

Future High Streets Fund

Call for Expressions of Interest

Application Form



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Applicant Information

Bidding authority: Slough Borough Council

Area within authority covered by bid: Slough Town Centre

Bid Manager Name and position: Shabnam Ali, Service Lead for Economic Development

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Additional evidence, such as letters of support, maps or plans should be included in an annex.

Applications to the Fund will be assessed against the criteria set out below. Further information on the scoring criteria and their weighting will be published by the department before the end of January 2019.

Submission of proposals:

Proposals must be received no later than 2359 on **Friday 22 March 2019**.

An electronic copy only of the bid including any supporting material should be submitted to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

Enquiries about the Fund may be directed to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

SECTION 1: Defining the place

This section will seek a definition of the high street or town centre to be covered within the bidding authority. Places should:

- Explain the high street/town centre geography
- Indicate the population of those living and travelling to this centre, how this links to the wider economic area and its role in the lives of those within the catchment area

1.1 Geographical area:

Include information setting out the extent of the high street/town centre area covered in the proposal and a description of this centre.

Please include maps and supporting evidence as annex documents if required.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

Geography

Slough has a reputation as being pro-growth and a good place to do business in, but the town centre will only thrive if people are prepared to invest in it. Recent regeneration successes have demonstrated levels of confidence amongst investors and businesses. It is vital that Slough continues on this trajectory of development but we must ensure the journey of growth is inclusive - where prosperity is shared with businesses, communities and stakeholders.

Slough is situated to the West of London in the Thames Valley, and is one of the most accessible towns in the South East. The town centre is a transport hub, fifteen minutes from London Paddington, a Crossrail station and the Western Rail link to Heathrow which will give access to Slough in 7 minutes. The bus station connects local and regional destinations via Green Line and National Express services. Slough's bike hire scheme and rapid regular bus services allow for popular local journeys including to the Trading Estate and its residential suburbs.

The square mile of the town centre is defined in the attached red line map. It lies within the centre of the Borough, and is characterised by a mix of uses, with a predominance of high density residential to the north and east and high quality offices outside the railway and bus stations. The shopping area is an elongated ribbon of retail (1110m) to the south of the A4, is characterised by two 1970s indoor shopping centres and a traditional pedestrian high street.

The 1970's shopping centres obstruct the desired visual and physical line from the train and bus stations to the high street. Fear of crime, antisocial behaviour and traffic congestion effect the perceived and actual environmental quality, and development viability. The primary retail area is blighted by vacant department stores - formerly occupied by national brand retailers, low quality infill / small shops and on-street sellers, and long term hoardings around large key sites which have not been built out. The town also has a limited night time economy, and few family attractions or brand restaurants. These combine to give the feel of a large district centre, dominated by food and drink shops meeting local cultural needs.

There have been small pockets of regeneration since the early 2000's. The project '@art at the centre' embedded art, high quality pavements and lighting along the high street. The historical "Heart of Slough" masterplan delivered the remodelling of the infamous Brunel bus station and roundabout to create an open boulevard between the historic St Ethelbert's brick and flint Church, the station forecourt and new landmark bus station and 'The Curve' (library, theatre and community building). Private investment has begun to follow with two flagship buildings in the new commercial quarter – the first of a new wave

of regeneration anticipated, but with implementation delays, and issues with viability, all of which are outside the Council's control, confidence is lagging again and communities and businesses are frustrated with the lack of a quality retail and amenity offer . (See annex a).

1.2 Population and links to wider economic area:

Information on the population living and working in the town centre area, how the area acts as a centre of social and economic activity and its links to the wider economic catchment area.

With supporting evidence to include:

Resident and workplace population, travel to work catchment area, town centre footfall, commercial space, retail activity, cultural activities, diversity of uses and social/ historical importance of the centre

Please limit your response to 750

Introduction

The historical Heart of Slough masterplan, and the more recent Town Centre Vision aims to attract higher earning commuters during the week, and resident families and their visitors at the weekends to spend more time in the town centre and the high street, in order to bring a blend of spenders and volume footfall.

