1.5. The Housing Strategy also explains how we will provide housing for vulnerable groups and work with the Private Sector which provides 25% of housing in Slough.
- 7.1.6. The Strategy explains that the Council will promote affordable housing at a range of rents from traditional social rents to those within the reach of households on middle incomes.

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- 7.1.7. One of the Local Plan Objectives is to meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need of 927 dwellings per annum within the Borough or as close as possible to where the need arises.
- 7.1.8. Topic Paper explains how this figure has been taken from the results of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Berkshire and South Bucks produced by GL Hearn. It examines the technical basis in detail and concludes that 927 is the correct figure for the Issues and Options Consultation Document to plan for in Slough. This is consistent with the approach taken by all of the other Berkshire Authorities in their Local Plans.
- 7.1.9. One of the other Local Plan Objectives is to provide new homes of an appropriate mix, type and tenure for Slough's population that are designed and built to a high quality and environmentally sound standard.
- 7.1.10. The Topic paper explains how the SHMA also provides evidence for the continued provision of a high level of affordable housing over the Local Plan period. It also sets out the case for the need for more family housing based upon the conclusions in the SHMA that 61% of new market housing will need to be 3 bedroomed or more and that 27% of affordable housing will need to be of a similar size.
- 7.1.11. Around 60% of dwellings constructed in recent years have been flats. This is largely in response to the increased value of sites as well as market conditions. It is estimated that if present trends continue approximately 80% of new homes would be flats.
- 7.1.12. The Topic Paper highlights the role of the existing residential areas in providing family housing and absorbing incremental growth.
- 7.1.13. It also explains that any consideration of which of the proposed Spatial Options needs to take account of their ability to provide family housing and meet the Objectives of the Local Plan of providing a balanced housing market.

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