Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1)

Statement of Community Involvement

Oxfordshire County Council

September 2021

Quality information

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Table of Contents

Figures

Tables

1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement and consultation activities undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), prior to submitting a planning application for the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1), hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme'.

1.2 The application is submitted to OCC as the determining local planning authority (LPA) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The application is a Regulation 3 application as defined by the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

1.3 The Proposed Scheme is seeking *full planning permission for:*

- *the dualling of the A4130 carriageway **(A4130 Widening)** from the Milton Gate Junction eastwards including the construction of three roundabouts;*
- *a road bridge over the Great Western Mainline **(Didcot Science Bridge)** and realignment of the A4130 north east of the proposed road bridge including the relocation of a lagoon;*
- *construction of a new road between Didcot and Culham **(Didcot to Culham River Crossing)** including the construction of three roundabouts, a road bridge over the Appleford railway sidings and road bridge over the River Thames;*
- *construction of a new road between the B4015 and A415 **(Clifton Hampden bypass)** including the provision of one roundabout and associated junctions; and*
- *controlled crossings, footways and cycleways, landscaping, lighting, noise barriers and sustainable drainage systems.*

1.4 The planning application has been prepared following extensive engagement between OCC and a range of stakeholders including members of the public, elected representatives, local authority officers and other technical and non-technical stakeholders.

1.5 Section 2 of this SCI details the engagement activities carried out as part of the ongoing consultation process.

1.6 Section 3 of this SCI summarises the feedback received and explains how the feedback has shaped the Scheme.

1.7 The consultation activities and subsequent analysis adhere to the guidance and relevant polices outlined in the 'Policy Context' and 'Scheme Background' section.

1.8 This SCI should be considered alongside all other documents submitted as part of the planning application.

Policy and Legislative Context

1.9 Early engagement was carried out throughout all stages of the Scheme development in accordance with both national and local planning policies.

1.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1] directive sets out the following policies on the importance of early pre-application engagement:

1.10.1 *Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community. (Chapter 4, paragraph 39).*

1.10.2 *The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs. (Chapter 4, paragraph 41).*

1.11 Alongside the NPPF, Oxfordshire's Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in July 2015[2] and the addendum adopted in June 2020[3]. The report states:

1.11.1 *Oxfordshire County Council believes it is very important that people have a say on how council services are planned and run. Consultation helps us to stay in touch with what people need and want. This is especially important when we need to make difficult decisions that affect the people of Oxfordshire. (Chapter 3, paragraphs 3.1, 3.2)*

The Council follows six key principles of consultation:

- *keep an open mind and run consultations in an open and honest way;*
- *be clear about what we are consulting on and what we will do with the findings;*
- *give all relevant parties the chance to have their say.*
- *provide sufficient time and information to enable people to engage.*
- *take views expressed in consultations into account when we make decisions.*
- *provide effective and timely consultation feedback. (Chapter 3, paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2)*

1.12 Oxfordshire's Statement of Community Involvement goes on to state:

1.12.1 ***Regulation 18 Consultation** – the Council must notify specific and general consultation bodies and other appropriate persons in the area about the plan they propose to prepare and invite them to make representations about what the plan ought to contain; this stage may involve more than one phase of consultation and may include consultation on a draft plan. (Chapter 5, paragraph 5.4)*

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf
[2] https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/planning/mineralsandwaste/mw2016/8OtherOCCDocs/8.2%20Revised%20Oxfordshire%20Statement%20of%20Community%20Involvement%202015.pdf
[3] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/planning-minerals-and-waste/ApprovedSCIMay2020.pdf

1.13 In March 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government published a planning update newsletter[4] from Steve Quartermain CBE, Chief Planner, stating:

1.13.1 *We ask you to take an innovative approach, using all options available to you to continue your service. We recognise that face-to-face events and meetings may have to be cancelled but we encourage you to explore every opportunity to use technology to ensure that discussions and consultations can go ahead. (Page 1, COVID-19 Advice, Decision Making).*

1.14 OCC used a number of traditional (offline) and online engagement methods to maximise engagement and ensure that local feedback was secured prior to the submission of the planning application.

Local Planning Policy

1.15 The Science Bridge scheme was originally identified as part of OCC's Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) in 2011. The scheme was included in order to help mitigate the growth associated with planned development at the time, prior to subsequent Local Plans which proposed additional growth across Science Vale. As such, relief to the existing Manor Bridge was required even when lower levels of growth were proposed in Science Vale. Therefore, modelling which includes Science Bridge in this way can be used as a suitable baseline from which to understand problems across Science Vale prior to the allocation of additional growth for the area by Local Plans.