The Vision does this by planning to reduce vehicle traffic throughput, diversify the attractions of the town to reduce the dependence on declining retail, and deliver safe attractive spaces and routes for pedestrians. Capital and revenue funding will promote the quality of experience through delivering an activity based centre with more cultural and creative activities, food and beverage provision, as well as new and small business accommodation.

Resident and workplace population

Slough has a disparity between high earning in-commuters with a lower earning, lower skilled resident population (earning an average of £679.20 and £604.60 per week respectively - Nomisweb 2018). In Slough as a whole the majority of residents in employment are in manual occupations (35%) with half as many in professional occupations (16%). The Borough's resident population is also characterised by having one of the youngest and most ethnically diverse in the South East. The 2011 Census indicated that 40% of the population was classified Asian or Asian British and 36% White British. Over 150 languages have been recorded as being spoken in Slough schools. Around 28% of people are under twenty, with a median age of 34.4 years (compared to 39.8 years for England as a whole) and a distinctive working age cohort. Over the last 7 years, the population of Slough is estimated to have increased by 8,055. (see annex a).

The town has a long history of having a culturally and ethnically diverse residential community which has created a place that is unique and valued by those who live and work here. Slough has transformed itself from a predominantly industrial town into a commercial centre with a range of more knowledge based businesses. There are approximately 80,000 jobs in Slough which contribute around £7bn to the national economy which is why it can be described as an "economic powerhouse".

Although the economic headline statistics are very positive, growth and prosperity has not reached all the population. The Slough resident on average earns £70 less than the worker commuting into the Borough, has lower levels of skills, is more prone to cardiovascular and diabetes related illnesses, is likely to have a shorter life and in general has a lower quality of life. (SBC 5 year Plan Evidence Base 2019)

The Town Centre Vision therefore, not only plans to deliver physical regeneration but also a programme of social regeneration which enables growth to be inclusive, shared and for all.

Travel to work catchment area

Heathrow on our doorstep means Slough aligns to the West London, Slough and Heathrow Travel to Work Area (see annex a), but it is also important in the Thames Valley. The train station enables workers from London, Reading and Oxford to access high skilled jobs on the trading estate, the town centre and beyond. The 45,000 commuters on a daily basis are able to get into Slough and deliver a range of high skilled jobs. It's estimated that one million people a year stand on platform 1 in Slough's train station. The proposed 3rd runway at Heathrow, the increasing numbers of data centres in the trading estate and Berkshire's economic scale in the IT Sector, means Slough will continue its significance as a business hub. None of this, however, transforms into footfall in the shopping area.

Commercial space in the town centre

Some investment is already taking place in new high quality office buildings which should be able to attract new HQ occupiers. This will help to change the quality of development and appearance of the centre.

Information on the social & historical importance of the town centre area

Slough grew rapidly during the 20th Century mainly as a result of the development of the Slough Trading Estate. Utilising its strategic location between London and Berkshire on the M4 Thames Valley corridor and excellent rail, road and air transport links, Slough continued to grow as a "working town" attracting residents from all over the world. It earned a reputation as an affordable town for those seeking a better quality of life through work and education. This trend has continued over the last 15 years.

SECTION 2: Setting out the challenges

Clear description of the issues and challenges facing this area.

This section will seek a description of the issues and structural challenges facing the high street or town centre area to be covered within the bidding. Places should:

- Describe the key challenges facing the area
- Provide evidence to support this argument (additional sources can be included in annexes). Set out why this place would benefit more from moving forward to co-development than other places within the area

We will not accept bids covering town centre areas that are not facing significant challenges.

2.1: Challenges

We recognise that each place will see different challenges. Supporting evidence on the challenges facing areas could cover the following:

- *Proportion and/or number of vacant properties*
- *Openings/closures of commercial units*
- *Diversity of uses in the town centre area*
- *Resident/customer surveys*
- *Pedestrian flows and footfall trends*
- *Evidence of congestion and air quality*
- *Perception of safety and occurrence of crime*
- *State of town centre environmental quality including provision of green spaces*
- *Accessibility*
- *Housing demands*

Proportion and/or number of vacant properties

As of February 2019, the total retail vacancy rate as of February 2019 in Slough town centre - including the high street and shopping centres was - 11%.

