

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 1 February 2021

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **KEY DECISION**

#### **SLOUGH STRATEGIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN ('STIP')**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

A report summarising proposals for transport infrastructure improvements to support the Council's strategic priorities around COVID-19 recovery, jobs and housing growth, quality of place, access to opportunity, health and wellbeing, and climate change.

The report is intended to introduce the STIP and summarise how it is important to achieving the Council's ambitions for Slough because of its focus on measures to encourage an increasing share of trips to be made on foot, by bicycle or by public transport.

The STIP is in draft form pending proposed stakeholder consultation. It is proposed that the STIP is finalised following this consultation and following publication of the Slough 2040 Vision and Climate Change Strategy.

##### **2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- a) That the concept of the STIP be adopted as the long-term plan for transport infrastructure to support regeneration of the town centre, the emerging Local Plan Spatial Strategy, and the Council's air quality and climate change policies.
- b) To note the significant technical work which has informed the STIP and the relevance of the STIP proposals to ongoing discussions with key town centre landowners and developers.
- c) To note the long-term nature of the proposals and the role of the STIP in supporting future bids for funding to deliver those proposals.
- d) To endorse the consultation exercise with stakeholders.

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

The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) is the document that details the priorities agreed for Slough with partner organisations. The SJWS has been developed using a comprehensive evidence base that includes the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). Both are clearly linked and must be used in conjunction when preparing your report. They have been combined in the Slough Wellbeing Board report template to enable you to provide supporting information highlighting the link between the SJWS and JSNA priorities.

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

The scheme aims to address the following Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 priorities:

1. *Priority 1: Starting Well-* By encouraging the use of sustainable modes of travel, aims to improve air quality in our five AQMA's and increasing quality of life for young people with respiratory disease, reducing Slough's health inequalities in the long term and providing access to work.
2. *Priority 2: Integration-* By providing transport infrastructure that includes safer access to transport hubs bus shelters, bus routes that will enable vulnerable elderly members of the community to access health facilities and community centers.
3. *Priority 3: Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighborhood's* – The STIP sets out how good infrastructure will support active travel that plays a crucial role in maintaining good health, preventing illness, supporting mental wellbeing and generally enabling people to be healthier and happier for longer.
4. *Priority 4: Workplace Health-* The STIP aims to establish better connectivity between places for home and work, provide reliable and sustainable transport for Slough residents in the suburbs and places of employment.

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

- Outcome 1: Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful.
  - Increased cycling levels will lead to fewer cars on the road providing safer, cleaner environment for Slough's children.
  - Better public transport will improve access to education and training opportunities.
- Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs.
  - Increased cycling and walking will contribute to maintaining physical and mental health.
  - Reductions in car traffic will improve air quality and reduce particulate matter.
- Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.

- Reduced traffic congestion through increased cycling and walking and better public transport services will result in improved air quality and safer roads.
- Improvements in the quality of the urban realm and quality of infrastructure will make Slough more attractive to residents, workers and visitors.
- Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes.
  - Improved integrated transport links will give residents greater choice as to where they can live and access work and facilities.
- Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.
  - Reduced congestion and improved accessibility options will reduce employee's travel time and business travel costs.
- Improvements in the quality of the urban realm and quality of infrastructure will make Slough more attractive to investors.

#### 4. **Other Implications**

##### (a) Financial

4.1 At this stage there are no specific financial risks associated with this high-level strategy however, it is expected that as identified projects come forward which are not fully funded such as the MRT+ these projects will need the Council to contribute through S106 and other council funding for Full business cases to be developed. Subject to the type of project and the available funding streams the Council may have to contribute in some form to match funding similar to the agreements with the Berkshire LEP. It is proposed that officers provide the necessary support to the capital finance manager to programme potential capital funding for future years to better plan the Councils Capital Programme.

