

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 22nd September 2009

CONTACT OFFICER: Paul Stimpson, Head of Planning Policy and Projects
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875820

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Neighbourhoods and Renewal, Councillor Swindlehurst.

PART I **KEY DECISION**

APPROVAL OF THE SLOUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT AND PROPOSALS MAP

1 Purpose of Report

To seek Member's endorsement of the Publication and Submission of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and to forward any comments to the meeting of the Full Council on 24th September.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to recommend to Full Council:

- (a) That the Site Allocations Development Plan Document be approved for publication and submission to the Secretary of State.
- (b) That the Strategic Director of the Green and Built Environment in consultation with the Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal be granted delegated authority to:
 - Make any necessary minor alterations to the Site Allocations DPD following the Council meeting and prior to Publication of the DPD for public consultation.
 - Make any necessary minor alterations to the Site Allocations DPD following the public consultation on the Publication Version and prior to the Submission of the Site Allocations DPD to the Secretary of State ;
 - Withdraw the DPD prior to the determination by the Secretary of State should it be expedient to do so;
 - Make any necessary alterations to the Proposals Map prior to its adoption.
- (c) That the new Proposals Map for Slough, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved for consultation alongside the Publication and Submission Versions of the Site Allocations DPD.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

- **A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play**
- **Prosperity for All**

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications associated with the proposed action. The cost of the Examination in Public needed for the document, which is estimated to be in the region of £30,000 will need to be absorbed within next year's budget.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
The Cabinet is requested to resolve to recommend to Full Council that the LDF Site Allocations DPD be approved for publication and a six week consultation after which it will be formally to the Secretary of State.	If the Council does not approve the Site Allocations DPD there will be a significant delay in bringing forward sites that are needed to implement the Core Strategy. We would fail to meet the agreed timetable for plan production set out in the Local Development Scheme.	That the Council approves the Site Allocation DPD subject to any changes that it may wish to make.
That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Green and Built Environment to make minor changes to the Site Allocations DPD and the Proposals Map	Without delegated authority any minor changes to the Site Allocations DPD and Proposals Map would require permission from Full Council. This would result in time delays to the work programme and result in the agreed milestones within the Local Development Scheme being missed	That the Council agrees the recommendation
That the new Proposals Map for Slough, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be approved for consultation alongside the Publication and Submission Versions of the Site Allocations DPD.	The Proposals Map identifies all site allocations, designations and policy zonings. The Proposals Map is essential to the implementation of all of the Council's Development Plan Documents. Failure to endorse the new Proposals Map could undermine the adoption of the DPD	That the Council agrees the recommendation as proposed.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The process for producing Development Plan Documents is set out within the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and amendments in 2008 and 2009. The Development Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (amended).

Once adopted the Site Allocations Development Plan Document will form part of the Council's Development Plan (as defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) as the basis on which planning decisions in the Borough are taken.

There are considered to be no specific human rights or legal implications relating to the proposed plan.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

This action is unlikely to have any impact in relation to race, gender, sexual orientation and disability groups.

(e) Workforce

There are no specific workforce implications associated with the proposed action which is included in the current Service Plan.

5 **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Members will recall that the results of the public consultation exercise on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) were reported to Cabinet on 20th April 2009 when the results were noted and a proposed methodology for selecting which sites should go in the final document was agreed.
- 5.2 A draft of the publication version of the Site Allocations DPD has now been produced for approval by Full Council on 26th September. As a result comments are therefore being sought on this document so that they can be passed onto Full Council. A copy of the draft DPD, together with a document setting out what the new Proposals Map for Slough will consist of when the DPD is adopted, is available in the Member's room for inspection.

Site Selection Methodology

- 5.3 The purpose of the Site Allocations DPD is to implement the Core Strategy. It does not have to be comprehensive or have to attempt to identify every site that will come forward over the plan period. The Council can therefore choose which sites it wishes to promote in the document.
- 5.4 At the previous meeting it was agreed not to include sites in the DPD which had planning permission, were too small, did not propose significant change or were subject to technical constraints. It was also agreed that sites that were contrary to policy should be deleted. The results of ongoing technical work suggested that this methodology should be further refined. As a result the scope of the DPD has been altered to produce a more streamlined and focused document. Importantly the DPD will now concentrate on promoting the sites that are regarded as being the most important for delivering the objective, vision and spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy.

Proposed Site Allocations

- 5.5 The DPD now identifies 18 sites for development plus an additional 7 sites which are to be proposed as Informal Nature Reserves. It also identifies a further 4 "Selected

Key Locations” where comprehensive redevelopment will be encouraged in the future. Details of all of these sites that are being taken forward are set out below.