1.16 The Local Transport Plan (LTP): Connecting Oxfordshire[5], also referred to as LTP4, sets out the policy and strategy for developing the transport system in Oxfordshire through to 2031, including improvements to transport infrastructure. It contains specific interventions based on a series of county-wide strategies, corridor strategies, and area strategies.

1.17 The LTP4 contains the HIF1 Schemes as specific proposals:

1.17.1 *Delivering Science Bridge and widening of A4130 to provide relief to Manor Bridge and support/ enable development in the area including Didcot A, NE Didcot, Valley Park and NW Valley Park. (Proposal SV 2.6)*

1.17.2 *Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre (CSC) Phase 1 (new road from CSC entrance to the B4015 north of Clifton Hampden) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC. (Proposal SV 2.13)*

1.17.3 *Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre (CSC) Phase 2 - new river crossing (between Didcot and CSC) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC. This scheme also increases capacity for north/south movements across southern Oxfordshire and reduces pressure on the A34, whilst increasing network resilience across the Thames floodplain. (Proposal SV 2.16)*

1.18 The LTP was agreed by OCC's Full Council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year. The eight-week consultation period took place between 5 February and 2 April 2015. A total of 617 responses were received.

[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875045/Chief_Planners_Newsletter_-_March_2020.pdf
[5] https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/localtransportplan/ConnectingOxfordshirevol1policyandoverallstrategy.pdf and https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/localtransportplan/ConnectingOxfordshirevol2partiiOtherAreasRouteFreightStrategy.pdf

1.19 On 13 July 2020, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020[6] were published and applied during the period from 16 July 2020 to 31 December 2020. These regulations temporarily amended the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/767) (2012 Regulations) in England in which it "*set out how a local planning authority (LPA) makes a document "available"*". Part 9 of the 2012 Regulations had previously stated that a hard copy of a document had to be made available for inspection and be published online on the Local Authority's website. The amendment meant that the requirement on an LPA to make the document available for inspection is removed and that the LPA did not need to provide hard copies.

1.20 In addition to complying with policies regarding early engagement, the Scheme also adheres to the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plans (VoWHLP and SOLP). These include policies to safeguard land for essential highway infrastructure needed to support housing and employment growth.

1.21 Policy TRANS3 in the SOLP seeks to safeguard this land to support the delivery of the Didcot Garden Town HIF1 schemes and ensure the provision of significant infrastructure improvements.

1.22 The VoWHLP recognises the importance of addressing congestion around the Science Vale. Core Policy 18 seeks ensure the safeguarding of land to support the delivery of a new Thames River Crossing between Culham and Didcot

1.23 The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) were undertaken using the Oxfordshire Strategic Model (OSM). The ETI informed the transport evidence base for the adopted VoWHLP 2031 and identified the requirement for significant highway infrastructure intervention in order to support the delivery of homes and jobs growth in the area. The Planning Inspectorate report on the examination into the VoWHLP 2031 states:

1.23.1 *In relation to transport Oxfordshire County Council, as Highway Authority, commissioned the November 2014 Evaluation of Transport Impacts Study to Inform the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031: Part 1[7]. Following several earlier stages this report assessed the likely transport impacts of the plan's proposed 20,560 new homes and 23,000 additional jobs in the district, based on a range of different transport interventions and improvements (one of medium scale and two of large scale). The report concludes that the Stage 5 ETI mitigation package (which in essence comprises those transport improvements identified in the plan) would largely mitigate the impacts of the proposed new development in the district, albeit that some congestion issues would remain. (Issue 7, paragraph 144)*

1.23.2 *[…] I have borne in mind that the "starting point" situation for the Vale is as a district which very much suffers from traffic congestion[8]. (Issue 7, paragraph 145)*

1.24 An ETI was produced to support the adopted SOLP 2035[9], which details the vision for South Oxfordshire to "*remain a beautiful and prosperous place to live".* The plan lends further weight to the need for these infrastructure schemes and highlights early engagement as a necessary part of the planning application process.

[6] https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/w-026-5480?originationContext=document&transitionType=DocumentItem&contextData=(sc.Default)&ppcid=b6816b75aebe4214bcbcf74f82399ae5&comp=pluk
[7] https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/10/Local-Plan-2031-Part-1.pdf
[8] http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/07/Vale-of-White-Horse-Local-Plan-2031-Part-1-Inspectors-Report-FR.pdf
[9] https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/02/SODC-LP2035-Publication-Feb-2021.pdf

1.25 The final publication of the SOLP was subject to a six-week consultation, which was designed to meet the statutory requirements for consultation under Regulation 19. The consultation took place from 7 January 2019 to 18 February 2019 and a total of 17,136 formal representations were received from 2,561 respondents. Overall, 76 comments were made on the then proposed policy for Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes (Policy TRANS3 which identifies land parcels to be safeguarded from numerous schemes across Oxfordshire including the Didcot Science Bridge proposed as part of the Scheme.) The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 was then adopted on 10 December 2020.