##### (b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
To support in principle the proposals for strategic infrastructure set out in the STIP, subject to further technical work.	High total costs will require active pursuit of funding.  Refusal from developers to contribute to the implementation of the strategy once finalised.  Opportunity to	Funding secured through trip generation for S106 contributions . Use of the UTMC to control traffic and re-route	Political – (Severity/ negligible: Probability/ low)  = rating 6	Work with the planning policy team to develop robust mechanisms to secure funding from developers.  Work across Council to secure central

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
	bring about significant enhancements and support growth and delivery of town centre regeneration.	traffic around town centre. Development planning controls.		Government funding to support UK growth agenda. Further detailed technical work (see below).
To support commencement of the next stages of technical work for each of the proposals.	To engage with Slough 2040 Vision and Climate Change Strategy teams to ensure policy consistency. Uncertainty of travel demand in short-term due to COVID-19. Key stakeholders, delivery partners and the public to be consulted.	To identify and scope out via the town centre group any further workstreams to support future designs and bids to Govt	Political – (Severity/ negligible: Probability/ low)  = rating 2	Detailed schemes design, costing and feasibility analysis. Detailed business case development using the council’s multi-modal strategic transport model. Identification of potential funding sources and financing mechanisms.
To support the consultation exercise with relevant stakeholders	Potential that developers and other stakeholders may raise concerns that some proposals may affect their developments	Dialogue with some developers have already taken place and these comments have been taken into account.	Political – (Severity/ negligible: Probability/ low)  = rating 2	Ensure that the consultation exercise is meaningful and supports growth.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no HR or legal implications resulting from this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no identified negative impacts as a result of the STIP. However, with specific regard to social exclusion, the STIP will enable better accessibility to those groups enabling them to take a greater involvement in Slough's prosperity. The STIP will also provide opportunities for stakeholders to feedback on the strategic proposals.

## 5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 In February 2019, Cabinet approved the key principles of a transport vision to support the emerging Local Plan. The key principles focussed on improving public transport, improving cycling and walking and improving the public realm to make the Centre of Slough a place where businesses and our residents want to locate too. The key principles had at their core a number of proposed Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) routes to link the east and west, north and south with specific regard to housing and business growth.

The key principles document identified Slough's road network is under significant pressure, particularly at peak times, resulting in congestion, safety and air quality issues, and acting as a barrier to investment. Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily reduced pressure on our road network, it is possible that the pandemic could result in higher than usual levels of car traffic in the medium-term. Further, the growth in jobs and homes anticipated in the Local Plan Review will see further increases in demand for travel. Approval of major developments such as Panattoni (1,000 homes) and the Horlicks Factory (1,300 homes) are some early signs of this growth. The major planning proposals expected for North West Quadrant and redevelopment of the shopping centres are further examples, with even more significant impacts.

The approach set out in the Key Principles is to reverse current trends in car use and address the growing demand for travel by providing a step-change in alternatives to car use and reducing the need to travel by locating homes closer to jobs, education and services.

- 5.2 Since March 2019 the Council has been developing the ideas in the Key Principles into a set of specific transport infrastructure proposals required to achieve the shift to non-car modes required for the future. These proposals extend beyond the town centre and bring benefits to the whole borough. This technical work has included outline design of schemes, preparation of Strategic Outline Business Cases; and traffic modelling to forecast the impacts of the proposed projects on the highway network. The findings of this work to date has been brought together in a draft STIP which will be brought before the Cabinet in autumn 2021.

### 5.3 The Strategic Transport Infrastructure Plan

- 5.31 The draft strategy to respond to this challenge and to support achievement of the Council's high-level outcomes relies on taking an integrated approach across our functions, and to work in partnership with stakeholders to deliver the proposals set out in our plans.
- 5.32 The STIP will enable the Council to ensure that transport and land use proposals are considered holistically; so that growth is located where sustainable travel options are at their most attractive already, and with further investment.
- 5.33 The Local Plan will also be critical in minimising the demand for travel by locating shops, schools and facilities close to where people live, and creating vibrant local

communities. The Local Transport Plan will be particularly important in identifying measures to support walking and cycling within local neighbourhoods, promote use of sustainable modes and improve safety and security.

