

Slough Borough Council

Local Transport Plan 3

Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Health Impact Assessment/ Habitats Regulation Assessment/ Equalities Impact Assessment

Non-Technical Summary

March 2010

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Non-Technical Summary

Background

This document is the Environmental Report for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Slough third Local Transport Plan (LTP3), incorporating Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). It has been produced by Atkins Ltd for Slough Borough Council (SBC).

Slough Borough Council LTP3

The Transport Act 2000 introduced a statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) every five years and to keep it under review. It sets out the statutory framework for Local Transport Plans and policies. This statutory requirement was retained in the Local Transport Act 2008, although other aspects of the statutory framework have changed. The Act now requires that LTPs contain policies (collectively referred to as ‘the strategy’) and implementation plans (the proposals for delivery of the policies contained in the strategy) and there is no longer the requirement for LTPs to be reviewed every five years – review periods should instead be decided at the local level to best fit with other local policies and plans.

The development of LTP3 involved the review of the LTP2 long term transport strategy that looked forward to the year 2011. LTP3 sets out a long term transport strategy to 2026 and an Interim Local Transport Implementation Plan (LTIP) for 2011/12 setting out a programme of proposed schemes and measures in the first year of the LTP3 implementation.

Slough LTP3 vision has been set out in line with the shared vision for Slough from the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS, 2008):

“People are proud to live in Slough where diversity is celebrated and where residents can enjoy fulfilling, prosperous and healthy lives”

In order to achieve the transport vision LTP3 sets 12 objectives. The long-term strategy and LTIP set out an action plan to deliver LTP3 objectives. The action plan will be delivered within the context of striving for economic growth and prosperity and supporting local communities in a way that does not damage Slough’s environment. The interventions and schemes in the LTP3 strategy and LTIP have been divided into twelve components:

- Accessibility measures;
- Cycling measures;
- Freight management measures;
- Intelligent Transport Systems;
- Network management;
- Parking policy and measures;
- Public transport measures;
- Road safety measures;
- Smarter choices measures;
- Walking measures;
- Improvements to Rights of Way; and

- Management of Slough's transport assets.

Each component contains specific measures that will be implemented to achieve SBC's local transport vision and objectives

The Assessment Process

As it has already been stated above, the SEA process has been integrated with three other assessment processes: HIA, EqIA and HRA. A methodology was developed to that effect and is described in the Final Environmental Report.

The SEA started as the preparation of LTP3 began and it has progressed concurrently in an iterative fashion in order to integrate environmental sustainability considerations into the plan making process. The SEA has been used as a tool for improving LTP3's environmental sustainability performance. Specifically, this has been achieved through allowing environmental (and wider sustainability) objectives to be considered throughout the LTP3 formulation process: from inception through development to adoption of the LTP3 proposals, measures and schemes.

The SEA has four stages as follows:

- Stage A* – Setting the Context and Establishing the Baseline
- Stage B* – Developing Alternatives
- Stage C* – Preparing the ER
- Stage D* – Consulting on Draft Plan and ER

The work undertaken thus far involved the completion of the SEA stages A, B, C and D and associated tasks.

A preliminary HRA Review was undertaken of the Consultation LTP3 Long-Term Preferred Strategy and an updated HRA Review was undertaken of the Final LTP3 strategy and of the Interim LTIP. The HRA review results are presented in a separate report and have also been integrated into the Final Environmental Report.

Sustainability Baseline and Key Issues

Slough is situated to the west of London in the Thames Valley. It is a very small Borough of just 32.5 square kilometres and is densely built up. It is surrounded by Green Belt land to the west and north (in South Bucks), the south (Windsor & Maidenhead) and the east (London Borough of Hillingdon). The only substantial area of Green Belt in Slough is located south of the M4 and east of Langley in the Colnbrook and Poyle area.

The development of Slough has been greatly influenced by its strategic transport links. There are three stations on the Great Western Railway line in the Borough, providing access to Paddington Station to the east and Reading and beyond to the west. There is also a branch line from Slough to Windsor. The A4 runs through the length of Slough with the M4 motorway running parallel along the south of the Borough. The M25 runs north-south along the eastern boundary. Heathrow airport also lies just to the east of the Borough boundary with the new Terminal 5 only a mile away from the Poyle Industrial Estate.

