

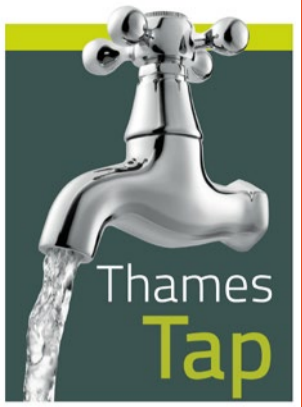
SLOUGH
SOCIAL.

DIGITAL EDITION

SloughReport

FRIDAY 6TH JULY 2018

POWERED BY



Transport is key to Slough's future

Jonathan Williams and David Fletcher from transport and engineering consultants Systra, consider how rapidly-developing Slough should approach the road, rail, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure challenges presented by its growth.



With significant investment in major transport schemes now coming forward, putting the town within seven minutes of Heathrow Airport and providing direct connection to Canary Wharf and Farringdon, Slough is an attractive proposition for developers and investors within the Thames Valley.

Hosting a core of residential-led mixed-use developments; major opportunities for office, retail and private rented sector (PRS) housing are having an uplifting effect on the town centre. Key to this transition period will be the pace at which the transport infrastructure reacts to this growth. Only then will we be able to see Slough's potential as a sustainable destination.

The arrival of Crossrail (the Elizabeth Line) and the potential for the

Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) are at the forefront of the borough's 'Heart of Slough' regeneration project, opening up opportunities for prime office space, PRS housing and retail and leisure facilities, to a much wider audience.

The redevelopment of Slough town centre needs to be supported through complementary urban realm improvements to create a continuous pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment across the town centre and to overcome the severance effects of the A4.

The redevelopment of a town like Slough cannot rely solely on commuter trade. The existing residents, infrastructure and employment opportunities all hold vital roles in shaping the future of the town.



DAVID FLETCHER
ASSOCIATE
Systra



JONATHAN WILLIAMS
CONSULTANT
Systra



At present, more people drive to work in Slough (63 per cent - Census 2011) than in Reading (49 per cent - Census 2011) and the outer London boroughs of Hounslow (42 per cent - Census 2011) and Hillingdon (55 per cent - Census 2011).

Slough has aspirations to become part of the London Transport network which would help provide better connections into London as well as providing ticket concession benefits.

The proposals for a Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) will provide a high quality public transport offer that is quicker, more frequent, and more reliable which will further encourage a modal shift away from the car and help to alleviate congestion along key points of the A4.

Welcome to the Slough Report

BY ALAN BUNCE
NEWS EDITOR
Thames Tap



The growth of Slough continues at a remarkable pace, driven by a pipeline of new transport links which would be the envy of towns and cities around the world.

The Government's commitment to Heathrow expansion potentially puts Slough in line for many more years of prosperity while the Western Rail Link to Heathrow becomes ever more likely.

And even before those two huge developments take off, the Elizabeth Line is on track to provide a direct link into central London by December 2019.

One of the key schemes in Slough's regeneration, The Curve, is now established as the cultural heart of the town. It followed the much-applauded new bus station nearby.

More than £40m has gone into improved leisure facilities including the award-winning Arbor Park stadium and the latest development, Salt Hill Activity Centre which opened in June 2018.

The Slough Report provides a snapshot of where the town stands in this dynamic environment, thanks to the unique access we have to the expertise of the Thames Tap Valley Voices and others at the centre of a town which has seen higher house price growth than anywhere in the UK in recent years.

This is the first in a series of reports on areas in the Thames Valley. If you have comments to make or would like to be involved in some way in future reports, please contact us at info@ukpropertyforums.com

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



SLOUGH SOCIAL PARTNERS



SLOUGH IS CHANGING. BE PART OF THE DEBATE.

#SLOUGHSOCIAL #SURPRISINGSLOUGH

What's in the Pipeline?

Eight major developments still to come to Slough



Station Square, Slough – Aberdeen Asset Management, Exton Estates

Arranged around a central public square will be:

- Two towers of 16 and 26 storeys totalling 330 Build to Rent apartments
- A four-star hotel with 180 bedrooms
- Retail space
- Basement parking for 120 cars



Former Slough Library site – 85 High Street, Slough Urban Renewal

Consent granted in July 2018 for:

- Two Marriott International brands, Moxy and Residence Inn
- Total of 244 bedrooms and 62 one-bedroom apartments
- 5,000 sq ft of retail and restaurants



The Future Works – U+I and Ashby Capital

Three phase development totalling 350,000 sq ft of Grade A office space

- The first phase of 100,000 sq ft is now complete
- The scheme offers communal rooftop gardens, restaurants, cafes and public spaces



Queensmere Observatory – Catalyst Capital

Full details yet to emerge but the scheme, which could be worth as much as £900m, is likely to involve:

- Demolition of the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres, which total 660,000 sq ft
- Development of a modern centre involving leisure and retail



Slough Basin – Slough Urban Renewal & Waterside Places

Over 250 new homes are planned with retail, café and community hub next to the Grand Union Canal.

The development will aim to encourage active use of the water.



Thames Valley University (TVU) site, Wellington Street

Slough Borough Council acquired the former TVU site in March 2017 for a mixed-use scheme, likely to involve as many as 1,500 apartments 45,000 sq ft of retail and leisure space and office space totalling 250,000 sq ft.

However the site has been considered by BA if the airline decides to move from Heathrow.



AkzoNobel (formerly ICI), Wexham Road

A 31.38-acre site near J6 of the M4, currently being marketed by Deloitte Real Estate.

