

Thames Valley Berkshire LEP: Strategic Economic Plan

Programme D (Infrastructure) – Package Diii (Enhancing Urban Connectivity)

Project 10: Slough A355 Route

Project summary and overview

1. Name of project:

Slough A355 Route

2. Lead organisation:

Slough Borough Council

3. Contact details: (name, email, telephone numbers)

Savio DeCruz, (savio.decruz@slough.gov.uk tel: 01753 875640)

4. Brief description of the project and the main activities within it:

This is a scheme to improve traffic flow on the strategic north-south A355 route between the M4, Slough Trading Estate and the M40 and to enhance access to Slough town centre.

The scheme involves the remodelling of the Copthorne roundabout, signal and junction upgrades, selected road widening and bus priority measures.

5. Location of the project:

Central Slough

Local Authority: Slough Borough Council

Parliamentary Constituency: Slough

Postcode: SL1

Rationale for the project and strategic fit

6. How will the project contribute to the delivery of Thames Valley Berkshire's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)?

Slough Trading Estate and Slough Town Centre are two key employment locations within TVB and both are important in the delivery of the SEP. It is clear that traffic congestion already has adverse impact on business efficiency and inward investment and, as such, threatens the future economic vitality of Slough. This scheme aims to:

- a) improve the **efficiency of Slough's businesses** by reducing journey times and providing reliability along this corridor;
- b) support **retention and growth of employment** in Slough by protecting and enhancing the connectivity advantages which make Slough a good place to do business and a focus for future inward investment;
- c) reduce **CO₂ and NO₂ emission levels**, from stop start road traffic and hybrid public transport alternatives, which in turn assists in tackling this AQMA zone ;

The opportunity to unlock some further housing opportunities and regeneration of parts of Slough along the Farnham Road and Chalvey could also be progressed as a result of improved connectivity.

7. How does the project fit within the Programmes and Packages outlined in the SEP?

This project is part of Programme D and, within that, Package D-iii, *Enhancing Urban Connectivity*.

8. What is the rationale for the project?

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.

Therefore this project is concerned with improving traffic flow on a key part of the transport infrastructure. This in turn is important for the ongoing development and regeneration of both Slough town centre and Slough Trading Estate.

9. What market failures will it address? What is the evidence?

The diminishing connectivity of the A355 has been highlighted and been the subject of improvement to some extent with some funding from DfT via the Better Bus Fund Programme. However, it is noteworthy that this improvement is focussed on a small section of the A355 and focuses primarily on public transport improvements. Further enhancements to retain existing and improved connectivity of Slough Trading Estate are required and some minor improvements are being undertaken by SEGRO and Slough Borough but a larger scheme treating the route is required and it is unlikely that the private sector will fund a scheme of this nature without public investment.

10. What other options have been considered?

Re-distributing traffic across multiple motorway junctions but then this adds cost to journeys and creates bottlenecks in other areas of the town centre.

11. What would be the consequences of a "do nothing" option?

Diminishing connectivity to Slough Town Centre and SEGRO from the north and south would mean it is less competitive and attractive to do business in Slough which would have a negative impact on the areas ability to generate and contribute to UK PLC.

12. Which partner organisations are involved in, and committed to, the project?

SEGRO are in dialogue with Slough as part of their major redevelopment, we are also engaging with the Highways Agency via the Managed Motorway Project and RBWM which is affected by any disruption on the A355.

Value for money

13. What outputs will the project deliver that are attributable to SLGF and other funding sources?

Improved vehicle journey times and reliability from central Slough (town centre, Slough Trading Estate and other employment areas) to M4 J6 for business users, freight, bus operators, Heathrow-related users and commuters with knock on positive effect on wider network delays. The A355 is recognised as being one the busiest roads in the TVB and is heavily used by HGV's and other commercial vehicles than any other road to undertake north-south journeys between the M4 and M40.

It is estimated congestions costs Slough £34m in wasted journey time (LSTF Bid Slough Borough Council) with traffic speeds dropping by 8% as a result. The scheme would look to build upon the work of the LSTF programme and other interventions to improve the traffic conditions that are leading to eroding connectivity.