The key sustainability issues identified for Slough are briefly summarised below:

Population

Congestion can have significant negative environmental and social effects. Slough's population increased between 2001 and 2008 by approximately 5.5% and is projected to rise further. This is likely to increase pressure on services, facilities, utilities and infrastructure required to support this population increase.

Traffic Growth and Congestion

Traffic growth in Slough is projected to decline in the near future, based on an analysis of combined local data trends and economic trends. Department for Transport (DfT) local road data for area-wide traffic levels

in 2008 are not yet available but the combined local road/ trunk road data show that the level dropped 1.3% between 2007 and 2008, which was similar to Bracknell Forest, greater than South East and Bucks, but less than Windsor & Maidenhead.

Population Diversity

The proportion of residents of Slough who are aged less than 18 is higher than regional and national proportions and Slough has the third highest population density within the South East of England, and the highest overcrowding indicator rating (16.9% compared to 7% on average for England and Wales). With 40% of residents from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds and 50 different languages being spoken, Slough is a diverse community. A sharp rise in the number of refugees and asylum seekers has been noted in Slough over the past few years. Potential barriers to public transport accessibility may be experienced if transport provision does not cater for a wide range of people.

Travel to School

The movements of people travelling to and within the Borough for school are likely to contribute significantly to traffic, especially at peak times during term time. School census information for 2007/08 indicates that non-car transport made up about 56% of travel to primary school. By contrast, almost 61% of secondary school age children used non-car transport in that year, which was much higher than the trajectory.

Travel to Work and Public Transport Patronage

In 2008/09, approximately 40,000 people commuted from outside the Borough to work in Slough and approximately 23,000 Slough residents travelled outside the Borough to work. Around 3,000 of Slough residents were reported to work at Heathrow Airport. People travelling to and within the Borough for work are likely to contribute significantly to traffic, especially at peak times. More recently, investment in infrastructure and vehicles and in new and expanded services has been followed by very encouraging increases in bus patronage and in customer satisfaction. In 2007/08, the use of the Borough's three stations increased 7.7% over the previous year.

Accessibility for All

Slough and Maidenstone West are the only two hubs in the South East that are presently classified by regional transport documents as inaccessible. The fact that Slough is not able to offer accessible rail services is significant as the three stations within the Borough will need to act as key transport hubs when Olympic events are held at Eton (Dorney Lake) in 2012. Although in 2004/5, only 42% of pedestrian crossings had facilities for disabled people, in 2007/8 over 90% of crossings had facilities for disabled people.

Walking and Cycling Routes

Although Slough's footpaths and rights of way were generally considered to be in good condition, their ease of use was noted as being undesirably low. In 2006/07, 41% of Slough's footway network was in need of potential structural maintenance, however progress since then has been good and the 2007/08 figure is down to 14%. In 2007 cycling trips at 9 survey sites was 12% greater than the previous year and 25% more than in 2005. Walking trips, however, were less frequent in 2007 (at around 20,000 trips) than in 2005 (around 25,000 trips).

Access to Key Services and Facilities

Monitoring data for 2007/08 indicated that 100% of the community of Slough could access a GP surgery or Primary School within 15 to 30 minutes by public transport, and 94% could access secondary schools and 96% retail centres within the same distance. These proportions are increased from 2004 levels.

Access to Skills and Employment

Heathrow Airport and the Slough Trading Estate (STE) are important contributors to employment in the Borough. The number of airport bus journeys taken in Slough has more than doubled since 2002/03 and, in 2008/09, exceeded the Annual Monitoring Report target for 2010/11 (reaching almost 2.7million). In 2008/9, 63% of the population lived within 45 minutes of Heathrow airport by bus, representing an increase of 60%

over 2006/7. Despite this, Slough's unemployment rate is historically the highest in Berkshire and higher than that observed in both the South East of England and the UK and there is a need to increase the skill levels of residents.

Road Safety

The number of slightly injured in 2008 was similar to the 2007 figure (545 compared to the previous 546), and the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the roads in 2008 was higher than the figure for 2007 (57 compared with 49), with the overall numbers being undesirably high. In 2007 there was a high number of KSI children (11), compared to 3 in 2008. Trend data show great fluctuation in this figure, although it indicates a decrease from 2001.