This retail vacancy rate does not reflect the quality of the retail offer. 4% (5) of the units in the shopping centres have no signage or permeant shop fit out. These are pop ups which are temporary/short term lets.

The emerging Local Plan's 'Town Centre first' policy has the objective of making the Town Centre the focus for all major leisure, retail, commercial and cultural development. This is in response to evidence that the centre has been declining as a shopping centre and that it has been losing jobs as a result of major employers moving out and offices being converted to residential use. It has also not developed a significant leisure offer or night time economy. At the same time there can be high levels of traffic congestion around the centre and it suffers from a perception of having a poor environment.

Openings/closures of commercial units

Shopping patterns are changing and Slough town centre is at risk. In the Core Strategy (2008), Slough town centre was classified as a "Primary Regional Centre" which drew shoppers from beyond the Borough's boundary. This is reflected in the fact that in 2006 Slough was ranked as the 57th most important shopping centre in the country. The 2018/19 VENUESCORE shows Slough ranking 190th. This fall in ranking is primarily attributed to the closure of M&S which shut in July 2017, but also other retailers such as Topshop and BHS.

The Footfall in Queensmere Observatory benefits from through Footfall to and from the High St towards the Bus and Train Stations and Tesco. Despite this, current Footfall year on year is -8.8% on top of similar reductions for the two previous years. Car Park usage reflects similar reductions this year, with larger decreases for the previous 2 years despite a relatively low charge of £1.00 per hour.

Formally there were 15 void empty units at the beginning of January 2019 with a further 2 Units still tenanted but not trading and a further 10 units under Notice and due to close imminently (potentially 27 Units void). The landlord has understood the need to retain as many Tenants as possible and kept a further 5 national Tenants by agreeing very preferential deals with minimal or no rent, but just a proportion of occupational costs being met. This has added to the issue of a low quality offer.

Diversity of uses in the town centre area

The town centre contains a lot of service jobs in the retail, leisure, financial and business sectors. While vacancy rates walking through the centre seem low, the retail offer has shifted to betting shops, charity shops and pound shops. There is a good supply of A grade offices but a lack of lower grade office space. This may be a factor in the survival or retention rates for Slough's diverse SME community. A recent workshop with developers and investors confirmed the professional judgement that the centre lacks an evening offer and that the food and beverage provision is insufficient for local residents, working commuters and visitors.

Evidence of retail and cultural activities

Excellent curating at the Curve means is earning it a reputation on the shows circuit – with the Venue recently hosting Russell Brand and Art Council funded productions. There are a number of established community and creative groups with a presence in the centre such as Home Slough. The Venue was never designed for large scale entertainment or to offer a permanent residency however, and the town centre lacks facilities and space to meet the need as these mature. For example RIFCO Theatre Company was grown by a Slough resident but moved to Watford due to a lack of useable large theatre space. In the same way Slough's High Culture is being thwarted due to a lack of suitable performance space. Slough Philharmonic Society performs in neighbouring Eton which doesn't help showcase and grow talent in the borough.

The Creative Academy in Slough which offers a dance qualification can't hold its assessments in Slough due to lack of a facility. Resource Production are a film organisation helping young people in the town centre but are restricted financially to holding events in the Curve. The Arts Council has recognised the potential Slough has to offer, but defined Slough as a 'cold spot' due to a lack of workable space and its current offering. This affects investors perceptions as they don't see Slough town centre as a place to invest in. We want to turn Slough town centre into a cultural 'hotspot'.

Residents/ customer surveys

One of the challenges facing our town centre is poor image. A town centre resident's survey analysis conducted in December 2018 demonstrates the perception of the town centre. 85% of respondents would NOT recommend Slough town centre as an evening destination. 79% said it 'has a negative feel'. Slough town centre was the main shopping destination for just 29% of respondents. When asked how the frequency of visiting had changed in the past year, more said they came less often (62%).
(see annex a).