- 5.6 All of the Site Allocations have been subject to high level technical assessments in order to establish that they are acceptable in principle. They will, however, still have to be properly tested at the planning application stage in order to ensure that there are no detailed material considerations that would prevent planning permission being granted.
- 5.7 The omission of a site from the DPD does not mean that it cannot come forward via a planning application in the normal way. Indeed the publication of the “Report on the Results of Public Consultation” will help to facilitate this, by identifying which of the original submitted sites the Council would support in principle. This includes 3 additional sites that were submitted at or after the first consultation stage.
- 5.8 One of the main themes of the Core Strategy is to promote major comprehensive regeneration schemes within the Borough as part of the spatial strategy of “concentrating development but spreading the benefits”. The Site Allocations DPD therefore includes proposals for the **Heart of Slough, Slough Trading Estate, Britwell & Haymill Regeneration, Queensmere/Observatory shopping centres, Town Hall** and the **Canal Basin**.
- 5.9 In some cases, such as the Heart of Slough, these proposals are well advanced. It is, however, still necessary to include this in the DPD because it will give added weight to the approved Master Plan and therefore help to ensure that development takes place in accordance with the agreed principles. Other sites, such as the proposal for the Queensmere Observatory Shopping Centre are far less well advanced but it is still important to include them so that the basic principles of what is proposed can be established.
- 5.10 The DPD also includes sites which are needed to implement the other policies in the Core Strategy such as housing, retail and nature conservation.
- 5.11 Although there is no overriding need for any more housing sites in order to meet the housing allocation in the Regional Plan, the following sites have been included for residential development. **Cippenham Phase 4** has been included as a Site Allocation because it forms part of an “Area of Major Change” in the Core Strategy and there is a need to confirm the final extent of the development area. Two other new small sites at **Newbeech House, Long Readings Lane** and **Moray Drive Play Area** have been included in order to establish their acceptability for housing development in accordance with planning policy.
- 5.12 The former **Arbour Vale School** site has also been included as a Site Allocation for residential use on the basis that redevelopment within the footprint of the existing buildings is acceptable within the Green Belt in accordance with PPG2 (Green Belts). The Council, as landowner, is now promoting the development of a new football stadium for Slough Town FC on the adjacent surplus playing fields. It is not, however, possible to include this as a Site Allocation in the absence of any specific policy support for this in the Core Strategy. As a result the proposed football stadium will have to be progressed through a planning application on the basis that very special circumstances can be demonstrated to treat this as an exception to Green Belt policy.

- 5.13 Existing Local Plan housing sites which already have planning permission, such as Castlevew and Middlegreen Trading Estate will be retained and shown on the Proposals map without having to be included as new “Site Allocations” in the new DPD.
- 5.14 The combination of all of the sites shown on the Housing Trajectory shows that there are sufficient identified sites to meet the housing allocation in the South East Plan along with a contingency for non delivery. As a result there is no need to identify any more sites in the Site Allocations DPD.
- 5.15 The Core Strategy acknowledges the need for more gypsy and traveller sites in Slough and a possible location has been identified in Poyle. This has not been included as a Site Allocation at this stage because land ownership and flooding issues need to be resolved.
- 5.16 With regard to new employment development, it is considered that priority should be given to the major office schemes within the comprehensive regeneration schemes that have been identified above, because of the wider benefits that these can provide. As a result it is not proposed to include any individual office developments as Site Allocations. This will not prevent suitable office schemes from coming forward in the town centre, where the number of proposals submitted during the consultation stage indicates that there are sufficient sites to implement the Spatial Strategy of “concentrating development”.
- 5.17 The proposals in the Site Allocations could result in a very limited loss of employment land to other uses, where this can be justified because of the wider benefits that this can bring.
- 5.18 The main thrust of the Core Strategy retail policy is to promote the town centre as a “Primary Regional Shopping Centre”. This will mainly be achieved through the **Queensmere / Observatory shopping centre** Site Allocation. The Core Strategy also identifies the need for enhancements to the two District Centres. As a result the DPD identifies the **Sainsburys** and **Lidl** stores for expansion in the Farnham Road and proposes a new supermarket in the **Langley Business Centre** adjacent to the Harrow Market shopping centre.
- 5.19 The full list of proposed Site Allocations is as follows:

Britwell & Haymill Regeneration

Mixed Use: community, retail, , residential and public open space

Cippenham Phase 4

Residential (family housing)

Newbeech Elderly Persons Home, Long Readings Lane

Residential and or community use

Slough Trading Estate

Mixed use: business, warehousing, offices, retail, hotel, financial and professional services, leisure, restaurants/bars, conference facility, skills centre and transport hub (including Leigh Road Central Core Area)

352-358 Farnham Road

Retail (extension to Lidl store)

149-153 Farnham Road & 415-426 Montrose Avenue

Retail (extension or redevelopment of Sainsbury's store with car parking)