Crime and the Fear of Crime

Since 2004 actual crime levels have been coming down in Slough. Despite a long term trend of reduced crime in Slough, it was higher in 2008/09 than in 2007/08. Fear of crime levels are also improving, although they remain higher than national averages. A lack of '*things to do*' for local people has also been noted as potentially leading to an increase in crime levels and the fear of crime.

Health Inequalities

The percentage of households in Slough with one or more persons living with a limiting long-term disability stood at 14% in the 2001 Census, higher than the regional percentage. This issue was particularly acute amongst the working age population in the more deprived wards, such as Foxborough, Baylis and Stoke and Chalvey. Of the 299 children with an identified learning disability, 50% with severe disability and 32% with a moderate disability are from the Pakistan community. The average mortality rate for Slough between 2003 and 2007 was significantly higher than that observed for the South East of England. Poor health is strongly related to poverty and in Slough approximately 5,800 children were living in low income households in 2006/07.

Physical Activity and Access to Public Open Space/ Natural Green Space

In 2005 there was approximately 34ha of accessible natural greenspace in the Borough, with no accessible natural greenspace in the wards of Baylis and Stoke; Chalvey; Cippenham Green; Farnham; Foxborough; Kedermister; Langley St Marys; and Wexham. The majority of users used to travel by car to access natural greenspace, and the average travel time was 14 minutes. A general lack of appropriate or clearly marked pathways, which would impact on the use of the spaces, particularly for those with a disability was noted. The amount of designated greenbelt land and public open space has remained constant since 2005/06 although it is considered to be under pressure from future development and redevelopment within the Borough. Although a significant area of Colne Valley Park (regional park) lies in the borough, the amount of open space provided within Slough is considered insufficient and this could be indirectly linked to increased fear of crime, as young people may have nowhere to meet except residential areas and congregations of young people are frequently perceived by other demographic groups as being threatening.

Deprivation

There are significant pockets of disadvantage within the Borough including many vulnerable children, with high numbers of asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, transient families, low-income households, Looked After Children (LAC), and children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). In terms of overall deprivation, Slough is consistently within the least deprived half of England's districts, and only 6% of Slough's population lived in the 20% most deprived areas of England in both 2007 and 2006.

Contributions to Climate Change

CO₂ emissions per capita in Slough decreased from 5.9t CO₂ per capita in 2005 to 5.72t CO₂ per capita in 2008/9. In 2005, 14.7% of CO₂ emissions in Slough were from road transport and this figure remained largely unchanged in 2007, at 14.5%. These figures are lower than the UK average for CO₂ emissions from transport, which stood at 24.2% in 2007.

Air Quality

In June 2005 two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) were declared and despite the progress made, the town suffers from poor air quality and traffic congestion whilst the standard of the built environment remains poor. Proximity to Heathrow, as well as major motorways such as the M40, M25 and M4 aggravates problems, especially in relation to air quality.

Noise Pollution

Noise is a significant issue in a built up area such as Slough. The area's dense population and mixture of land uses generate significant noise levels and the main source of background noise in Slough is road traffic. Additionally, the Borough is in proximity to Heathrow Airport, the UK's busiest airport. Due to the fact that the prevailing wind over the UK is from the west, Heathrow is on westerly operations 75% of the time, spreading the noise contours over Slough to the north and the south east of Windsor to the south, with the areas of Colnbrook and Poyle being the most affected by noise from Heathrow. Noise is not only a disturbance but may also pose a threat to human health and wildlife. .

Built Heritage

In 2008/09, Slough had just under 100 listed buildings, with a further 60 locally listed buildings. None of these are on the 'at risk' register held by English Heritage. In addition, there are currently two sites in Slough that are designated as Scheduled Monuments, two registered historic parks and gardens, five parks and gardens of local interest and five conservation areas. Furthermore, the Earthworks at Wexham Court Combined School have been identified as an area of archaeological importance..

