



### 3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

#### 3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The redevelopment of the North West Quadrant (“NWQ”) will make a significant contribution to the joint priorities captured within the Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025:

- PRIORITY 1: constructing the new development will improve local temporary employment opportunities as well as increasing apprenticeship opportunities enabling local people to start their working life well and improve their learning and skill base,
- PRIORITY 2: coordinated and curated public spaces that are accessible to all will encourage integration and reduce inequality,
- PRIORITY 3: promoting a large scale architecturally designed mixed use regeneration scheme with high quality urban realm in the Centre of Slough will encourage more active lifestyles, improved mental health and wellbeing, increase life expectancy and encourage strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods; and
- PRIORITY 4: The development and operation of new commercial premises within a vibrant mixed use scheme will create quality permanent local employment opportunities with fit for purpose buildings, supported by a range of ground floor amenities, promoting workplace health within the borough.

#### 3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The development will help deliver the following of the Five-Year Plan outcomes:

- OUTCOME 2: creating engaging public spaces will encourage healthier lifestyles helping our people to be healthier and manage their own care needs,
- OUTCOME 3: Large scale mixed use regeneration within the town centre will contribute to Slough being an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay,
- OUTCOME 4: Increasing the supply of good quality new homes will contribute towards our residents living in good quality homes; and
- OUTCOME 5: Large scale mixed use place shaping regeneration within the town centre will increase demand, footfall, vibrancy and activity in the town centre helping to attract, retain and grow businesses and investment that creates opportunities for our residents.

### 4 **Other Implications**

#### a) Financial

Whilst there is no anticipated in-year financial pressure, other than the repurposed £50k, the expectation is that on the completion of the feasibility studies and option appraisals of SBC’s existing potential cultural assets an update will be provided to members outlining proposed investment and costs (capital and revenue) in future financial years.

Generating a commercial return for the partners is part of SUR’s objectives. There is also an obligation in the NWQ LLP Option Agreement to seek compliance with affordable housing policy whilst returning SBC’s minimum land value (based on sunk costs to date) and maintaining a financially viable scheme. This consideration will form part of the on-going joint venture Business Plan review.

Depending on the economic conditions surrounding the phases the affordable housing viability will need to be reviewed on a phase by phase basis to establish any prioritising of the objectives based on more detailed feasibility information as the project evolves.

Muse are presently preparing the Business Plan for the shareholders to review and approve. This will take account of the current market considerations and includes a detailed financial model to allow the shareholders to assess the financial planning, including commitments that will be relevant to SBC's Medium Term Financial Plan. The Business Plan will set out the scheme delivery options, including phasing proposals, taking into account the financial objectives of the joint venture partners. The approval of the Business Plan will be supported by external chartered surveyors, acting for the Council.

The option remains for SBC to deliver part of the NWQ site through NWQ LLP as a community project (i.e. funded by SBC rather than development receipts). This decision sits with, SBC and NWQ LLP, and will be influenced by the outcome of the further business case planning for the community/cultural opportunity. This business planning will provide a clear understanding of the capital and revenue implications, together with demand and economic benefits.

Developing the entire site, rather than retaining a proportion of the site for community project building, facilitates the full recovery of SBC's "sunk" acquisition, demolition and holding costs.

b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats / Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
a) Note the business planning and option review executive summary appended to this report	None	None	0	
b) Agree that the £50,000 budget approved by Cabinet in September will be repurposed to progress feasibility studies and option appraisals associated with existing Slough Borough Council assets that have potential for enhanced cultural utility	Investing in the efficient utilisation of existing cultural assets maybe more financial attainable than building new ones.	SBC will procure consultants with experience of comparable instructions.	6	Specialist consultants will be appointed to assist SBC in the delivery and utilisation of cultural space within it's existing asset base.
c) Agree that retaining circa a sixth of the North West Quadrant site for a large cultural building is not a financial priority for the	Culture has an important role in regeneration but it's cost must be	Option review and business planning appended to this report	4	Specialist consultants will be appointed to assist SBC in the delivery and utilisation of

Council at this present time and officers should seek to achieve more with less through an activity led cultural investment strategy focussed on existing SBC assets	balanced against SBC's other statutory obligations			cultural space within it's existing asset base.
d) Agree that the incorporation of Higher Education space and an innovation hub are still a strategic priority and that officers should seek their inclusion within the larger development project being promoted by North West Quadrant LLP which will now comprise the whole of the North West Quadrant site	Incorporating the HE and innovation requirements into the wider project allows planning for the whole scheme to come forward together.	NWQ LLP will promote the whole site and include flexible building space that can be utilised for a range of purposes.	4	SBC can still support the financial delivery of this type of space within the scheme (grants/ lease arrangements etc) without needing to retain land and design and build the space itself.