Slough Town Hall, Bath Road

Mixed Use: residential, community, commercial

Thames Valley Community Centre, The Green, Chalvey

Mixed use: community and education

Former Arbour Vale School, Stoke Road

Community, residential, playing fields

Play Area off Moray Drive

Residential and public open space including play area

Slough Canal Basin, Stoke Road

Mixed Use: residential, hotel, retail, business, public open space

Queensmere & Observatory Shopping Centres, High Street

Retail, leisure, restaurants/bars, car parking, residential, community

Heart of Slough, William Street roundabout, TVU, Brunel Bus Station, Compair House, Library, Day Centre & St Ethelberts Church

Mixed Use: residential, offices, hotel, new bus station, new library, retail, cafes/restaurants/pubs/bars, leisure and associated public realm and parking.

Upton Hospital, Albert Street

Medical and healthcare uses

Wexham Park Hospital, Wexham Road

Medical and healthcare uses

Post Office Sorting Office, Wellington Street

Residential or mixed business and residential

Part of Langley Business Centre, 11/49 Station Road, Langley

Retail (new supermarket)

BT Site & 297 Langley Road

Residential and Health Care

- 5.20 It is also proposed to include seven sites as Non Statutory Informal Nature Reserves as a carry over from the Local Plan. These are **Lynch Hill & Bangle's Spinney; Watercress beds, Keel Drive; Chalvey Millennium Green; South of Stranraer Gardens; Halkingcroft Wood; West of Hollow Hill Lane; and Old Slade lake & Orlitts Lake.**

Selected Key Locations for Comprehensive Regeneration

- 5.21 In addition to the specific Site Allocations, it is proposed to identify a number of other key sites which may form part of comprehensive regeneration schemes at some stage in the future.

5.22 Core Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy) states that:

Proposals for the comprehensive regeneration of selected key locations within the Borough will also be encouraged at an appropriate scale. Some relaxation of the policies or standards in the Local Development Framework may be justified by overall environmental, social and economic benefits that will be provided to the wider community.

5.23 The Core Strategy identifies where some of these selected key locations will be but makes it clear that other areas can be considered in the Site Allocations DPD. Many of these areas have been brought forward as Site Allocations, but there are some which are not sufficiently advanced to be treated as such. As a result it is proposed to identify the following four areas as “Selected Key Locations” for comprehensive redevelopment.

5.24 Part of the **Bath Road, Cippenham** which currently contains the Trade Sales car showrooms and sites has been included as a Selected Key Location on the basis that it could be redeveloped for residential use, even though it is currently zoned as an Existing Business Area.

5.25 The **Shopping Centre, Chalvey High Street** adjoins the Thames Valley Community Centre and has the potential to be developed in co-ordination with this. As a result it has been identified as a key location that could form part of the wider Chalvey regeneration area and could be redeveloped without having to replace all of the existing shops.

5.26 The **Stoke Road/Mill Street** area has been included on the basis that there is a long standing recognition that this area can be redeveloped on a comprehensive basis for a mix of uses. The **Former Langley Oil Depot** has been included as a selected key location for comprehensive regeneration in recognition of the fact that it may not be suitable for business or warehousing use because HGVs cannot gain access to it under the low bridge in Station Road. As a result a long term solution needs to be found with a suitable mix of uses which also improves access to the site, maintains the Green Belt land and retains some capacity for rail deliveries.

5.27 The Petersfield Road area has also been suggested as an area for comprehensive redevelopment but this is considered to be premature until the proposals of Akzo Nobel (former ICI) are known.

Proposals Map

5.28 When the Site Allocations DPD is adopted it will have a new Proposals Map which shows all of the relevant zoning and designations for all of the existing Development Plan Documents. This will be based upon the existing Proposal Maps for the Local Plan for Slough and the relevant parts of the Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans.

5.29 Members will recall that as part of the Site Allocations process, proposals were put forward to include land within the Green Belt. It is considered that land at Cippenham, Farnham and Wexham should be included in the Green Belt. An extension of the proposed Green Belt at Wexham, as proposed by the parish Council, has not been included on the basis that this does not comply with the criteria in Core Policy 2. The three new areas do not have to be included as Site Allocations because they can be implemented by designating them as Green Belt on the new Proposals Map.