Habitats

Due to the built up nature of Slough, there are few places where semi-natural habitat survives and there are no internationally designated sites of nature conservation interest. Slough does, however, contain a number of valuable sites of nature conservation experiencing pressure from future development and redevelopment within the Borough, including several sites that have been identified as Wildlife Heritage Sites and some ancient woodland. The total area of UKBAP priority habitat in SBC equates to approximately 3.5% of the total land area. The Borough also contains wildlife corridors.

Flood Risk

The urban nature of Slough makes it susceptible to flooding. Substantial areas of the Borough are identified as likely to be affected by flooding either from rivers or the sea if there were no flood defences, while even more of the area is identified as at risk of an extreme flood from rivers. Whilst the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton flood alleviation channel has reduced the area of land at risk from flooding in Slough, a proportion of the Borough is still at risk, and there exists a possibility of the channel failing to adequately reduce flood risk. Development should thus be directed away from areas of flood risk.

Previously Developed Land (PDL)

SBC noted that in 2001 there was no evidence of contamination causing actual harm in the Borough. There were, however, several sites where the Council was aware that there was a possibility that harm may arise. In 2008/09, SBC data noted that 69% of new dwellings were provided on PDL and all new employment floorspace completed was constructed on PDL.

Water Quality

In 2007, only 50% of the river lengths in the Borough were classified as having 'good' chemical and biological water quality. The majority of Slough falls within inner or outer groundwater source protection zones. In the urban area of Slough, the principal surface water features are the Roundmoor/Boveney Ditch and the Chalvey Ditch. These two watercourses are especially sensitive to pollution incidents due to the industrial and commercial nature of uses along their length. The Queen Mother's Reservoir and Wraysbury Reservoir, although entirely outside the Borough, both border directly onto Slough Borough, and should be also taken into account as potentially at risk from pollution originating in the Borough.

Low and Zero Carbon Energy Generation and Energy Efficient Transport Solutions

The lack of renewable energy generation in Slough means that the Borough is unlikely to meet the national target for renewable energy generation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Framework

The SEA Framework is a key tool in completing the SEA as it allows the assessment of the effects arising from LTP3 proposals in key areas to be undertaken in a systematic way. The SEA Framework for Slough LTP3 comprises a series of objectives that incorporate specific health, equalities and habitats issues, to ensure the full integration of the assessment processes of HIA, EqIA and HRA, whilst also meeting the requirements of the SEA Directive.

An SEA Framework containing 18 objectives and associated indicators has been developed using the SA Framework developed for the Core Strategy and the SEA Framework developed for the LTP2 as the starting point. An iterative process, based on the review of relevant plans and programmes, the evolving baseline, analysis of key sustainability issues and consideration of which of these issues can potentially be addressed by LTP3, has also contributed to the development of the SEA Framework.

The proposed LTP3 SEA objectives that form the framework against which the predicted performance of the LTP3 measures have been assessed are shown below:

1. Address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases;
2. Reduce the need to travel by car and improve the efficiency of sustainable modes of transport including public transport, cycling and walking;
3. Reduce noise, vibration and light pollution from transport;
4. Reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve;
5. Maintain, protect and enhance buildings, sites and features of archaeological, historical or architectural interest and their settings;
6. Identify, manage and protect habitats and species which are important on an international scale (*HRA specific objective*);
7. Identify, manage and protect habitats and species which are important on a national and local scale;
8. Maintain and improve the water quality of rivers and ground waters and achieve sustainable water resources management;
9. Enable adaptation to the effects of climate change including the risk of flooding;
10. Ensure prudent use of natural resources, conserving soil and mineral resources and quality and minimising the production of waste;
11. Maximise the use of renewable energy and technologies and increase energy efficiency;
12. Promote protection and enhancement of landscape and townscape character including the open spaces and Green Belt, promoting an increase in access to and provision of natural greenspace;
13. Protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities (*Equalities specific objective*);
14. To raise attainment and aspiration levels of all people to acquire the skills needed to be employed locally (*Equalities specific objective*);
15. Improve the health and well being of the population and reduce inequalities in health (*Health specific objective*);
16. Reduce the number of road accidents (particularly in deprived areas) and accidents on public transport and pavements (*Health specific objective*);

17. Reduce crime and the fear of crime (*Health specific objective*);
18. Improve accessibility to key services, facilities and employment areas for all sectors of the community by public transport, walking and cycling (NI175) (*Equalities specific objective*).