#### c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Under Section 13 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council must keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development.

These matters include the principal physical, economic social and environmental characteristics of the area, the principal purposes for which land is used in the area, the size, composition and distribution of the population of the area, the communications, transport system and traffic of the area, and any other considerations which may be expected to affect those matters. The matters also include any changes which the Council think may occur in relation to any other matter and the effect any such changes are likely to have on the development of the Council' s area or on the planning of such development.

The Council must also keep under review and examine the above matters in relation to any neighbouring area to the extent that those matters may be expected to affect the Council's area and must consult with the local planning authority of the neighbouring area in connection with such matters.

#### d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The NWQ masterplan will be subject to a full EqIA, full consideration has been given to accessibility and other equalities issues, as part of the ongoing design parameters of the scheme.

#### e) Property Issues

See Section 5 below.

## 5. **Supporting Information**

### **Background**

- 5.1 The Former Thames Valley University Campus, Market Yard Car Park and ancillary land, released from Highways use when the adjoining junction was reconfigured, are known collectively as the Heart of Slough North West Quadrant (“NWQ”) site.
- 5.2 The Council assembled the site in April 2017, started demolishing the existing towers in early 2019 and optioned the site to the newly created North West Quadrant LLP, a subsidiary of SUR managed and governed by SBC and Muse, in November 2019.

### **Slough Urban Renewal (SUR) and North West Quadrant LLP (“NWQ LLP”)**

- 5.3 SUR is Slough’s Local Asset Backed Vehicle (“LABV” or “vehicle”) jointly owned with Morgan Sindall Investments Limited (“MSIL”). The role of SUR is to offer a long-term approach to regeneration. Through the joint venture, the Council receives market value from the disposal of assets, with the benefit of planning, and because it is a 50% partner in SUR receives 50% of any developer profit made upon completion of the development (provided it retains a 50% equity stake). The Partnership Agreement (“PA”) regulates how SUR operates and on speculative development projects SBC makes individual sites available for SUR to develop, under a standard option agreement, allowing SUR to acquire sites for development once various conditions (planning, procurement etc) are satisfied.
- 5.4 Through the vehicle the Council can also procure community projects such a schools, leisure centres, ice arenas and even hotels which are construction managed by the vehicle but paid for exclusively by SBC (rather than from future anticipated development receipts).
- 5.5 Given the scale and complexity of the NWQ project amendments to the governance of the project were made within the NWQ LLP Partnership Deed and the associated Option Agreement including allowing part of the site to be “held back” for the delivery of community projects if desired. The development is managed MUSE, the specialist high density mixed use development arm of Morgan Sindall Plc.
- 5.6 Following approval of the Business Plan shares in NWQ LLP are anticipated to transfer from SBC:MSIL to SBC:MUSE.

### **Masterplan Scheme**

- 5.7 In accordance with the Heart of Slough Strategy, the Masterplan seeks to create a new residential-led mixed-use quarter for the town centre, which reacts to the wider ambitions of the town centre and compliments other planned town centre projects, such as Future Works 2, The Octagon site and Slough Central.
- 5.8 The Masterplan includes the scope for cultural, innovation and education space.

### **Cultural Options Review and Business Planning**

- 5.9 Slough is one of youngest and most internationally diverse places in the UK, with a resident and business population from every part of the globe bringing their culture, insight and experiences to the local community.
- 5.10 Slough has successfully attracted a huge number of businesses to the Borough, has the highest economic output per worker of any city in the country (ONS GVA data) and has been voted “the best location to work” in the UK for three years running (Glassdoor).
- 5.11 Despite the economic success Slough still has areas of entrenched deprivation and poor health outcomes.

