

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 15th December 2014

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Sohail Munawar
Commissioner for Social and Economic Inclusion.

PART I **KEY DECISION**

A332 WINDSOR ROAD ROUTE ENHANCEMENT AND A355 TUNS LANE/FARNHAM ROAD ROUTE ENHANCEMENT

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's agreement to progress implementation of the A332 and A355 route enhancement schemes in order to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability along these strategic routes.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That the process of securing funding from Thames Valley Berkshire LEP be progressed and supported.
- (b) That the terms of the offer, including the potential need for the remainder of the scheme cost to be met by local funding contributions, be noted.
- (c) That the local funding contributions required from Council capital resources be agreed in principle subject to further consideration of scheme costs.
- (d) That the design of the scheme be agreed in principle subject to a positive outcome of the public consultation that is underway at the time of writing this report, and will be completed at the time of presenting this report to Cabinet.
- (e) That the tendering process be progressed in due course in line with the Council's procurement policy.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

Health

Aims relating to this report:

- Ensuring better community engagement to improve the wellbeing of our residents

3.1 Improving the strategic A332 and A355 routes will contribute to the health and wellbeing of those living and working in Slough by increasing access into the local community and enhancing social inclusion. The scheme will also help to address AQMAs by reducing pollution from congestion and 'stop start' road traffic.

Economy and Skills

Aims relating to this report:

- Increase prosperity of the community and town
- Maintain and grow the town's economy
- Improve transport and communications infrastructure
- Increase inward investment and town centre regeneration

3.2 These schemes will contribute to the economy of Slough by reducing congestion along the town's strategic routes and making it more attractive as a place for businesses to invest. Improving access to the town centre will also encourage retail developments to utilise Slough as a place to do business, and will attract local people to visit the town centre's retail outlets and contribute to its growth.

Regeneration and Environment

Aims relating to this report:

- Facilitate the regeneration of Slough town centre to become a thriving sub regional hub for public transport, retail, culture and living
- Encourage private sector investment to create employment and economic activity that will increase the viability and vitality of the town
- Maintain and improve access to recreational and leisure facilities, including parks and open spaces, using these in such a way as to ensure local people gain most benefit

3.3 Slough's environment will be enhanced by the potential reductions in CO2 and NO2 emission levels which are often caused by congestion and 'stop start' traffic. Moreover, improving the A332 will contribute towards regenerating the image of Slough, and will encourage residents and visitors to utilise the amenities in the town centre. Similarly, improving the A355 will help to regenerate a key strategic route to Slough Trading Estate, and will therefore contribute to the realisation of SEGRO's 'Masterplan' for the trading estate.

Housing

Aims relating to this report:

- Better housing standards, including efficiency and more choice and affordability

3.4 Both schemes unlock an opportunity for new housing developments, and the A332 scheme in particular unlocks the opportunity to demolish derelict properties and potentially build new housing in its place. The A332 scheme will help the delivery of plans for Slough town centre supporting the provision of almost 2400 new dwellings and 79,000 sq m of new office and ancillary space. In addition to the 2400 dwellings described above there are opportunities for some 1000 extra dwellings in the town centre over and above the LDF allocation. These would be in the form of redevelopment and changes of use and rely on provision of improved access into the town centre. The opportunity to unlock further housing opportunities and regeneration of parts of Slough along the Farnham Road and Chalvey could also be progressed as a result of the A335 scheme.

Safer Communities

Aims relating to this report:

- A place where people feel safe to live, visit, work and play
- Promote cohesive open communities that value diversity, encourage a sense of belonging and engender a sense of local pride

3.5 Improving the A332 and the A355 will enhance community safety in the area. Firstly, improvements to access and infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists will provide safer crossing and cycling facilities, which has the potential to reduce the number of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists. Secondly, upgrading junctions and signals will help to reduce collisions by limiting the incidences of excessive queuing which can lead to driver frustration and subsequent poor manoeuvres. Improvements to these strategic routes will also allow greater social inclusion and community cohesion through improved connectivity into the town centre.

Cross-Cutting themes

Civic responsibility

3.6 Improving transport and access to Slough's key amenities will encourage residents and visitors to become champions for the area, thus contributing towards the economic growth of the town.