- 5.30 The Proposals Map will also include the new Town Centre boundary for use with the Core Strategy policies and other minor re-zonings to the established town centre shopping centre. The Proposals map will also show all of the new Site Allocations, the Selected Key Locations for Comprehensive Regeneration and the saved Local Plan Proposal Sites.
- 5.31 An explanation of all of the changes to the Proposals Map will be set out in a separate document which will be published alongside the Publication Version of the Site Allocations DPD.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.32 The DPD is required by law to have a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which looks at the social, economic and environmental impacts of the proposals. Given that the Site Allocations DPD seeks to implement the Core Strategy, this SA has been based upon the work that was carried out for it. One of the reasons for adopting the more focused approach to the Site Allocations is that the Sustainability Appraisal has highlighted the fact that, without carrying out a new full appraisal, the scale of development that can be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD cannot exceed that which has already been tested in the Core Strategy or the South East Plan.
- 5.33 The Site Allocations DPD has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal throughout all stages of its preparation. The SA Report which will be published alongside the Publication version of the Site Allocations DPD shows that the sites that have been identified are likely to bring sustainability benefits with them; particularly as they are focused on the regeneration of key locations. The SA also considers the relative sustainability of all the sites put forward during the process. While a small number of site allocations scored poorly against the sustainability criteria many of the unconstrained sites in the urban area were identified as bringing similar sustainability benefits

Next Stages

- 5.34 Subject to the approval of the document by Full Council on 26th September, it is proposed to publish the Site Allocations DPD, together with the Sustainability Appraisal and other evidence documents, in October when there will be a six week public consultation period. This will give interested parties the opportunity to register their support for, or objections to the sites. All comments will then be considered and any appropriate minor changes will be made before the final (submission) version of the document is submitted to the Secretary of State in January.
- 5.35 There will then be a hearing which will be conducted by an Independent Inspector who will assess the soundness of the plan. This is likely to be held in May/June 2010. The Inspector's binding report could then be published in August 2010. The Council will then be able to formally adopt the Site Allocations DPD.
- 5.36 It should be stressed that under the new planning system there is very little scope for the Council to make any changes to the plan once it is published and that the Inspector is the only person who can make any changes to the submission document.

5.37 Delegated powers are being sought to enable minor changes to be made to the document as a result of the public consultation exercise and to allow it to be withdrawn if this is suggested by the Inspector.

6 Comments of other Committees

The Draft Site Allocations DPD was considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 8th September and the Committee noted the report.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The Site Allocations document is a key part of the Local Development Framework. It provides the opportunity to implement the Core Strategy for Slough by identifying specific sites for development.

7.2 This report summarises the sites to be taken forward in the Site Allocations SPD which will be published for public consultation and subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State.

8 Appendices

Appendix 1 – The Scope and Content of the New Proposals Map for Slough.

9 Background Papers

- '1' - Slough Core Strategy (Dec 2008)
- '2' - Site Allocations Consultation Draft (Oct 2008)
- '3' - Draft publication version of Site Allocations DPD
- '4' - Draft Sustainability Appraisal of Site Allocations DPD

The Scope and Content of the new Proposals Map for Slough.

The Proposals Map for Slough, which will be adopted alongside the Site Allocations DPD, will consist of the following information:

1. As proposed within Site Allocations DPD:
 - The site allocations for development;
 - The Selected Key Locations for Comprehensive Regeneration;
 - Proposals for Informal Nature Reserves;
 - The Town Centre Area;
 - The Town Centre Shopping Area;
 - The extensions to the Green Belt;
 - The addition to public open space

2. As on the existing Proposals Map for the Local Plan for Slough (Adopted March 2004):
 - The Plan Boundary;
 - The unimplemented Local Plan Proposal Sites (specifically Local Plan sites 16 & 18 as saved);
 - The Existing Business Areas;
 - The Shopping Centres (NB alteration to Town Centre boundary under 1);
 - Slough Old Town Area;
 - Residential Areas of Exceptional Character;
 - Public Open Space/Allotments (as altered by the proposed addition);
 - Green Belt (as altered by the proposed additions);
 - Local Wildlife Sites (formally called Wildlife Heritage Sites where they have retained this status);
 - Areas liable to flood (updated to include the latest Flood Maps provided by the Environment Agency);
 - Ancient Monuments;
 - Trading Estate/ Simplified Planning Zone;
 - Public Safety Zone;
 - Historic Parks and Gardens;
 - Conservation Areas (including alterations to any Conservation Area boundaries or new Conservation Areas);
 - Local Nature Reserves;
 - Colne Valley Regional Park;
 - Strategic Gap;
 - Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt;
 - Linear Park

(NB. The Town Centre Commercial Core Area and the Town Centre Boundary on the Proposals Map for the Local Plan for Slough will not be brought forward onto the New Proposals Map for Slough)

3. As on the relevant parts of existing Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (adopted with modifications in 1997 and 2001)
 - Any Mineral Local Plan site allocations within Slough Borough
 - All Minerals Local Plan designations within the Slough Borough boundary

4. As on the relevant parts of the existing Berkshire Waste Local Plan (adopted 1998).
 - Any Waste Local Plan site allocations within Slough Borough;
 - All Waste Local Plan designations within the Slough Borough boundary