12% of the interviewees of the Cushman and Wakefield household survey of 2015 stated they didn't shop in Slough because of the poor range of non food shops. A further 13% said that Slough had an unattractive environment or was not a very nice place.

In 2014, Slough was rated as the third ugliest town centre in the UK by the Telegraph 89% agreed that we “should insist upon better design to improve the image of Slough”. In order to transform the centre it will be essential that we insist upon the highest standard of architectural design and obtain good quality environmental standards. This high standard will be extended to the public spaces, increasing the offer and attractiveness of pavements, squares and parks.

Town centre footfall trends and pedestrian flows

A Cushman and Wakefield survey also showed that Slough’s catchment area had reduced significantly to around 60,000 people. This means that it is not serving the whole of the population of the Borough and that many Slough residents are going to other destinations for their main shopping. This indicates a general decline in figures visiting the high street. In order to monitor this we used Springboard to carry out a three month footfall count in the high street. January had a count of 214,913, February 241,375 and March 303,620. We will use this as a benchmark in further surveys in order to measure how much footfall is declining in the town centre.

Footfall is heaviest during the days, with little evening or leisure economy. The town does not have a historic core or other attractions or high quality hotels at present (these have fallen through in favour of out of town locations) so visitors to the centre are primarily day shoppers from the local area. The three month footfall count benchmarking study was carried out but as yet no follow up has been invested in at present, as the decline is evident in the retail closures. The Council is planning to relocate its head office to within walking distance of the centre so that staff spending can support local enterprises.

Transport challenges congestion and air quality issues

Slough’s road network is under significant pressure, particularly at peak times, resulting in congestion and air quality issues - with parts of the town centre suffering from significant air quality problems. Peak period congestion is a serious threat to achieving a vision for a forward-looking, 21st Century Slough. It is also a threat to achieving the scale of growth proposed in the Local Plan Review. Without addressing the demand for travel by car, and the resulting congestion, the ability to improve the quality of the urban realm is severely limited; there will not be sufficient capacity for movement, or sufficient connectivity to and from the centre of Slough; and inward investment by existing businesses and developers will be suppressed.

New development will have to be designed to mitigate the impact upon residents in terms of air quality. There is a shortage of open green space in the town which means that new development will have to take the opportunity to create new public realm.

Parts of the town centre area have been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) because of emissions caused by traffic.

Perception of safety and occurrence of crime

Parts of the town centre, including the car parks serving it, have a reputation for being unsafe. Reports show there are hotspots of Anti-social behaviour (ASB) around the High Street; there is a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in place until December 2021. The Council’s regulatory service team are working with other agencies to address this, and ensuring new developments are designed in a way to drive out crime and ASB.

State of the town centre environmental quality including provision of green spaces

There are no parks or green spaces in the area surrounding the high street. There are no informal sitting out spaces in the town centre. Greenery and trees as a whole are lacking in

Slough in particular the town centre. Reports show we have fewer trees per square mile than London.

As explained previously the perception of crime, litter and appearance mean the town is not a place where people chose to spend their leisure time. It's reputation as a centre serving deprived local communities also means office workers from the trading estate do not visit the centre whilst commuting via the train or bus station, or despite free bus services offered by some employees.

Accessibility

Movement across Slough town centre between the north and south is currently constrained particularly for pedestrians. The lack of retail frontages from the Queensmere and Observatory onto the A4 Wellington Street acts a major barrier to a safe and pleasant walk or cycle between the train station and the shopping areas. The public realm and the car parks at either end have unattractive access to the A4, and fail to provide pleasant pedestrian access from them to the centre.

There is a lack of clear visual connectivity for pedestrians to access the town centre from nearby areas and local amenities, such as the canal basin and Herschel Park.

Housing Demand

The Borough has a high housing need, with the recent government allocation of over 900 homes a year, but also lacks suitable sites to meet this in full as it is highly physically constrained. As a result, the Council has opted to direct significant new housing to within a short walk or bus ride of the town centre. There are sites with permissions but some are stalling while others are using viability to avoid providing affordable housing. The Planning team are working on an Action Plan to understand the obstacles and what interventions might best address them. Homelessness and rough sleeping is a great challenge in the town centre and provision needs to be made for the homeless population.