LTP3 Objectives

To fulfil Slough's vision for transport, SBC derived a draft set of local transport objectives. These are consistent with DfT's Guidance on Local Transport Plans (July 2009) and DfT's five goals for transport - *Tackling climate change, Quality of life and a healthy natural environment, Better safety, security and health, Supporting economic growth, and Equality of opportunity*.

The local transport objectives are also structured in line with Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) themes:

- SCS Theme 1: Environment;
- SCS Theme 2: Community Safety;
- SCS Theme 3: Health and Wellbeing;
- SCS Theme 4: Economy and Skills;
- SCS Theme 5: Community Cohesion.

The SEA guidance states that it is important that the objectives of LTP3 are in accordance with SEA/HIA/EqIA/HRA objectives and, as such, an assessment of the compatibility of the two sets of objectives was undertaken. This assessment demonstrated that, overall, LTP3 objectives are broadly compatible with the SEA objectives but a number of recommendations were formulated to improve compatibility.

Resulting from the compatibility assessment, amendments to some of LTP3 objectives have been proposed. After consideration of the SEA recommendations put forward above, SBC determined that the final LTP3 objectives are as follows:

- To make sustainable transport options accessible to all;
- To enhance social inclusion and regeneration of deprived areas;
- To protect and improve personal health;
- To minimise the noise generated by the transport network, and its impacts;
- To achieve better links between neighbourhoods and access to the natural environment;
- To improve the journey experience of transport users across Slough's transport networks;
- To reduce the number of traffic accidents involving death or injury;
- To minimise the opportunity for crime, anti-social behaviour and terrorism and maximise personal safety on the transport network;
- To reduce transport's CO₂ emissions and make the transport network resilient to the effects of climate change;
- To mitigate the effects of travel and the transport system on the natural environment, heritage and landscape;
- To ensure that the transport system helps Slough sustain its economic competitiveness and retain its position as an economic hub of the South East; and
- To facilitate the development of new housing in accordance with the LDF.

LTP3 Strategic Options

SBC has developed their strategic alternatives in response to the local transport objectives and four strategic alternatives have been developed, which can be summarised as follows:

- Strategic **alternative 1 – Do Minimum** - Minimal Level of Investment and mainly as continuation of LTP2 Proposals and previous Strategies
- Strategic **alternative 2 – It's the Economy** - Prioritising Access to Labour and Markets for Businesses and to Jobs for Residents
- Strategic **alternative 3 – Sustainable Travel Town** - Taking all Feasible Action to Reduce Transport's Contribution to Climate Change
- **Strategic alternative 4 – Hybrid Approach** - Strategic Alternative 3 plus additional schemes and measures that will protect and improve quality of life for Slough's residents; will fulfil Slough's strategic role in Thames Valley and supporting growth; will raise the economic and social profile of Slough; and will achieve goals through reducing transport demand, not increasing supply

Each strategic alternative has a different level of emphasis on walking, cycling, public transport and road network improvements.

These strategic options were assessed against the SEA/HIA/EqIA objectives. The assessment against the HRA objective has not been undertaken as the level of information available about the strategic alternatives was not sufficiently detailed to enable the identification and assessment of effects.

This assessment identified the extent to which the proposed strategic options are considered to encourage sustainability. Generally, from an SEA (including Health objectives) and EqIA perspective, strategic alternative 4 is considered to be the most sustainable when compared to all the others – it is considered to offer the most wide-ranging benefits, with a particularly strong emphasis on meeting the needs of local residents when compared to the alternatives. In addition, strategic alternative 4 has the greatest potential to deliver benefits in terms of both sustainable transport and the optimisation of efficiency within the constraints of the existing network, in terms of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, in terms of raising attainment and aspiration levels of residents, and in terms of creating cohesive communities.

Final LTP3

LTP3 sets out an action plan to deliver the transport objectives, which will be delivered within the context of striving for economic growth and prosperity and supporting local communities in a way that does not damage Slough's environment. Strategic alternative 4 (hybrid approach) was considered to be the most sustainable. SBC took forward the hybrid approach to develop the final LTP3 document, which includes measures for improving accessibility, promoting cycling, walking and smarter choices for travelling; measures for freight and network management, implementing Intelligent Transport Systems, parking policy; measures for making public transport a more attractive choice, increasing road safety and managing transport assets.