- 5.12 The promotion of community and social inclusion is particularly beneficial in resolving mental health disorders and promoting wellbeing and social mobility. The aim is to create space for people to gather, connect, share and engage through social, recreational and inclusive activities and programmes. Engaging in society helps people to feel a sense of purpose and agency, feel safe and secure, free from violence and the threat of violence, and have hope for the future. (*Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC) – Social Inclusion – June 2007*).
- 5.13 The “creative economy” has proven to be successful in boosting economic growth, especially in situations of economic and social distress. This is because the arts and culture can assist directly in being a catalyst for employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, social revitalisation and cohesion.
- 5.14 Culture can be a powerful partner for investors, developers and local authorities in achieving positive social, environmental and economic impact through real estate developments (*Including Culture in Development – Urban Land Institute – October 2019*). Key impacts include:
- Increased social cohesion - culture is intrinsically linked with identity and acts as mediator or connector between a user and a space. Benefits can include bringing a new identity to an existing area, building a sense of place in a new or abandoned area, uniting different communities and introducing new or different activity to the area.
  - Community context – activating a creative ecosystem helps to meaningfully and robustly tie a project into its location and subsequently create economic benefits. This helps to align the objectives of the local community and the developer in working towards the success of the place.
  - Trust and accountability – by investing in a place, carefully co-creating a creative brief and designing assessment methods, key steps are established that help build a meaningful and lasting relationship with local communities.
  - Health and wellbeing – cultural infrastructure can help achieve health and wellbeing objectives. A well designed green space or new leisure facilities will contribute to mental and social wellbeing.
- 5.15 The cultural options review and associated outline business plans are summarised in Appendix 1.

### **New Direction**

- 5.16 The options recommended by the cultural consultant range between a capital expenditure cost of £80m to £135m. The council is under short to medium term financial pressure caused by the global pandemic and an increased demand for (and cost of) front line statutory services. Activity led cultural investment focussed on utilising existing assets is likely to achieve greater social outcomes with a more modest investment.
- 5.17 Third party funding is also currently less available, due to reduced budgets across the sector, with much of the available funding going towards the retention and recovery of existing organisations and assets.
- 5.18 In 2016 SBC completed the award winning (*Development of the Year at the Thames Valley Property Awards 2017*) The Curve development comprising c.50,000 sq.ft. of library, performance and cultural space which has been used for theatre, comedy and poetry performances among a variety of other uses. The proposed feasibility work will consider whether even more can be achieved from the utilisation of this interesting and striking cultural building.

- 5.19 At the same time the Council have recently invested in safeguarding cultural landmarks like the former Adelphi Theatre, which in it's heyday hosted the likes of Little Richard, The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and even Engelbert Humperdinck. With a relatively modest investment the premises may have the potential for a range of uses from cultural & creative to conferencing & performance.
- 5.20 The developers of Slough Central are also considering the creation of a cultural quarter to the rear of The Curve which could accommodate a meaningful proportion of the cultural infrastructure Slough requires.
- 5.21 Part of the NWQ Masterplan includes the creation of significant new high quality public realm that will be accessible for public events and general usage. The proposed feasibility will include consideration of how these new spaces, alongside existing spaces, can be best utilised for cultural events and activities.
- 5.22 With the above in mind officers are seeking to re-purpose the budget approved in June to explore an activity led dispersed model of cultural infrastructure investigating further the optimised use of key assets like the Adelphi Theatre, The Venue @ The Curve, new and existing public realm and some 4,000 sq.ft. of ground floor space being acquired on the ground floor of the Old Library Slough scheme, whilst also intelligently working with British Land/ ADIA on the options for the cultural quarter proposed for the western end of the Slough Central scheme.
- 5.23 Pursuing the "dispersed model" also enables the whole of the NWQ site to come forward together.

## **6 Comments of Other Committees**

- 6.1 This report has not been considered by any other committee.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 Culture has an important part to play in place shaping and regeneration through increased social cohesion, community, trust, accountability and associated benefits to health and wellbeing.
- 7.2 Investing in culture attracts business and investment whilst contributing towards Slough being an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.
- 7.3 There is an opportunity to investigate investment in a range of SBC assets dispersed around the town centre and intelligently engage in the cultural quarter proposed on Slough Central to ensure that SBC's investment in culture continues to leverage the maximum benefits for the town and it's residents.

## **8 Appendices**

Appendix One – Slough Cultural Infrastructure – Options Appraisal and Outline Business Plan – Executive Summary

## **9 Background Papers**

Heart of Slough – North West Quadrant Masterplan – June 2020 Cabinet Report  
Slough Cultural Infrastructure – Options Appraisal and Outline Business Plan  
Slough Cultural Infrastructure – Situation Analysis Report  
Slough Cultural Infrastructure – Quantifying Social Impact