Summary

The key to revitalising the town centre and overcoming the challenges is a blend of measures, delivered by a committed group with an agreed vision. That will include provision of a mix of new build commercial and residential units in addition to investment in repurposing existing buildings and transport and green infrastructure.

Appropriate and innovative activity and regulation will be needed to create a desire to travel to the centre. There is also a critical need to facilitate investment and redevelopment of the shopping centre in order to restore it as a major retail and leisure destination that residents of new housing in the centre have access to and the amenities they need to "work, rest, play and stay" in the town centre. The realisation of this vision will support our plans for inclusive growth and the development of a town where all communities can benefit from the spaces, new homes and jobs generated from our plans.

(See annex a).

2.2: Rationale for selecting town centre area

Set out your rationale for choosing this town centre area as opposed to other centres within your local authority, and why this area is most in need.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

South Bucks wraps around the northern and western boundary of Slough with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to the South. It bounds the London Borough of Hillingdon to the east near Heathrow and has a very small boundary with Spelthorne Borough Council at the south east corner of the Borough. The Borough is physically

constrained and highly urbanised with an area of 32.5 km² and a population of around 148,000 people.

The town's catchment area comes from Slough and beyond: high density office and residential uses are located within 10 minutes' walk. The employees on the SEGRO Slough Trading Estate and Bath Road Central are connected by a regular and fast bus service. South Bucks lacks a major retail and commercial town centre, and the residential population of Windsor to the south is within 10 minutes journey by train.

The town centre area is mainly made up of Central and Chalvey Wards, Central is the sixth most deprived ward and Chalvey is the second most deprived ward in Slough. Both wards have higher income deprivation than the average in Slough. They are more likely to have more unemployed and lower skilled employment compared to the Slough average and the national average.

Slough town centre should have a sub-regional role but is clearly failing in this. The centre of Slough is the focus of a lot of new development and regeneration and it is essential we have a shopping centre which can stimulate this, as opposed to acting as a deterrent. Slough as a whole has an image problem and improvements to the high street and shopping centre will go a long way to improving this. We want to draw in the communities to provide a central hub for our borough so that there is less need for our residents to go elsewhere.

We only have two other district centres, Farnham Road and Langley, both are thriving with low vacancy rates and serve local needs to the east and west. We have smaller local parades of shops which are mainly made up of convenience stores therefore the town centre identified and its areas including the high street is the main focus of this Expression of interest.

SECTION 3: Strategic ambition

This section will seek evidence of the level of ambition from the local authority, support from stakeholders and evidence that the local authority is well-placed to use the Future High Street Fund to tackle these challenges in a way that will fit with wider existing plans. Local authorities should:

- Set out a high-level vision for improving their area and how this links with need expressed in Section 2
- Demonstrate how this ambition will align with other funding streams (public or private)
- Cover how investment from government will support the area and help overcome these challenges
- Demonstrate engagement with and support from local stakeholders including other tiers of local government, if applicable (supporting evidence of this support such as letters should be attached as an annex)
- Show how this will link to wider strategic plans, including the Local Plan and Local Industrial Strategies e.g. around housing and local growth
- Provide an estimate of how much revenue funding they would need to support the development of their strategic vision and business case for a specific proposal

This phase relates to defining places and challenges and we therefore are not asking for specific project proposals at this stage.

However, if a local authority has been working on a specific project that they feel is deliverable in the short term if they were to receive capital funding at an early stage, we invite them to make that clear here. While the details of the project will not be considered in our decision-making at this stage, we may consider fast-tracking these projects during co-development.

We will not accept bids that do not provide sufficient evidence of support from local stakeholders.