1.26 The VoWHLP 2031 is divided into two parts: Local Plan Part 1 was adopted by Full Council on Wednesday 14 December 2016. Part 2 was adopted by Full Council on Wednesday 9 October 2019. The consultation for Part 1 was held in late 2014. A consultation for Part 2 was held in autumn 2017.

Scheme background

1.27 Oxfordshire is a prosperous and vibrant county, combining a thriving economy with a high-quality environment. Didcot was first designated as a growth area in 1979 and has been developing ever since. Current forecasts are for over 85,000 new jobs and 100,000 new homes in Oxfordshire by 2031. A considerable proportion of this housing and employment growth is planned for the Didcot area through both the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plans, detailed in the Policy Section above.

1.28 As part of the VoWHLP 2031, an iterative approach was taken to infrastructure requirements to deliver the growth scenarios and identify Scheme as a minimum requirement within the district areas. Other schemes identified include relief to Rowstock, Harwell Link Road (now delivered), Chilton Diamond Interchange (now delivered), Wantage Eastern Link Road and Milton Interchange (now delivered).

1.29 In 2015, the town was awarded Garden Town status by the Government to help plan for the expected 16,000 new homes due to be built over the next 20 to 25 years. In addition, the next 20 years will see 20,000 new jobs created in and around the town and the Science Vale area.

1.30 In 2018, OCC undertook an options appraisal process following the Department for Transport's (DfT) Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) on the Transport Appraisal Process (May 2018)[10]. OCC then produced an Options Appraisal Report (OAR) formed of two parts, completed in March 2018 and September 2019. This was undertaken to establish the appropriate infrastructure to mitigate the traffic impact of the planned growth in the area.

1.31 The OAR Part 1 generated a number of options, including highway capacity improvement options, public transport options (bus and rail), and traffic management options. An Early Assessment and Sifting Tool test, developed by the DfT, was applied to these options resulting in the basic principles of the four scheme sections that now constitute the HIF1 Scheme being identified as the most effective response to address the issues arising from the forecasted traffic growth.

1.32 In March 2019, the Government announced that OCC was successful in its bid for £218 million from the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), which will directly deliver 11,711 new homes and support the further delivery of around 6,000 new homes.

[10] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/938766/tag-transport-appraisal-process.pdf

Scheme overview

Timeline

1.33 The HIF1 funding will be ring-fenced to deliver the four separate sections identified in the local policies and plans. The funding for these four sections which comprise the Scheme must be spent my November 2024. Table 1 provides an overview of the project timeline and key milestones to date.

Table 1: Project timeline and key milestones to date

Date	Activity
March 2011	Cabinet Report Submitted (seeking approval for the Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030 (LTP3))
April 2011	OCC's Local Transport Plan 3 agreed (LTP3)
July 2015	Cabinet Report submitted (seeking approval for the Local Transport Plan: Connecting Oxfordshire 2015-2031 (LTP4))
September 2015	OCC's Local Transport Plan: Connecting Oxfordshire 2015-2031 (LTP4) agreed
July 2016	Cabinet Report Submitted (outlines the first update to LTP4)
December 2016	Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 1 adopted
September 2017	Cabinet agreed to submit Didcot Garden Town HIF1 as part of three HIF Expressions of Interest to the Government
October - November 2017	Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 Consultations
March 2018	Options Appraisal Report Part 1
April 2018	Government announced the Scheme to be shortlisted for development
September 2018	Options Appraisal Report Part 2
November 2018	Public consultation
January 2019	HIF1 Business Case submitted to Government
October 2019	Cabinet Report Submitted (Didcot Garden Town Infrastructure Fund Draft Heads of Terms)
October 2019	Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 2 adopted
October 2019	HIF1 programme funding agreed
March - April 2020	Online consultation
April 2020	Walking, Cycling and Horse-rider Assessment and Review (WCHAR)
June 2020	Engagement with bus operators
July 2020	Cabinet Report submitted (Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund: Preferred Scheme Alignments)
July 2020 - ongoing	Further engagement with parish councils

December 2020	South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan 2035 adopted
June 2021	Further engagement with walking, cycling and horse-riding groups