5.34 Improvements to strategic transport infrastructure, the focus of this STIP, will be designed to take advantage of Slough's existing strengths, and fully exploit already-committed projects, such as the Elizabeth line, to spread their benefits across the borough.

5.35 The draft STIP sets out the transport objectives which the STIP proposals are intended to deliver; and in so doing, achieve our highest Council priorities relating to health, opportunity, the economy, place and environment. The proposals in the STIP will do this by:

- making public transport the dominant mode of travel to and from the centre of Slough, the rest of the Borough and beyond, including to and from Slough's neighbourhoods;
- providing the capacity for movement to and from the centre of Slough, in the form of a high quality, reliable, high-capacity public transport network, which enables a higher scale of development;
- maximising the benefits of enhanced strategic public transport connectivity to London, Heathrow Airport and the wider Thames Valley;
- making walking and cycling to and from the centre of Slough and the district centres the most attractive option for shorter journeys;
- creating attractive environments in which people are put first in terms of movement and use of space for interaction, creating safe, healthy and vibrant urban spaces which encourage people to live, work and relax locally;
- using high quality design of transport infrastructure to enhance the quality of the public realm;
- significantly reducing the dominance of the car as a mode of travel to, from and through the centre of Slough and on key arterial roads; and
- minimising the impacts of roads, parking and motorised vehicles on the urban realm and on people, including improved air quality and road safety.

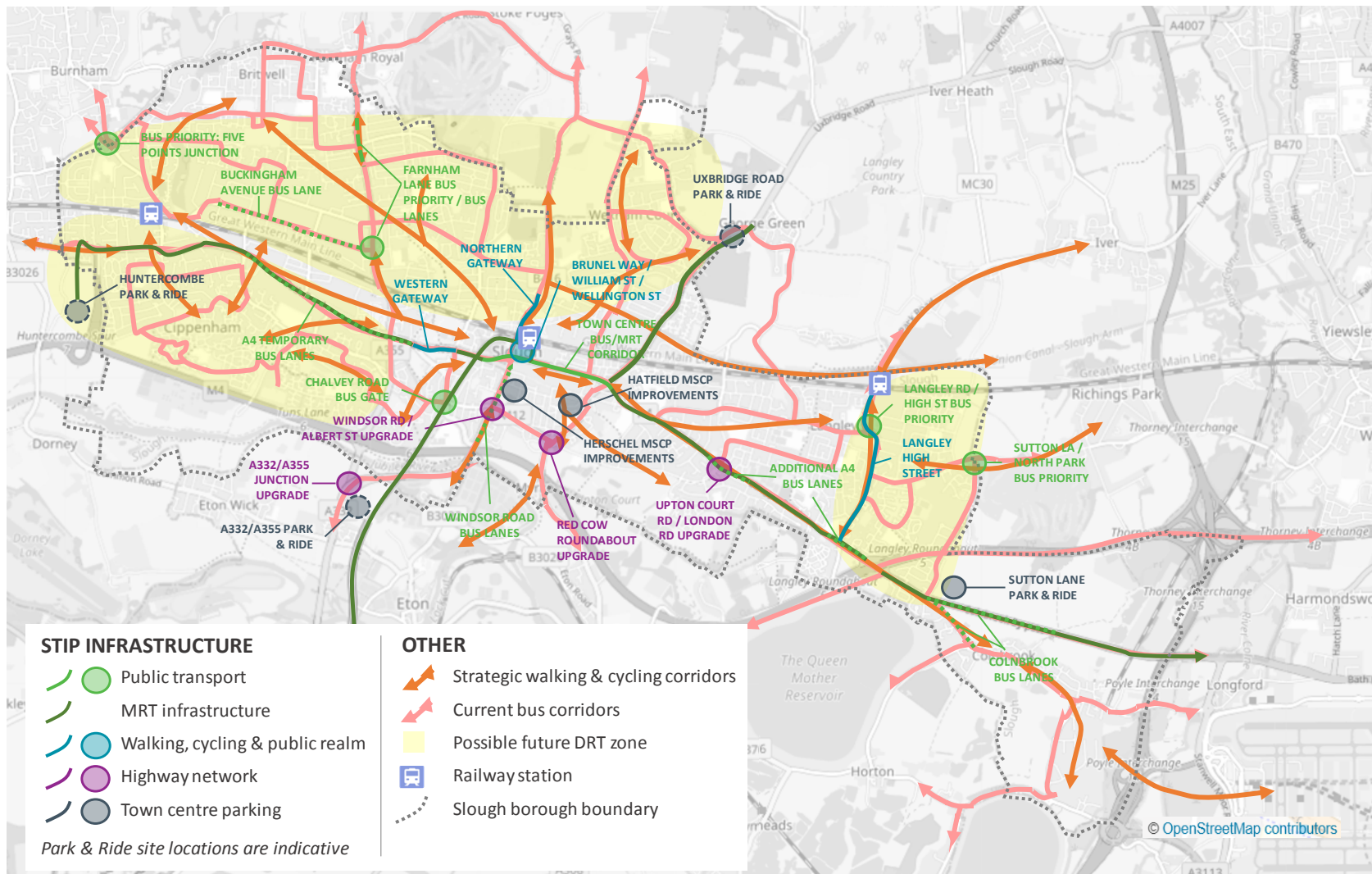
5.36 A brief summary of the proposals is provided in Table 1 overleaf, which also indicates the intended outcomes of each. A map showing their locations is provided in Figure 3.

