

SLOUGH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

## REPORT ON: SLOUGH LAF RESPONSE TO SIFE PLANNING APPLICATION

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to gain members' approval of the draft response to the SIFE planning application consultation.

### 2. DRAFT RESPONSE

22 December 2010

## Slough Local Access Forum

Paul Stimpson  
Planning Section  
Slough Borough Council  
St Martins Place  
51 Bath Road  
Slough  
Berks

Replies to: Jacqui Wheeler,  
Officer to Slough Local Access Forum  
Highways Engineering  
Slough Borough Council  
St Martins Place, 51 Bath Road  
Slough, SL1 3UF

Tel: 01753 477 479  
Fax: 01753 875 660  
Email: [Localaccessforum@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Localaccessforum@slough.gov.uk)  
Ref: SIFE Planning/LAF response

Dear Mr Stimpson,

I am writing to let you know that on balance the Slough Local Access Forum opposes the proposed development known as the Slough Intermodal Freight Exchange. The overall environmental impact of the development has to be taken into account by members as it would affect the public's enjoyment of the public rights of way.

Detrimental impact on the environment is in direct conflict with the remit of the Local Access Forum; which is to:

Advise relevant organisations, especially the Borough Council, on the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment. In particular, to ensure that such advice:

- sets public rights of way and access to open countryside in a broad context, integrating provision for all forms of open-air recreation, transport, tourism, health and public information;
- considers provision for all users, and reflects the needs of local people;
- addresses the co-ordinated use of resources to deliver integrated recreational and access provision and management
- has regard to the needs of land management, the conservation of flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features, and government advice.

It is considered that although there will be enhancements made to the surfaces of the paths and planting/fences erected to lessen the visual impact of the buildings, nothing could be done to mitigate against the noise or reduced air quality and the overall effect will be to remove the “open countryside” nature of the surroundings.

Specifically the LAF would encourage improvements to the public rights of way network in conjunction with the aims and objectives of the Slough Borough Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2007-2017. The most relevant being Objective 4b (ROWIP Statement of Action pg 38-40) “Identify and improve routes that provide access to areas of countryside”

One of the recommended activities under this Objective is to “Develop a promoted circular horse trail and/or easy access route and/or cycle route of the bridleways lying north of the Colnbrook Bypass, at the Slough/Colne Valley Park crossover.”

Though, LAF members recognise the potential for improvements to these paths arising out of these proposals, they question the extent to which the changes would meet the present and likely future needs of the public. The LAF would recommend that further investigation is done into the current usage of the routes in question.

Finally, the connection of public rights of way across this site as part of the Colne Valley Park is judged as being vital to the integrity of the Park and Slough itself; the loss of such an open area of countryside would be severe for local residents. The importance of the proposed development site is stressed in Slough Borough Council’s Core Strategy where it is designated as Strategic Gap.

If you have any queries concerning the above please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**Laurie Tucker**  
**Chair 2010, Slough Local Access Forum**