3.1 Town centre vision and ambition for change

Set out your vision for regenerating your high street and how this links with the challenges outlined in section 2.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

Slough is emerging as a place of ambition and opportunity. The buzz of our young population and the sense of a turning tide is palpable. We need the kick start to turn the currently soft ambitions for culture, leisure, business and great living into hard deliverables. Central to our vision is our determination for inclusive growth. We will not allow the creation of new spaces that do not meet the aspirations of our young, entrepreneurial, vibrant, diverse population.

We will create spaces and use land to develop a Cultural Quarter which is home to growing arts, creative, digi-tech start ups. We will seize opportunities to develop world class transport links in the town centre. We will work with local and regional partners, in the public and private sectors, London neighbours and the wider functional economic area. Our communities will be driving this agenda with us so that the spaces being created are shaped and used by them. They will benefit from the jobs, homes, and opportunities created as a result of our vision – No one will be left behind.

Our long term Transport Strategy will meet the changing movement habits of our Millennials and Generation Z. It will be a 21st Century world class transport network which

will proactively integrate the new MRT route into our emerging town centre masterplan. It will promote sustainable modes of transport. The newly designed road infrastructure will allow the sharing of tram, bendy bus, walking and cycling. Consideration for strategically placed parking and car clubs for our new residential developments, will be made. As a result of Crossrail, the Western rail link and expansion at Heathrow airport, Slough will be the best connected place in the world.

At the heart of our vision is working with our stakeholders to 'Re-Brand Slough' town centre to break down negative perceptions. We will create well thought-out, people driven inclusive strategies, plans and places that inspire inward investment and allow for the delivery of high quality homes, work space and public realm in the heart of Slough. We want to reverse the decades of, spatial and social segregation and economic inequality across the Borough that detrimentally impact our high street and perpetuate the negative reputation of Slough, all of which continues to hold us back from meeting our potential.

Our stakeholders want the centre of Slough to be an attractive and vibrant hub providing high quality housing, offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities. We aim to achieve this by working with landowners including the public sector to proactively align their developments with our emerging vision, whilst also balancing the need for housing and desirable employment uses. We want the High Street and the surrounding area to be an "economic powerhouse" with a large skilled resident workforce and a reputation as an excellent business centre, which will encourage both established but also new companies to invest and grow in the Borough. Planned commercial offices spaces around the station will enable a growing Business Quarter.

Our vision looks to address our high street's decline, by shifting our focus away from retail and onto the experiential offer in the town centre, anchored around the existing Curve and new, the Adelphi cultural venues and seize the educational opportunities that arise from these developments i.e. new educational facilities, youth theatre groups.

We will push our Independents Quarter by supporting the independent retailers, business start ups, existing community and creative industries to promote the meanwhile uses of empty buildings for pop ups, budding entrepreneurs, creative hubs and community groups. All of this supports our commitment to inclusive growth.

We aim to improve legibility, wayfinding and permeability at all gateways into the town centre improving the visitor experience and create and curate appropriate, flexible public spaces, plaza's, squares and multi-use event spaces that provide a safe and dynamic public realm for all that use it.

We will suitably invest in high quality digital infrastructure, provide free town centre wi-fi and integrated and innovative Digi-tech solutions that enable business productivity and visitor experience. We will build on our Slough App so that businesses and consumers have a high quality experience on the High Street.

We have an established governance structure for the regeneration of the town centre. It includes internal teams, the voluntary & community sector, businesses, stakeholders, investors and landlords. The Regeneration Directorate is well resourced and skilled to deliver major infrastructure programmes. The team's track record has benefited from successful funding from regional & national investment. (See annex a).

3.2 Engagement and alignment of vision

Set out how your town centre vision aligns with other funding streams, both public and private, including details of partnership working with the private sector in this area.

Show how your vision fits with wider strategic plans such as housing, transport and Local Industrial Strategies.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

Alignment with Our 5 Year Plan

The 5 Year Plan sets out the Council Leadership Team's vision for Slough – growing a place of opportunity and ambition – and how we will deliver this by putting people first. It sets out our priority outcomes including:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay;
- Our residents will live in good quality homes; and
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.

Slough Borough Council has begun an ambitious programme of regeneration to make the town both an attractive place to live, work and stay; and a place where businesses want to locate and invest.