The LTP3 has been subject to the SEA/HIA/EqIA to predict and evaluate the nature (beneficial, adverse or neutral) and scale (significant or non-significant) of effects (this includes the effects' magnitude, geographical scale, time period over which they occur, whether they are permanent or temporary, probable or improbable, reversible or irreversible, frequent or rare, and whether or not there are secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects). The assessment of the LTP3 was undertaken in two iterations. The first iteration covered the LTP3 Draft Preferred Strategy and the second the Final LTP3 (Strategy and Interim Implementation Plan). Details of the assessments of the Draft Preferred Strategy can be found in the Final Environmental Report. The results of the assessment of the Final LTP3 are summarised below.

For the purposes of assessment, LTP3 was divided into eight components:

- Accessibility and Smarter Choices Measures

- Cycling Measures
- Walking and Rights of Way Improvement Measures
- Freight Management Measures
- Intelligent Transport Systems and Network Management
- Parking Policy Measures
- Public Transport Measures
- Road Safety and Asset Management

The assessment indicated that the plan performs with mixed results against the SEA framework, but on the whole achieves a balance of beneficial effects.

The assessment results show that the implementation of Final LTP3 should successfully address a number of the key issues in the area. Specifically, the Final LTP3 is predicted to deliver significant positive effects against the following SEA objectives:

- Address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases;
- Reduce the need to travel by car and improve the efficiency of sustainable modes of transport including public transport, walking and cycling;
- Reduce noise, vibration and light pollution from transport;
- Reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve;
- Maintain, protect and enhance buildings, sites and features of archaeological, historical and architectural interest and their settings;
- Identify, manage and protect habitats and species which are important on a national and local scale;
- Enable adaptation to the effects of climate change including the risk of flooding;
- Promote protection and enhancement of landscape and townscape character including the open spaces and Green Belt, promoting an increase in access to and provision of natural greenspace
- Improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health;
- Reduce the number of road accidents (particularly in deprived areas) and accidents on public transport and pavements; and
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- Protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities;
- Raise attainment and aspiration levels of all people to acquire the skills needed to be employed locally;
- Improve accessibility to key services, facilities and employment areas for all sectors of the community by public transport, walking and cycling (NI175).

Moderate adverse effects may be expected against the SEA objective concerned with prudent use of natural resources, soil and production of waste, as some schemes will inevitably result in a requirement for additional resources and increased waste production. Moderate adverse effects may also be expected against the EqIA objective that seeks to protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities, as increases in freight movement around the Slough International Freight Exchange site and in other hubs around the Borough may result in severance within surrounding communities. This may include a degeneration of the walking and cycling environment, severance through increased traffic and hence less cohesive communities, and unreliability of public transport services due to increased traffic on the road network.

An HRA review of the Final LTP3 has also been undertaken and the results are presented in a separate report. It concluded that none of the objectives, delivery packages or projects would lead to likely significant effects on the three internationally designated sites that were assessed. However, it has been recommended that the subsequent LTP3 Implementation Plans should undergo a further HRA review.

Mitigation Measures

Although LTP3 will have beneficial effects overall, certain schemes and measures may have the potential for short to long term adverse effects. Adverse effects have been predicted against SEA objective 7 (biodiversity), SEA objective 8 (water environment), SEA objective 9 (adaptation to climate change and flooding), SEA objective 10 (prudent use of natural resources and production of waste), EqlA objective 13 (protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired) and EqlA objective 18 (accessibility).

The Environment Report recommends a number of specific and generic mitigation measures aimed at preventing, reducing or offsetting the adverse effects that have been identified. The recommendations for enhancing the predicted positive effects have also been set out. As mentioned above, the majority of the recommendations set out as a result of the first iteration of the LTP3 assessment have already been taken on board, which resulted in the elimination and tempering of some predicted negative effects and the enhancement of some positive effects. It is recommended that the outstanding relevant SEA recommendations are taken into consideration when developing the subsequent LTP3 Implementation Plans and implementing its schemes.