The scheme is a key part of the SEGRO redevelopment for the Trading Estate as it will enhance connectivity to the heart of the trading estate for commuters, businesses and investors. By improving traffic conditions on the A355 the scheme will have a knock on positive effect on movement to the town centre via the A4; this will in turn contribute towards 'Heart of Slough' residential regeneration.

The scheme is expected to achieve a high value for money score (a BCR of 10:1 has been calculated for the Copthorne roundabout element of the scheme Pinch Point Fund Tranche 3 Bid).

Outputs		2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	Later
Houses (units)	SLGF	75	75	75	75	75	75	300
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)	5	5	5	5	5	5	20
	Private sector	20	20	20	20	20	20	80
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	400
Jobs	SLGF	160	160	160	160	160	160	2065
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)	10	10	10	10	10	10	115
	Private sector	40	40	40	40	40	40	540
	Total	210	210	210	210	210	210	2720
Employment floorspace (sq m)	SLGF	6070	6070	6070	6070	6070	6070	77420
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)	345	345	345	345	345	345	4385
	Private sector	1585	1585	1585	1585	1585	1585	20195
	Total	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	102000
Businesses created	SLGF							
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)							
	Private sector							
	Total							
Business assists	SLGF							
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)							

	Private sector							
	Total							
Other 1 (specify)	SLGF							
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)							
	Private sector							
	Total							
Other 2 (specify)	SLGF							
	Other public sector (specify ESIF, etc.)							
	Private sector							
	Total							

14. How have these outputs been estimated?

Using figures from the Slough LDF and planning colleagues.

15. What wider outcomes will be achieved in TVB? Please quantify these if possible.

Improved connectivity will benefit the wider Thames Valley as it will help retain and grow the attractiveness of Slough and the wider Thames Valley as a place to do business. This will benefit in increasing the economic vitality of the area and help retain employment within Berkshire. With Crossrail and Western Rail Access to Heathrow (WRAtH) due in Slough in 2019 and 2021 respectively, it is critical that business users have journey time reliability to tie in with these new services. Delivering improvements on the A355 will enable connectivity with the proposed SMaRT project.

16. To what extent are these outputs (and downstream outcomes/impacts) likely to be additional? What is the basis for this assessment?

Without the scheme there would be a considerable loss of connectivity to the local and strategic road network thus reducing the economic vitality of Slough, thus these are not additional but necessary outputs of the scheme.

17. What is the nature of the resourcing package that is proposed (e.g. balance between loans and grants, etc.)?

20% Local and private sector partner funding and 80% grant.

18. What is the funding package through which the project will be delivered?

The total cost of the scheme is estimated to be £5.8m and the funding sought from SLGF is £4.4m.

Source	Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
SLGF	Capital	£4.4m					
	Revenue	N/A					
Other public sector	<i>Please specify</i>	0.5m					
1 SBC		£0.25m					
2							
3							
Private sector	<i>Please specify</i>						
1 S106 agreements		£1.15m					
2							

3							
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Deliverability and risks

19. How secure are the funding contributions from elsewhere?

Private sector funding is secured through S106 agreements. Other public sector funding will be secured from the Council's 2015/16 capital resources.

20. What are the key project milestones?

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

21. What are the proposed arrangements for project management?

The project will be managed using the PRINCE 2 methodology

22. What are the principal risks linked to the project's delivery, and what actions will be (or have been) taken to mitigate and manage these?

This is a relatively low risk project in the sense that all works on this proposal are within the highway boundary and there are no third party interests. However other risks are identified in the table below.

Risk	Likelihood (H / M / L)	Severity (H / M / L)	Mitigating actions
1 Higher than expected costs	L	M	Scheme to be tendered with other major projects included within the SEP to provide VfM
2 Delays in procurement process	L	L	Programme allows sufficient time for process
3 Delays due to utility requirements	L	L	Close dialogue and planning with utility companies

List of supporting information and evidence

Slough Borough Council LSTF Bid

Slough A355 Pinch Point Fund Submission

Slough LDF