Improving the image of the town

3.7 Both of these schemes will improve two of the main strategic approaches into Slough, which has the potential to significantly enhance the public perception and overall image of the town. Reduced congestion will result in easier access for residents, visitors and business users, thus encouraging greater use of the town centre and key business locations.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

4.1 This scheme has been approved by the Capital Strategy Board, on the basis that over its lifetime it will unlock opportunities for housing, regeneration, business investment, and improvement to AQMA zones to help improve Business Rates income and Council Tax income through helping the delivery of additional units being built.

4.2 It is important to note the significant financial contribution from the council to these schemes of £5m (A332) and £5.5m (A355.) This will need to be factored into the next Capital Strategy (2015-20) as part of the planning process; this will come to Cabinet early in 2015. This cost will be borne by the Council's General Fund capital programme, and this will result in a revenue cost through either reduced investment balances or through the need to borrow additional funds. The Capital strategy is due to be approved by full Council in February 2015 and at this point, if approved, the scheme will receive the finalised approval for funding from SBC.

4.3 Contributions will come from:

A332

SBC Capital: £300,000 (P098)

SBC General Fund: £2m

TVBLEP: £2.7m

S106: None

A355

SBC General Fund: £100,000

TVBLEP: £4.4m

S106 (Eton College): £700,000

S106 (Other): £300,000

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
<p><u>Legal</u></p> <p>a) Unexpected land compensation claims.</p> <p>b) Delay in acquiring frontage land near Three Tuns/ land transfer negotiations and legal process longer than expected.</p> <p>c) Planning permission not being granted for elements that are not Permitted Development.</p>	<p>a) Address any claims in accordance with current legislation.</p> <p>b) Programme allows time for CPO process to be carried out and time for land transfer.</p> <p>c) Public consultation and close working with Ward Members, NAGs, Parish Councils and partners, bearing in mind that the affected land lies within the approved Bath Road Widening Line. On-going dialogue with planning officers to address likely concerns.</p>	
<u>Property</u>	No risks identified	
<u>Human Rights</u>	No risks identified	
<u>Health and Safety</u>	No risks identified	
<u>Employment Issues</u>	No risks identified	
<u>Equalities Issues</u>	Please see Section 4d of this report for a full list of risks and mitigations	Upgrades to pedestrian crossings will provide a safer crossing point for blind and partially sighted residents, thus enhancing social inclusion

<p><u>Community Support</u></p> <p>a) Unfavourable response to wider public consultation.</p>	<p>a) Programme allows for detailed design to be modified where necessary to meet specific objections.</p>	
<p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>a) Public unaware of proposals</p>	<p>a) Appropriate consultation to be carried out before works are carried out</p>	
<p><u>Community Safety</u></p>	<p>No risks identified</p>	<p>Upgrades to pedestrian crossings will enhance community safety</p>
<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>a) Delays in achieving local contribution towards costs.</p> <p>b) Higher than expected costs arising post-business case approval.</p>	<p>a) Ensure SBC funding in place and on-going dialogue with partners.</p> <p>b) Manage scheme costs and benchmark against similar schemes.</p>	
<p><u>Timetable for delivery</u></p> <p>a) Unexpected lead in time and duration for Statutory Authority Works.</p> <p>b) Delays in procurement process.</p> <p>c) Utilities alterations greater than expected.</p>	<p>a) Discuss and place orders early on and allow adequate lead in time in Project Plan.</p> <p>b) Programme allows adequate time for procurement.</p> <p>c) Early consultation with Statutory Authorities</p>	
<p><u>Project Capacity</u></p>	<p>No risks identified</p>	
<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>a) Changes to design after commencing construction.</p>	<p>a) Fully complete design prior to commencing construction/ allow for contingency provision.</p>	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

4.4 No implications

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

4.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. The following potential impacts, and their corresponding mitigations, were raised:

4.6 Narrowing of the pavements at certain points may have a negative impact on those with access requirements, such as wheelchair users and blind or partially sighted road users. In order to mitigate for this, SBC will ensure that footway widths will be maintained so that vulnerable road users have access.

