

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 13th September 2011

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WARD(S): All

PART 1 **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

HEART OF SLOUGH SCHEME – UPDATE REPORT

1 Purpose of Report

At its meeting on the 17th July the Committee requested an update of the Heart of Slough Project including information on the Compulsory Purchase Orders. This report provides that update.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note and comment on the report.

3. Community Strategy Priorities

The Heart of Slough Project will support through the constructions of buildings or the provision of services and activities the following:-

- Celebrating Diversity, Enabling inclusion
- Adding years to Life and Life to years
- Being Safe, Feeling Safe
- A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play
- Prosperity for All

4. Other Implications

Financial

- 4.1 The report to Cabinet on 7th December 2009 (Agenda Item 8) set out the Heart of Slough budget requirement for the financial years 2009/10 to 2012/13. This included provision for potential acquisition and compulsory purchase of sites required for the implementation of the Heart of Slough regeneration.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

- 4.2 If agreement cannot be reached as to the acquisition of land required, the use of our powers for compulsory purchase will interfere with the rights of the landowners

affected by the CPO. Those rights are protected by the European Convention on Human Rights and section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 prohibits the Council, and all public authorities, from acting in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Those rights were considered by Cabinet on 24th January 2011. At the same time Cabinet considered the implications of compensation payable and the service of blight notices should the CPO be confirmed.

Staffing Implications

4.3 There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

5. Background/Supporting Information

5.1 Heart of Slough Project – progress précis

The Heart of Slough regeneration project provides for the regeneration of the town centre and involves the four sites surrounding the Wellington Street/William Street roundabout. They are:

- Quadrant 1 - Brunel Bus Station and surrounding area. The old Bus Station and car park is now being demolished and the new Bus Station is fully operational since the 28th May 2011. The lease for the Café has been completed and it is anticipated the lease for the Newsagents will complete by the end of August 2011
- Quadrant 2 - The Curve. This is to be the site for the new library and cultural centre. The site is currently the subject of a Compulsory Purchase Order – see below. The purchase of the land owned by Criterion was completed on the 2nd August by agreement, thereby avoiding the need to compulsorily purchase the land.
- Quadrant 3 - The Existing Library – The site has been acquired by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) for the development of a hotel and offices. Site leased back to the Council for continued use of the library.
- Quadrant 4 - University of West London (formerly Thames Valley University). The HCA, as part of the funding provided for the infrastructure part of the project require the construction of 1,200 dwellings. Work has commenced for the development of the outline planning application for the proposed use of the site.

5.2 The four sites are drawn together by the major road improvements and infrastructure works. These works include the removal of the roundabout and removal of the subways at the junction of Wellington Street and Windsor Road, Stoke Road. These works are progressing satisfactorily and it is anticipated that the new crossroads, to replace the main William Street roundabout, will be operational from the 10th October 2011.

5.3 **Compulsory Purchase Orders** - The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for land and rights required for the proposed site of The Curve was made on the 29th June 2011, and the Notices of the making of the Order served on the relevant parties on the 29th June 2011. To be operational the Secretary of State (DCLG) must authorise confirmation of the Order.

- 5.4 The Notice invited objections to be made to the Secretary of State by the 29th July 2011 and any queries to be addressed to Slough Borough Council by the same date.
- 5.5 The Secretary of State had 5 weeks from the 29th July to notify the Council of any objections received and the date of notification is the “relevant date”. At that time we will be served with a schedule showing the names and details of the objectors, if any, and the details of the objection. The Council then has the opportunity to negotiate with any objectors with the intent of persuading them to withdraw their objection.
- 5.6 The Council then has 6 weeks from the relevant date to serve a Statement of Case on the Minister and remaining objectors. This sets out full particulars of the case to be put forward at the inquiry and justifies the reasons for making the CPO and respond to the individual objections. Following this period the Council can further attempt to negotiate with any remaining objectors with the intent that any such objections will be withdrawn.
- 5.7 If the Council cannot secure the withdrawal of all remaining objections there will either be a public local inquiry or, providing all remaining objectors agree to its use, the written representations procedure will be used.
- 5.8 If a full public local inquiry is held all parties must be given at least 42 days notice of the date, time and place of the inquiry, and this should normally be within 22 weeks of the relevant date. Using either the written representations procedure or public inquiry, the Secretary of State will determine the CPO.
- 5.9 The Council has received many inquiries concerning the CPO, and most of these have been dealt with satisfactorily. However, some inquirers have requested specific details of the proposed siting of the hoardings, cranes etc. As this information is not currently available some of the inquirers have said they will register their inquiry as an objection pending the receipt of satisfactory information.
- 5.10 From the above the longest time frame for the Minister to confirm, modify or refuse CPO is 27 weeks from the 29th July 2011, so being 3rd February 2012.

6. Conclusion

The Committee is requested to note the above.

7. Background Papers

1. Copy of the CPO of 29th June 2011.