Aim of the Scheme

1.34 The Scheme aims to address the following issues and opportunities:

- **Local and regional economy:** The historic road network in Didcot and the surrounding areas is not currently fit for purpose this will be exacerbated by the planned growth. There is congestion at key points, including where newly established and planned developments will access the road network. The Scheme will unlock and support the delivery of approximately 18,000 new homes in the area including affordable homes.
- **Local traffic issues:** Didcot is a centre for distribution meaning there are more Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on the transport network than in other areas, adding to congestion and delay. There is also a need to plan now for all forms of travel, including modes that are only just starting to be tested (e.g. autonomous vehicles). Transport connectivity is poor in the area with limited links making it difficult to travel between existing/ planned housing and employment sites.
- **Environment:** To uphold its 'Garden Town' status, developments within Didcot should positively protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, providing green infrastructure, addressing climate change and minimising waste and pollution.
- **People and local communities:** There have been increasing traffic impacts in Didcot and the surrounding villages and their historic cores due to congestion, noise and air quality. The location of railway lines creates physical barriers between some housing and employment sites, including areas proposed for new development because of limited crossings, which are already at capacity. The River Thames is also a barrier with limited bridge crossings. The Scheme will facilitate new movements across the Science Vale area, including by sustainable modes.

1.35 The Scheme will address the above aims, through the following objectives:

a) Directly unlock the delivery of 11,711 new homes in the area, of which approximately 4,200 will be affordable;

b) Support the delivery of an additional 6,000 new homes;

c) Unlock thousands of new jobs across existing and new employment sites in the area and releases business rates form Enterprise Zones to be reinvested back into the local economy;

d) Ensure the impact of additional housing on the transport network is acceptable;

e) Provide for real mode choice by future proofing new infrastructure;

f) Reduce congestion in the parishes surrounding Didcot to the north;

g) Provide relief to the A34;

h) Provide value for money to the public sector; and

i) Support Didcot as a new vibrant Garden Town.

Scheme location and proposals

1.36 The location and layout of the Scheme is illustrated in Figure 1. The area of land over which the Proposed Development will occupy, during construction and operation, is referred to as the 'Site'. The total site area (both temporary and permanent) for the Proposed Development is approximately 155 hectares (ha) in size. It is located within two districts; the VoWDC and SODC.

1.37 The Scheme consists of four sperate but interdependent sections that make up the overall Scheme package, including the improvement of the existing A4130 road and the development of three new roads. These are:

- **A4130 Widening** – the dualling of the existing road between Milton Gate and the link to the new Didcot Science Bridge, with segregated walking and cycling facilities. Several new junctions into adjacent proposed developments.
- **Didcot Science Bridge** – a new single carriageway bridge over the A4130, Great Western Railway Main Line, and Milton Road, with segregated walking and cycling facilities. A new single carriageway link road through the former Didcot A Power Station site, re-joining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road north of the Purchas Road/Hawksworth roundabout with segregated walking and cycling facilities.
- **Didcot to Culham River Crossing** – providing a new road connecting the A4130 at Didcot with the A415 at Culham, including a bridge over the River Thames and another bridge over a private rail sidings, and connections to Appleford and Sutton Courtenay via the B4016, all with segregated walking and cycling facilitates.
- **Clifton Hampden Bypass** – a new relief road northwest of the village, between the A415 at Culham Science Centre and the B4015 Oxford Road, north of Clifton Hampden. A new roundabout at the western end near Culham Science Centre and Culham Rail Station, and other access junctions along the Bypass. Walking and cycling facilities segregated from the carriageway.