4.7 The change to the layout of the roads may have a negative impact on blind and partially sighted road users, as such changes can be disorientating. In order to mitigate for this, SBC will provide tactile paving on key footways in order to alert blind and partially sighted road users to road layout changes. All signal crossings will also be fitted as standard with tactile cones.

4.8 Narrowing of the pavements at certain points may have a negative impact on mothers with pushchairs. In order to mitigate for this, SBC will ensure that pavements are wide enough to remain accessible for those with access requirements

4.9 At some points during the construction process pavements may need to be closed or narrowed, which could negatively impact blind and partially sighted pedestrians, wheelchair users, and mothers with pushchairs. In order to mitigate for this, SBC ensure that diversions are in place for all pedestrians and cyclists

4.10 At this moment we are unable to identify what type of disruption will occur while SBC re-configure the disabled steps and access from the pavement to Slough Baptist Church. However, access to the Baptist Church will be maintained including the ramp access.

Equalities will also be managed through the CDM-C role throughout the process.

(e) Workforce

4.11 No implications

(f) Property

4.12 Please refer to Cabinet Report 'Windsor Road Regeneration Scheme,' presented in Part Two of the Cabinet meeting held on 15th September 2014.

5. Supporting Information

Strategic Context

5.1 The A332 provides a strategic link between Slough, Windsor and Bracknell. It also acts as the southern gateway to Slough town centre, and connects with Uxbridge (via the A412 Albert Street) and with Wexham Park Hospital and South Buckinghamshire (via the B415 Stoke Road). Every day an average of over 23,000

vehicles use Windsor Road, with morning peak flows of about 4,300 vehicles. An average of 12 buses an hour use the route.

- 5.2 The A355 is the strategic north-south route connecting M4 J6 with M40 J2. It gives access to the major focus of business activity at Slough Trading Estate for business travellers, staff and freight. It also serves Slough town centre via the A4 strategic east-west route and provides the main connection between Slough Trading Estate and Heathrow via M4 J6. South of M4 J6 the A355 crosses the Borough boundary and connects with the A332 to give access to and from Windsor and Bracknell. However, these routes often become congested, meaning that traffic is delayed and journey time reliability is poor along these routes.
- 5.3 Route enhancements along the A332 and A355 will therefore enhance connectivity into the town centre, and will improve journey time reliability across the Borough. The Council has submitted the A332 and A355 route enhancement schemes for inclusion for funding by the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP in October 2014, and has received financial approval from the LEP and the DfT for both schemes following the LTB meeting on the 20th November 2014.

Outline of the Schemes

- 5.4 The A332 and A355 route enhancement schemes deliver a combination of:
- Road widening and junction and signal improvements, aimed at reducing congestion and improving journey time reliability
- 5.5 The schemes will enhance connectivity between key areas in the Borough, including:
- Slough town centre: these projects will complement the improvements that have been initiated since 2010 as part of the Heart of Slough regeneration project. Both enhancements will improve access to the town centre's shopping and commercial facilities, and will therefore contribute to the economic growth of the town
 - Slough Trading Estate
The A355 project in particular will enhance access to Slough Trading Estate, and will therefore contribute to the completion of SEGRO's masterplan, which in turn will attract businesses to Slough and reaffirm Slough's status as an economic hub of the South East
 - The M4 and the M40: The A355 enhancement scheme will improve traffic flow on the strategic-north south route between the M4, Slough Trading Estate and the M40, which will also enhance access to Slough town centre

Detailed Infrastructure Proposals

5.6 A332 Route Enhancement

This scheme is designed to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, and improve journey time reliability. In order to do this, a number of enhancements will be carried out on this route, including:

Northern section

This section of the scheme focuses on carrying out improvement works on the northern section of Windsor Road. These works include:

High Street to Herschel Street

- Widening of carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound;
- Improvements to traffic signal operation/capacity;
- Improvements to bus infrastructure;
- Improvements to pedestrian facilities;
- Public realm enhancements linked with 'Heart of Slough' regeneration.

Herschel Street to Albert Street(A412)/ Chalvey Road East

- Widening of carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound;
- Improvements to traffic signal operation/capacity;
- Improvements to bus infrastructure;
- Landscaping enhancements.