The council is focussed on utilising improvements of infrastructure - including the arrival of Crossrail, the expansion of Heathrow airport and the new Western Rail Link to Heathrow - to promote economic growth.

We have also sought to enhance our residents' skills, and the council launched the Slough Academy, which will help the council to 'grow our own' talent and generate training opportunities for our residents.

We have promoted the uptake of more sustainable modes of transport through improved cycling infrastructure and the installation of electric vehicle charging points; and we have recently launched a new Low Emissions Strategy to improve air quality.

The council has also sought to reduce journey times and gridlock, and has introduced the A4 Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) dedicated bus lane.

Though we have made substantial progress, more needs to be done to enhance the visual appeal of our public realm and challenge stereotypes about Slough.

To meet the housing demand challenge we will continue to build new, high quality and affordable homes, enhancing our partnership with Slough Urban Renewal

Slough's town centre retail offer is limited, but there is the opportunity to establish alternative uses for the centre of town to accommodate our rising population and create the business vibrancy that Crossrail has potential to bring.

As a council, we are committed to promoting inclusive economic growth, ensuring that the benefits from the regeneration of our town are shared by all of our residents.

Slough Town Centre Transport

In early 2018 work commenced on a new transport-led vision for the centre of Slough which could guide development and regeneration to 2040 and beyond. The brief was to develop an ambitious transport vision to support a town fit for the 21st Century, one which would improve the quality of life of those living in, working in, and visiting the Borough, and which would support the creation of a stronger, more sustainable and viable centre of Slough.

The Transport Vision, recently approved at Cabinet, is intended to reverse current trends in car use by providing a step-change in alternatives, defining a low-car urban core and, over time reducing the attractiveness of car travel to or from the centre of Slough.

Local Plan Review

The town centre element of the Local Plan Vision states that “the centre of Slough will be an attractive, vibrant hub providing high quality offices, retail, leisure, landmark buildings and cultural opportunities for our diverse communities”.

The overall strategy is to deliver balanced cohesive growth which meets local needs as far as possible given all of the constraints to development. The results of the issues and options consultation helped guide the 5 elements of the Emerging Preferred Spatial Strategy (see annex a). One of the main elements of the strategy for the new Local Plan is to deliver major comprehensive redevelopment within the “Centre of Slough”.

The Town Centre Vision

We have commenced work on a development strategy for the town centre which will become part of the Review of The Local Plan for Slough. It will guide development in the centre of Slough in order to ensure that the comprehensive regeneration of the area takes place in the most sustainable way. It will also help to draw together and promote all of the Council’s development plans for the town centre.

3.3 Support for town centre vision

*Provide details, including letters of support, for your vision from (where applicable):
Other tiers of local government including Mayoral and non-Mayoral Combined Authorities and county councils where applicable*

Other local stakeholders including:

- *Local Enterprise Partnerships*
- *Business Improvement Districts*
- *Private sector*
- *Community groups*

Please limit your response to 500 words and include evidence of this support as an annex where appropriate.

Town Centre Partners Pledge

The attached Pledge illustrates the collective commitment to improving the Town Centre by the private sector, the local authority and community and voluntary sector. They are all bought into delivering the Town Centre Vision.

Clean / Safe / Vibrant Project

This Town Centre project commenced in June 2018 to address key challenges. These were identified through the Town Centre Partnership, wider stakeholders, walkabout surveys, site visits and focused discussions. The issues identified were the cleanliness of the town centre, stakeholders concerns about safety and low levels of footfall.

Response to these challenges included:

- Chief Executive and Member level championing of this project
- Establishing this programme as a gold project in the corporate portfolio
- Walkabouts to understand issues at certain times of the day
- The development of a Town Team, an operational team to deliver and improve change
- A permanent town centre manager

- Investing in Home Slough, a community sector organisation, to create an active artistic experience along the High Street, to take up an empty unit in the shopping centre
- Improved cleaning through bringing services back in house
- Commencement of a Business Improvement District (BID) feasibility programme
- Identifying key Local Authority funds to pool and resource key improvements.