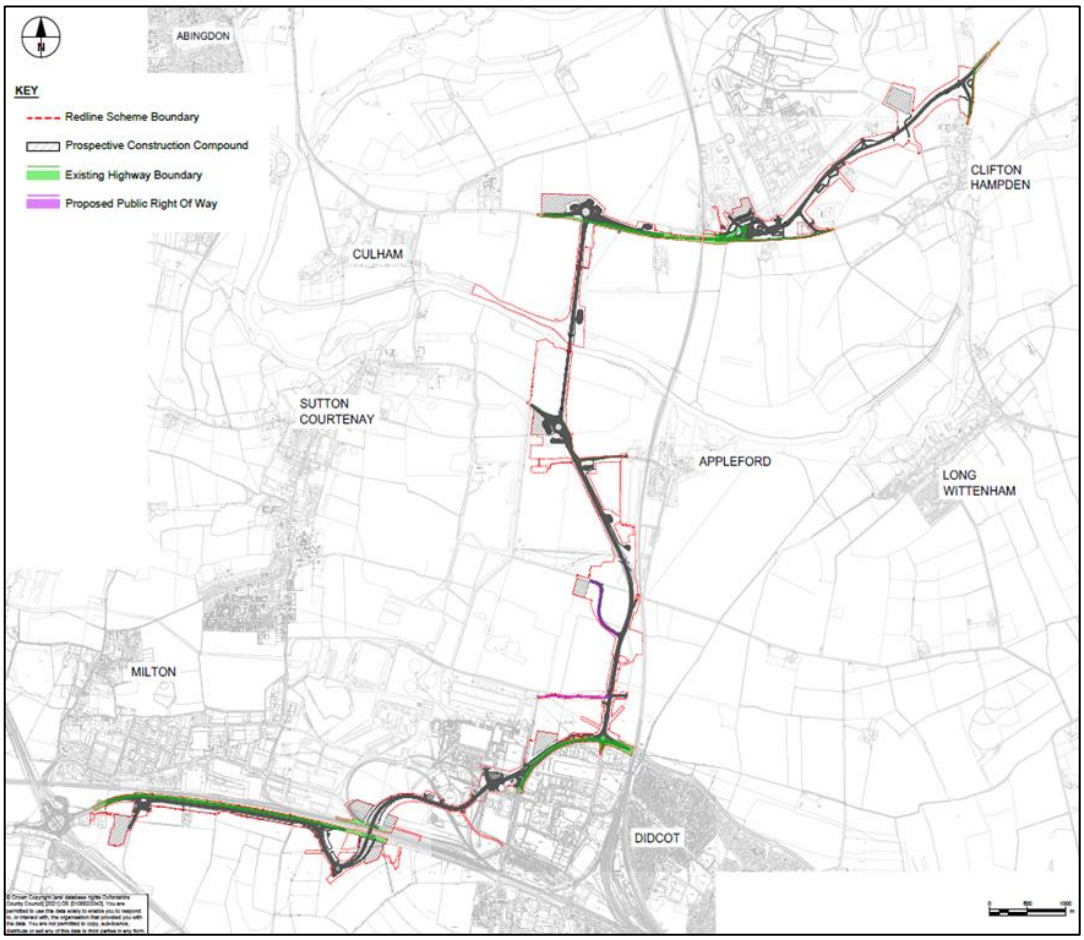


Figure 1: Scheme location map

1.38 There is a strong emphasis on providing a comprehensive package of walking and cycling facilities, as well as new bus stops with shelters, both on carriageway and laybys. These additional bus stops will increase the accessibility and catchment of the existing bus services in this area, whilst also helping to cater for new or improved services in the future.

Details of scheme proposals

A4130 Widening

1.39 The existing A4130 is the main access to Didcot from the strategic road network at the A34. It is dual carriageway which extends eastbound from the Milton Interchange reducing to single carriageway at the Milton Gate junction.

1.40 A new, at grade, four-arm roundabout (Backhill roundabout) will be created approximately 200m to the east of the Milton Gate junction. This will include two lanes on its circulatory carriageway. The two mainline A4130 entry and exits will have two lanes. Two arms will be provided on the southern part of this roundabout, and these will provide access to planned developments on land to the south-west and south-east of the roundabout. Single lane entry and exits will be provided on these arms.

1.41 East of the new Backhill roundabout the A4130 will be dualled to two lanes in each direction. Most of the existing single carriageway, adjacent grass verges, ditches, hedgerows and trees will be retained. The existing single carriageway becoming the eastbound carriageway of the new dualled road. A new two-lane carriageway will be constructed south of the existing carriageway and will form the westbound carriageway of the new road. The highways infrastructure in this location will be approximately 35m

wide but may vary where the width of existing ditch varies, this has been considered using the limits of deviation.

1.42 Further east, an access into the land subject to planning permission (Valley Park Ref: P14/V2873/O, VoWHDC) will be included. This will be a signalised junction, with a dedicated right turn lane included on the eastbound carriageway and a dedicated left turn included on the westbound carriageway. The existing ditch and hedgerow south of the existing carriageway will be removed in the vicinity of this junction, to provide a safe layout including for the required visibility. The access will have a single exit lane, and two approach lanes providing separate left turn and right turn lanes onto the new dualled A4130. Two bus lay-bys will be provided in this location, one east of the junction on the eastbound carriageway, and one to the west of the junction, on the westbound carriageway.