**Table 1 – Summary of infrastructure projects and intended outcomes.**

	Proposal	Public transport is the dominant mode	Capacity for movement	Maximising benefits of Elizabeth line etc.	Walking & cycling for short trips	Creating attractive environments	Enhancing public realm	Reducing dominance of car travel	Minimising impacts of traffic
Public transport	A <b>Slough Mass Rapid Transit</b> network. Passenger and vehicle priority infrastructure, and high specification vehicles to provide high quality and reliable public transport.	●	●	●		●		●	●
	Infrastructure improvements for <b>traditional bus services</b>	●	●	●				●	●
Walking, cycling and public realm	Enhancements to <b>Brunel Way, William Street and Wellington Street</b> to significantly enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce the dominance of traffic.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Town centre <b>Northern Gateway</b> improvements for buses, pedestrians and cyclists on Stoke Road.	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
	Improvements to Slough Station northern forecourt	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Town centre <b>Western Gateway</b> improvements for buses, pedestrians and cyclists on the A4 Bath Road.	●	●		●		●	●	●
	Improvements to <b>Langley High Street</b> to improve conditions for pedestrians and other road users.	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
The highway network	Junction and highway improvements to provide an <b>alternative east-west traffic route</b> around the town centre to allow for reduction of Wellington Street capacity.		●						●
	Upgrade to the <b>A332/A355 junction</b> to allow vehicle access to the town centre via M4 (J6) and Windsor Road. (subject to business case)		●						●
Town centre public parking	Consolidation of <b>town centre public parking</b> into SBC's two multi-storey car parks in the medium-term, and enabling remedial works.								●
	A ring of <b>park &amp; ride</b> sites on the edge of Slough as a longer-term solution to parking in the town centre and other employment locations.							●	●



Figure 3 – Locations of proposed strategic transport infrastructure projects



6. **Comments of Other Committees**

The matter has been considered by O&S Committee and will be included in the final draft of the STIP.

7. **Conclusion**

Adopting the principle of a Strategic Transport Infrastructure Plan will allow progress on engagement with key stakeholders and development of the final version containing further details of the measures to support the Slough 2040 Vision, Climate Change Strategy and other Council priorities.

8. **Appendices Attached**

A) 'A' – Draft Slough Strategic Transport Infrastructure Plan Summary slides

9. **Background Papers**

'1' A Transport Vision for the Centre of Slough Key Principles (March 2019 Cabinet)

'2' Centre of Slough: Regeneration Framework Masterplan (September 2020 Cabinet)

'3' Slough Local Plan Proposed Spatial Strategy for Public Consultation (October 2020 Cabinet)