Southern section

This scheme focuses on carrying out improvement works on the section of A332 between Albert Street/Chalvey Road East and Ragstone Road. These works include:

- Widening of carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound;
- Improvements to traffic signal operation/capacity; and
- Improvements to pedestrian facilities

5.7 A355 Route Enhancement

This scheme is designed to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, and improve journey time reliability. In order to do this, a number of enhancements will be carried out on this route, including:

- Conversion of the Copthorne roundabout to a 'hamburger' design' similar to the Sainsbury roundabout in the Town Centre;
- Alteration of north-south (A355 Tuns Lane) movements to cut across the circulatory carriageway;
- Retention of the circulatory section for side roads (Cippenham Lane and Church Street)
- Retention of Church Street as a give-way controlled arm
- Installation of MOVA i.e. smart controlled signals on 3 approaches to the roundabout: A355 Tuns Lane north; A355 Tuns Lane south; and Cippenham Lane
- Church Street is to remain un-signalised
- Widening the south-east corner of the roundabout and reducing the speed limit on A355 south of the junction to 30mph to enable the conversion of the southbound carriageway to three lanes
- Conversion of the northbound carriageway of the A355 to three lanes from the High Street, Chalvey bridge to the new roundabout;
- Localised changes to signs and lines on approaches

Programme

5.8 In summary, the programmes for each of the schemes are as follows:

A332

- Business Case ready for submission to independent assessor: Oct 2014;
- Financial approval sought from BLTB: Nov 2014;

- Tendering process begins: March 2015;
- Works begin on ground: July 2015;
- Completion: Autumn 2016.

A355

- Business Case ready for submission to independent assessor: October 2014;
- Financial approval sought from BLTB: November 2014;
- Tendering process begins: March 2015;
- First phase works begin on ground: June 2015;
- Completion of first stage works: Summer 2016.

Public consultation

5.9 Slough Borough Council conducted a public consultation for the A332 and the A355 schemes over the period of 20th October-28th November inclusive. This public consultation took the form of a number of public events, held in various locations around Slough, as well as an online consultation on the Council's Limehouse portal, which allowed residents and businesses to respond to the consultation questionnaire online. Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire were posted to affected residents and businesses, and were also provided at each of the public events. Slough Borough Council received the following level of response for each of the schemes:

A332

Online responses -56

Postal responses - 20

Total responses - 76

A355

Online responses -63

Postal responses -10

Total responses - 73

5.10 Detailed percentage breakdowns can be found in the appendices. Please see below for an overview of the total responses received (received both online and via post.)

A332

Question	Yes	No	Don't Know	No response
Do you support the widening of the carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound between the High Street and Herschel Street in order to reduce congestion?	65.8%	23.7%	10.5%	0%
Do you support the widening of the carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound between Herschel Street and Albert Street/Chalvey Road East in order to reduce congestion?	64.5%	25.0%	9.2%	1.3%
Do you support the widening of the carriageway to two lanes northbound and southbound between Ragstone Road and Albert Street/Chalvey Road East in order to reduce congestion?	61.8%	27.6%	10.5%	0%

A355

Question	Yes	No	Don't Know	No response
Do you support the conversion of the Copthorne roundabout to a hamburger design in order to reduce congestion?	64.4%	21.9%	9.6%	4.1%
Do you support the widening of the southbound carriageway of the A355 to three lanes in order to reduce congestion?	75.3%	17.8%	2.7%	4.1%
Do you support road widening to reduce the journey time between the town centre and Junction 6 of the M4?	76.7%	16.4%	1.4%	5.5%
Do you support road widening of the south-east corner of the roundabout in order to enable the conversion of the southbound carriageway for three lanes?	67.1%	16.4%	8.2%	8.2%
Do you support the installation of MOVA controlled signals on three approaches to the roundabout in order to reduce congestion?	61.6%	23.3%	9.6%	5.5%
Do you support the change in speed limit from 70mph to 30mph between M4 Junction 6 and the Copthorne roundabout?	27.4%	58.9%	8.2%	5.5%

5.11 The only question where more respondents answered “No” than “Yes” was Question 6 of the A355 Consultation Questionnaire: “Do you support the change in speed limit from 70mph to 30mph between M4 Junction 6 and the Copthorne roundabout?” Slough Borough Council recognises these concerns. However, the scheme requires the speed limit to be reduced, due to the narrowing of lanes and associated safety concerns for motorists and pedestrians.