1.43 A second roundabout (Old A4130 roundabout) will be created. This will be an at grade, three-arm roundabout with two lanes on its circulatory carriageway. It will provide access to the current alignment of the A4130 towards Didcot, and to a single carriageway which will connect with a third roundabout, the Didcot Science Bridge roundabout, to the south-east. All three arms will be marked as two-lane entries, the eastern and south-eastern arms flaring from a single lane approach. The western arm will be marked as a two-lane exit, while the other two arms will provide only a single lane exit. To the east of this roundabout, two bus stops will be created in the main traffic lanes, on the alignment of the existing A4130.

1.44 The eastern link road section between the proposed 'Old A4130 roundabout' and the Didcot Science Bridge roundabout is a single carriageway. The Scheme will be approximately 20.3m wide in this location, including NMU provision. Fencing and embankments will extend beyond.

1.45 The Didcot Science Bridge roundabout will be an at grade, three-arm roundabout, that will provide access between the A4130 and the Didcot Science Bridge, and to the planned development at Valley Park. All approaches will be single lanes flaring to two entry lanes. While all exits will provide only single lanes.

Didcot Science Bridge

1.46 The Didcot Science Bridge will consist of a single carriageway passing over the A4130, the Great Western mainline railway and Milton Road landing in the former Didcot A Power Station site. The bridge will be approximately 14.9m in width, including NMU provisions.

1.47 This single carriageway road will continue as the Didcot Science Bridge Link Road, extending through the allocated development areas of the former Didcot A Power Station site. This part of the Scheme will be approximately 18.3 m in width, including NMU provision. These NMU provisions shall be continued into the Didcot to Culham River Crossing scheme. The link road ties-in with A4130 Northern Perimeter Road, north of the Hawskworth Roundabout. The northern arm of Hawksworth Roundabout (A4130 Northern Perimeter Road) connects to the link road, forming a new ghost junction with a right turn pocket is provided on the new link road into the old A4130 Northern Perimeter alignment, leading to Hawksworth Roundabout. Throughout the scheme extents, there are multiple side-roads which will provide direct access points into adjacent land located to the north and south of the Scheme. Side roads that lie within the Clowes development shall be provided by Clowes, all other side roads shall be provided by OCC.

Didcot to Culham River Crossing

1.48 The existing, at grade, four-arm roundabout (Collett roundabout) will be enlarged. It will include two lanes on its circulatory carriageway; currently there is one. All approaches

to the roundabout will flare out to two lanes; all exits off the roundabout will merge from two lanes into one lane. Two bus stops will be included to the east of the roundabout, on both carriageways. The alignment continues north, along the current alignment of an access road to several private residential properties, with two offline bus stops provided opposite one another on either side of the carriageway.

1.49 Further north, the Scheme will continue as a single carriageway with two accesses; one to land located to the east of the Scheme and one to land located west of the Scheme, both serving the proposed Didcot Technology Park (D-Tech) site. The D-Tech site will not be constructed in advance of the HIF1 Scheme therefore access to J James Pallets and Wood Recycling will be maintained, thereby ensuring that the business is able to operate during the construction of the Scheme. There will also be private accesses to Hartwright House and Hill Farm House. The Scheme will be approximately 20.3 m in width, including NMU provision and verges, but this will increase where bus stops and ghost island right turn lanes are provided (for example, to enable access to Hanson and FCC operations).

1.50 The Scheme is aligned between three ponds, located to the east and west. Small sections of two of the ponds will be infilled. At this location, to the west of the main carriageway a priority T junction and an access road will be constructed to replace the existing Portway Road access road further north. The priority junction will include a ghost island right turn lane for traffic travelling from the north. The minor arm will incorporate a widened exit so that traffic turning left to the north can filter past vehicles waiting to turn right. The severed section of the Portway Road will be retained as an access for maintenance and operational purposes.

1.51 Further north, the Scheme will cross Appleford railway sidings, a private railway siding for the Hanson aggregate operations and FCC Landfill Site. The Scheme will remain as a single carriageway and will continue through an area of historic restored landfill (known as the 90-acre field). There will be a priority junction on the B4016 to the north and west of Appleford including a dedicated ghost island right turn lane for traffic travelling north. Further north, two bus stops located opposite each other will be provided offline from the mainline of the Scheme. The proposed Sutton Courtenay roundabout will be an at grade, three-arm roundabout with two lanes on its circulatory carriageway. Two lanes will be included on all exits, these will merge to one lane once off the roundabout. This roundabout will provide access to the crossing over the River Thames and maintain links between Appleford and Sutton Courtenay and the surrounding areas.