Monitoring

Monitoring the significant sustainability effects of implementing LTP3 will be an important ongoing element of the SEA process. SEA monitoring involves measuring indicators that will enable a better understanding of the causal links between the implementation of the plan and the likely significant sustainability effects (either beneficial or adverse) being monitored. This will allow the identification of any unforeseen adverse effects and enable appropriate remedial action to be taken. A monitoring programme for the LTP3 has been prepared.

The following significant effects (direct as well as indirect and cumulative) have been identified by the assessment and form the basis of the proposed monitoring programme:

SEA objectives (identified significant beneficial effects)

- SEA objective 1 – Address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases;
- SEA objective 2 – Reduce the need to travel by car and improve the efficiency of sustainable modes of transport including public transport, walking and cycling;
- SEA objective 3 – Reduce noise, vibration and light pollution from transport;
- SEA objective 4 – Reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve;
- SEA objective 5 – Maintain, protect and enhance buildings, sites and features of archaeological, historical and architectural interest and their settings;
- SEA objective 7 – Identify, manage and protect habitats and species which are important on a national and local scale;
- SEA objective 9 - Enable adaptation to the effects of climate change including the risk of flooding;
- SEA objective 12 – Promote protection and enhancement of landscape and townscape character including the open spaces and Green Belt, promoting an increase in access to and provision of natural greenspace;

SEA objectives (identified significant adverse effects)

- SEA objective 10 – Ensure prudent use of natural resources, conserving soil and mineral resources and quality and minimising the production of waste;

HIA objectives (identified significant beneficial effects)

- HIA objective 15 – Improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health;
- HIA objective 16 – Reduce the number of road accidents (particularly in deprived areas) and accidents on public transport and pavements; and
- HIA objective 17 – Reduce crime and the fear of crime.

EqIA objectives (identified significant beneficial effects)

- EqIA objective 13: Protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities;
- EqIA objective 14: To raise attainment and aspiration levels of all people to acquire the skills needed to be employed locally;
- EqIA objective 18: Improve accessibility to key services, facilities and employment areas for all sectors of the community by public transport, walking and cycling (NI175).

EqIA objectives (identified significant adverse effects)

- EqIA objective 13: Protect the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities.

Conclusions

The Environmental Report sets out the SEA process and its key findings in relation to Slough LTP3. It incorporates the results of HIA, EqIA and HRA.

As a result of the first iteration of the assessment, the Draft Environmental Report made a series of SEA/HIA/EqIA recommendations that aimed to improve the overall sustainability performance of the LTP3. The Final LTP3 incorporated most of these recommendations, which improved its overall sustainability performance. Some of the recommendations were not considered in the Final LTP3 mainly due to the fact that specific details of schemes will be set out in the LTP3 Implementation Plans and some recommendations are already covered as part of the Supplementary Strategy documents to some extent. It is recommended that outstanding relevant recommendations are considered and taken on board as appropriate when developing the consecutive LTP3 Implementation Plans and implementing its schemes. For details on how the SEA/HIA/EqIA recommendations contained within the Draft Environmental Report have been incorporated/or not into the Final LTP3 please refer to the Slough LTP3 SEA Statement.

It is therefore considered that the Final LTP3 meets the range of SEA/HIA/EqIA objectives identified in the SEA Framework to a very large extent. It offers potentially significant positive effects on a number of objectives related to climate change, use of sustainable modes of transport and reduction of need to travel, air quality, noise, vibration and light pollution, biodiversity, landscape and townscape, vulnerable disadvantaged and mobility impaired, skills, health and wellbeing, road safety, crime and fear of crime and accessibility for all.

Significant adverse effects have been predicted on the SEA objective that relates to use of natural resources and production of waste and the EqIA objective concerned with the protection of the vulnerable, disadvantaged and mobility impaired to create cohesive communities. The adverse effects identified can be minimised to a satisfactory degree through the effective implementation of all requirements and interventions of LTP3 and through identified mitigation measures.

The HRA Review considered that none of the LTP3 and Interim Implementation Plan objectives, delivery packages or projects would lead to likely significant effects on the internationally designated nature conservation sites. However, a further HRA review for future implementation plans has been recommended. More details on the HRA Review are presented in a separate report.