5.12 Public Feedback: A332

Residents have expressed concerns about:

- Entry/exit onto Windsor Road from surrounding side streets
- Concerns about how the scheme will affect the quality of the environment/pollution
- Concerns over whether the scheme will lead to excessive speeding
- Residents have expressed a desire for a speed limit, and a desire for speed cameras
- Residents have also outlined the need for parking, pedestrian crossing, and pedestrian and cycle facilities to be considered

Slough Baptist Church have expressed concerns about:

- Disabled parking
- Disabled access in/out of the Church
- Fire safety and fire exit – outflow entry/exit if the front entrance to the Church is changed
- Safety for children (including Guide groups) and the proximity of the Church to the road

- The loss of the front “garden” patio area to the Church and front garden of the residential property next door
- The need for facilities for parking, a layby for loading/unloading, and adequate space for access/egress
- It is also noted that Slough Foodbank and other Church groups need ease of access and facilities for loading, parking, and disabled parking.

Slough Borough Council will consider the possibility of loading areas and parking allocations at Slough Baptist Church throughout the detailed design process.

Slough Baptist Church have made Slough Borough Council aware that they are in the process of gathering signatures for a petition, to be submitted to the Council before the end of this year.

5.13 Public Feedback: A355

The primary recurring concern about the A355 scheme centred around concerns about the reduction of the speed limit from 70mph to 30mph between the M4 Junction 6 and the Copthorne Roundabout, as acknowledged above.

Lastly, the Slough Local Access Forum provided Slough Borough Council with the following comments about both the A332 scheme and the A355 scheme:

- Feedback that the online questionnaire has been perceived as “leading”
- Enquiries as to how much each scheme will cost and how much congestion is expected to reduce by
- How congestion is measured
- Comments that the Windsor Road scheme will do little to reduce congestion, due to the fact that congestion is largely due to the road being single lane further north
- Comments that the schemes require well designed cycle lane provision
- Members would like “to know about the modelling used and the results achieved from this modelling to support the Council’s conclusions about the impact of these two schemes.”

- 5.14 Slough Borough Council has taken these comments on board and will respond to them individually. Where possible, Slough Borough Council will also use these concerns to inform the detailed design process, and amendments and/or mitigations will be made for these concerns where possible and feasible.

6. Comments of Other Committees

Capital Strategy Board

- 6.1 This scheme has been approved by the Capital Strategy Board, on the basis that over its lifetime it will unlock opportunities for housing, regeneration, business investment, and improvement to AQMA zones to help improve Business Rates income and Council Tax income through helping the delivery of additional units being built.

7. Conclusion

7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Agree to progress and support the process of securing funding from TVBLEP
- Agree in principle to the local funding contributions required from Council capital resources, subject to further consideration of scheme costs
- Agree and progress the design of the scheme

7.2 It is also recommended that it should be agreed for officers to continue in parallel the following:

- The design of both schemes through to tender stage and appointment, in line with the council's procurement policy
- Implementation of construction in 2015 for the route enhancement schemes, for completion in 2016

8. Appendices Attached

- 'A' - Submitted LEP Bid, A332 Corridor Improvements
- 'B' - Submitted LEP Bid, A355 Route Enhancement
- 'C' - Percentage Breakdown: A332 Online Responses
- 'D' - Percentage Breakdown: A332 Postal Responses
- 'E' - Percentage Breakdown: A332 Total Responses
- 'F' - Percentage Breakdown: A355 Online Responses
- 'G' - Percentage Breakdown: A355 Postal Responses
- 'H' - Percentage Breakdown: A355 Total Responses
- 'I' - Equalities Impact Assessment

9. Background Papers

- '1' - <http://static.slough.gov.uk/downloads/SJWSbooklet-final-2013.pdf>