1.52 Extending north from Sutton Courtenay roundabout, a viaduct 336m in length is provided to cross the River Thames flood plain, with a bridge 155m in length over the River Thames. The bridge over the River Thames will comprise two 45m side spans and a 65m main span. The River Thames is navigable at this location so the bridge height about water level has been designed to accommodate river traffic. The crossing over the River Thames will be a single carriageway, approximately 16.9m in width including the NMU provisions.

1.53 To the north of the River Thames crossing, private accesses will be created to a farm property located to the east of the alignment. Where the new link road interfaces with the A415 Abingdon Road a new four-arm at grade roundabout is constructed to the north of the existing road alignment. This connects the A415 Abingdon Road, the new road and a new stub to the north for future development access.

1.54 The A415 Abingdon Roundabout has two lanes on its southern circulatory carriageway and three on its northern side. This will ensure three lanes are provided at the A415 eastbound access onto the roundabout. Two-lane approaches will be included on all other entries, except for the A415 westbound, which will also include a segregated left turn lane. To the east of the roundabout, the A415 will return to a single carriageway.

Clifton Hampden Bypass

1.55 The Clifton Hampden Bypass will re-route traffic on the A415 around the village of Clifton Hampden, which currently experiences a large amount of through traffic as people travel between the A415 to A4074.

1.56 The existing A415 will be realigned south of the CSC and a roundabout will be created. The proposed works also include the construction of a large four-arm roundabout at the western end of the Scheme, providing access to the SODC Local Plan allocated housing site, a railway station and LEDA owned farmland / businesses north of CSC coming off the northern arm, and CSC on the northeast arm. Station Road will be realigned and will join with a new entrance to the industrial properties (Culham No.1 site) located north west of the roundabout. An existing access road into the CSC will be terminated and converted into a footway and cycleway. The other exit from the roundabout into the CSC will provide two access points to CSC (main gate and perimeter road). The bypass will be aligned in a south-west to north-east direction and will be a single carriageway, approximately 11.3m in width including segregation strip and hard strip, but this will increase in some cases for example, where dedicated ghost island right turn lanes are provided. There will be a dedicated, ghost island, right turn lane that will connect with a new single carriageway, which will connect with the current alignment of the A415. This will provide access to the village of Clifton Hampden.

1.57 Two bus stops are proposed on the bypass, outside CSC, to link public transport to this employment centre. The westbound bus stop will be in a lay-by, while the eastbound bus stop will be on-carriageway. A second pair of bus stops are proposed near the B4015 Connection junction, as a provision for future use by local bus companies to connect with Clifton Hampden Village. The westbound bus stop will be in a lay-by, while the eastbound bus stop will be on-carriageway. Both sets of bus stops will be equipped with a bus shelter and Sheffield stands (cost effective solution for bike parking).

2. Stakeholder engagement

2.1 Throughout the development of the Scheme, constructive engagement with stakeholders has been crucial to understanding their views and where appropriate informing the development of the Scheme. Details of the engagement undertaken is summarised in this section, and details of the feedback received, and the resulting key themes are provided in Section 3 of this document.

Objectives and narrative

Overall aim

2.2 The overall aim of the stakeholder engagement process was to provide effective and transparent communications and allow the opportunity for stakeholder views to inform the development of the Scheme. This engagement process adhered to the relevant policy and legislation detailed in Section 1 of this document.

Core narrative

2.3 The Scheme is made up of four transport infrastructure improvement sections which must be delivered collectively to facilitate the demand for new housing, jobs as well as improved journey times in Didcot and the surrounding areas, while improving congestion. A key objective is to promote a modal shift away from private single car occupancy trips. A comprehensive package of walking and cycling facilities is being developed across the Scheme.

2.4 The engagement process provided the opportunity to engage with members of the community and key stakeholders, through both public consultations and targeted engagement activities.

2.5 The approach to community consultation ensured that comprehensive and meaningful engagement took place, despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.6 The engagement process included the provision of accessible detailed information on the plans for each section of the Scheme and offered an opportunity for comment. Feedback received through the engagement activities has been reviewed and considered during the development of the Scheme to shape the proposals where feasible.

Engagement to date

Approach to consultation

2.7 The approach to consultation followed the guidance set out in Oxfordshire County Council's Statement of Community Involvement (June 2020). This approach gave stakeholders the opportunity to feedback on designs presented as part of the four independent, but interdependent highway scheme sections.

2.8 The consultation process used a variety of methods in order to maximise participation from relevant stakeholders and the local community. Activities included a 2018 and 2020 public consultation event, targeted consultation with key stakeholder groups and a dedicated project website. See sections titled 'Public consultation events', 'Targeted consultation' and 'Website', for more information detailing these engagement activities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some activities had to be re-planned in order to adhere to the national guidance at that time.