It has been identified for housing and could provide up to 750 homes.



Horlicks site, Stoke Poges Lane

A 6.5-acre factory site, owned by GSK, closed in July 2017.

Slough Borough Council wants the iconic, although not listed, main building retained and up to 766 homes on the site.

The land is currently on the market.

One scheme, still to come forward, is likely to involve hundreds of homes on the former National Grid gasworks site.

Slough's transformation will deliver a dynamic town to be proud of



We presented Lucy Arthur, head of asset marketing for Ashby Capital, and Ben Cartwright, senior development manager for U+I, the joint venture behind The Future Works development in Slough with three key questions about Slough. Here are their thoughts:

Q: Should Slough aim for its own identity or act as a London borough?

One of Slough's many advantages is that the town has the ability to be the best of both. It is a place in its own right with a strong and growing critical mass, benefitting from being amongst the Berkshire countryside with its own identity, community and town centre.

Yet it is also complemented by a transport network that quickly, seamlessly, easily and cheaply, connects to central London.

The Elizabeth Line will improve links between London and connected towns ready to be beneficiaries of this new infrastructure.

Q: How do you rate the work being done by Slough Borough Council in exploiting the opportunities its new transport links present?

Crossrail and the Western Rail Link to Heathrow will undoubtedly be transformational for Slough.

This is a town undergoing significant change and the council has been instrumental in facilitating and maximising that, by unlocking sites for redevelopment, engaging with developers and pushing exciting schemes forward.

A focus on first-class contemporary architecture, as seen on Slough's new bus station, at The Curve, and on the town's latest office buildings, demonstrates that the town is focused on quality, while new facilities including cultural and leisure amenities are helping to ensure that Slough offers much more than just great transport links.

Slough Borough Council has helped to stimulate the regeneration of the town centre, bringing office development and occupiers back to the core.

The proposed move of Slough's own offices into the town centre is a clear example of the council leading from the front and demonstrating its commitment to the town centre regeneration process.

LUCY ARTHUR
ASSET MARKETING
Ashby Capital



BEN CARTWRIGHT
SENIOR DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER, U+I



Q: What are the issues Slough must address in order to sustain its new image as a vibrant town?

Slough is already undergoing something of a renaissance but needs to keep pushing forward. Plans are afoot to regenerate the dated shopping centre, which will be transformational for the town and cannot happen soon enough.

We also need to turn our attention to improving perceptions of Slough. The town has the highest concentration of global corporate headquarters outside London, was named the best place to work in the UK by Glassdoor and is the most productive place in the UK. Yet it is all too often derided as a suburban backwater.

We need to be proud of Slough and we need to work together to address people's misconceptions and change their opinions.



Slough Bus Station



The Porter Building



The Curve

SLOUGH IS CHANGING. BE PART OF THE DEBATE.

#SLOUGHSOCIAL #SURPRISINGSLOUGH

Positive Letting activity set to continue

Vail Williams partner Charlie Nicholson reports on an increasingly positive lettings market in Slough in 2018.

Momentum has built up in Slough since the start of the year and we can report a very active Q2 with a number of agreements moving forward.

Telecoms giant Orange, care of Colliers, is understood to be progressing legals and is close to completion at The Porter Building, Landid/Brockton's Well-certified 120,000 sq ft new office building on the doorstep of the Elizabeth Line station.

This would follow lettings to FiServ (consolidating offices from the likes of Stockley Park) and Spaces (IWG co-working serviced offices) taking a floor and a half.

Nearby, U+I and Ashby Capital have announced a letting to Central Working at the recently launched The Future Works development, illustrating how take-up by co-working operators continues as predicted last year.

CHARLIE NICHOLSON
Vail Williams



In the out-of-town market along Bath Road, Indivior, until 2014 part of Reckitt Benckiser Group, is looking to take around 22,000 sq ft at 234 Bath Road, the new building on the site of Segro's former HQ.

As the Elizabeth Line's arrival gets closer, the momentum of positive letting activity is set to continue.

Headline rents beginning to get near £40 per sq ft, illustrating the renewed strength of the market for well located, well parked, modern flexible offices close to infrastructure and amenity.



Slough must grasp the new opportunities on offer

David Murray-Cox, associate director for planning consultancy, Turley, puts transport at the centre of Slough's development.

The accessibility of Slough, and indeed Berkshire and the wider Thames Valley, is set for a positive step change over the coming years.

We see that the potential Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) is a significant step in enhancing the area's accessibility.

With the introduction of that link, for the first time there will be direct rail services from the Slough area and further west to Heathrow. In our view this rectifies a missing, but fundamental, component of the infrastructure of the area.

Around one in 10 of Slough's population works at Heathrow and the only realistic options to access it from Slough and the west have been by train via London, bus services or the car.

Slough occupies a strategic link close to the airport and with Heathrow itself - and transport connections to it - improved, Slough should grasp the advantages that the expansion and accessibility offer.

Both the expansion of the airport and the additional infrastructure around it, should be the impetus to focus new development in the area by providing new employment floorspace in locations that can take advantage of these strategic links.

Given the existing links between Slough's population and Heathrow's workforce, we expect this to be reinforced. Slough and the adjoining authorities should grasp the importance of this as well by providing opportunities for people to live in locations accessible to their place of work, be that the airport or the businesses that thrive around it.

Slough is also excellently placed to accommodate the needs of businesses displaced by the expansion of Heathrow.

We see the WRLtH as a significant step in the right direction. The task is to grasp the opportunities that come from it.

DAVID MURRAY-COX
Associate Director
Turley