HOME Slough

HOME Slough's mission is to increase opportunities and awareness of all the arts in Slough, offering ways for everyone to fulfil their artistic potential. It is a consortium of arts and community organisations, led by Slough Council for Voluntary Service. The consortium comprises of Slough Borough Council, Clinical Commissioning Group, SEGRO, RIFCO and The Arts Council.

It is part of the Creative People and Places programme, initiated and funded by Arts Council England through the National Lottery. Creative People and Places are about more people taking the lead in choosing, creating and taking part in art experiences in the places where they live.

Slough Borough Council and Morgan Sindall Partnership - SUR

We are leading major regeneration in the borough including leisure facilities, housing and mixed use developments in the town centre. We have commenced a mixed use development of 2 Marriot branded hotels and a residential block in the town centre.

As part of the Transport Strategy we are working with Atkins to support a town that is fit for the 21st Century. We have worked with bblur architecture to create visual images of what a truly transformed town centre has the potential to look like. (See annex A).

Moving forward we plan to build a collective campaign with our stakeholders to brand Slough and deliver a range of marketing and promotional activities.

Issues and Options for the Slough Local Plan

Consultation on the Issues and Options for the Slough Local Plan with the residential and business communities in Slough, and the Thames Valley LEP endorses the journey toward the Vision and objectives for Slough in 2036 set out in 3.2 above - and in more detail in annex a.

See attached pledge and letters of support.

3.4 Estimate of revenue funding needed

Provide details of how much revenue funding you need to develop project plans for capital funding (including detailed business cases).

Include estimated breakdowns of how you would spend this revenue funding

Please limit your response to 500 words.

Town Centre Vision

Setting out the evidence and masterplan estimate of revenue funding required - **£500,000**. These studies below will help us develop our knowledge and capacity in delivering our overall Town Centre Vision.

Includes:

- Quantum study for development capacity in the town centre to evidence need, demand and delivery.
- Public Realm strategy to help define and design creative spaces for an experiential offer.
- Views study to determine heights and views blocking Windsor Castle.
- Office demand study.
- Other pieces of evidence that will be required.

Transport Strategy

As part of our overall Town Centre Vision we have outlined our Transport Led Strategy which enables us to deliver the vision.

Commissioning Atkins to do further modelling and analysis and potential solutions to deliver the key principles on our Transport Strategy. - **£200,000.**

The modelling will help us better understand our aspirations for reconfiguring the A4 where we plan to;

Phase 1; Partial Closure of the A4

Partial closure of A4 Wellington Street to be used for public transport only to south side of the high street reducing journey time, increasing public transport use, more comfortable crossings for pedestrians.

Phase 2; Full Closure of the A4

Taking all the data analysis of the use of public transport in phase 1, to inform full closure of the A4 to traffic other than public transport and opening up a public realm area.

Phase 2 will have different stages which will include car parking provision, options of introducing multi storey car park facility. This removes current car parking around the train station which helps release land to create a business quarter in and around the train station which is free of the private vehicle.

To note, the proposed multi storey car park facility will require negotiating a deal with the current occupier, Tesco to purchase the site.

Windsor Road Spur

Anticipated capital funding use relevant to phase 2 of this expression of interest:

Following on from the above projects we would want to deliver the A33 Windsor Road spur scheme. This would alleviate traffic going through the centre of Slough enabling traffic to use the newly configured spur road to get on to junction 5 of the M4. This strengthens our vision for a reduced private vehicle use in the town centre and unlocks land for new homes and work space. We have some LEP funding for this and would want this bid to match fund the remaining.

Adelphi Theatre

Adelphi Theatre feasibility study to support the reinstatement of an iconic cultural/events venue to its former glory. Also including using its car park as a pop up creative arts and culture business start up space. - **£80,000.**

In our vision to develop the Town Centre as a creative digi-tech hub for small businesses we need to conduct a feasibility study to understand the needs and demands of this sector. Once we have this information we will use the high street funding to match the Council's Strategic Acquisition Board funding to acquire land/property across the town centre to promote this sector.