2.9 In the run up to the 2018 and 2020 consultation events, engagement was carried out with local elected members, notifying them of the consultations and providing the opportunity for questions to be asked and input provided.

2.10 This section details engagement activity undertaken to date.

Public consultation events

2018 consultation

2.11 The first public consultation took place between Friday 2 November and Sunday 25 November 2018, via in-person and online consultation. Two public exhibitions took place on Wednesday 7 November at the Didcot Civic Hall and Saturday 17 November at the Cornerstone, both in Didcot. Approximately 300 people attended the public exhibitions. A copy of the materials shown at the consultation can be viewed in Appendix A.

2.12 To publicise the consultation, a range of communications were launched prior to the first event taking place on 2 November 2018.

2.13 Emails were issued to key stakeholder groups inviting them to attend the consultation, find out more information and give their feedback. The list of groups emailed were categorised into the following groups:

- County Councillors
- District Councillors
- Parish County Clerks
- Local schools
- Local business parks and centres
- Chamber of Commerce

2.14 A consultation poster was delivered to local Parish Councils and a newspaper advert was published in the Oxford Times prior to the consultation starting. The advert provided a brief introduction to the proposed schemes, alongside details of the online consultation and exhibition dates. A copy of the poster and newspaper digital advertisement can be found in Appendix B and C respectively.

2.15 Social media posts were also published on OCC's Facebook and Twitter pages prior to the consultation beginning, promoting the public consultation

2.16 A press release was issued in October 2018 and The Herald newspaper published a news story on their website. OCC also posted a news story on their website on 2 November 2018. A copy of the Herald and OCC news stories can be found in Appendix D.

2.17 The initial consultation in 2018 focused on a package of strategic improvements, including:

- **A4130 Capacity Improvement** – dualling of the A4130 between the A34 and new Science Bridge, including new and improved pedestrian and cycling measures.
- **Science Bridge** – A new road link from the new dualled section of the A4130, over the railway, back to the A4130 at Purchas Road, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

- **Culham to Didcot River Crossing** – a new road between Culham near the Science Centre to Didcot's A4130 perimeter road, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- **Clifton Hampden Bypass** – a new road between the A415, Abingdon Road, at the Culham Science Centre and B4015, Oxford Road, north of Clifton Hampden village

2.18 *Note: names and descriptions of the four sections of the Scheme have evolved during the design phase. The above descriptions are representative of the 2018 consultation.*

2.19 When presenting the details of each section of the Schemes, information regarding the 'pros and cons' of the different options considered was also provided, including the preferred option.

2.20 Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the design proposals through completing a feedback form. The feedback form was available at the online and in-person public exhibitions with a space to provide a free-text response to the following question: *'Do you have any comments on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area to support planned growth?'*

2.21 In total, 307 consultation responses were received during the 2018 consultation, of which 13 did not provide any comments. The submission method and number of responses is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: 2018 consultation summary of responses

Submission Method	Number of responses
Online	236 (11 did not provide any comments)
Exhibition	56 (2 did not provide any comments)
Post	1
Email	14

2.22 *Note: where a response was sent twice by different methods, only one has been counted to avoid double counting.*

2.23 All feedback collected was categorised into key themes which were subsequently analysed and are presented in Section 3 of this report.

2020 consultation

2.24 Following the 2018 public consultation, the designs for each section of the Scheme were developed further and a second consultation took place between Friday 20 March and Thursday 30 April 2020.

2.25 The consultation was originally planned to last four weeks, which is the required duration for a non-statutory consultation. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and national social distancing guidance, this duration was extended to six weeks to allow people more time to respond.

2.26 A variety of methods were used to maximise participation from relevant stakeholders and local community groups, including:

- Using an innovative online consultation room with live chat function;

- Sending over 22,000 letters to residential properties in the area;
- Directly contacting landowners with whom OCC had previously been in contact with;
- Radio adverts;
- Printed and online newspaper adverts;
- Social media posts via the OCC Facebook page and Twitter feed;
- Directly contacting Parish Councils;
- Directly contacting OCC and District Councillors; and
- Including phone numbers on all correspondence for people to call to ask questions and request information packs to be sent to them in the post.

2.27 More information on the above means of promotion are detailed below.

2.28 The online consultation room presented information boards on the Scheme, as well as details about the individual packages of work, illustrated in Figure 2. The room allowed stakeholders to communicate directly with members of the project team, via a live chat function. A copy of the materials shown in the online consultation room can be viewed at Appendix E.

Figure 2: Screen grab showing the online consultation room

2.29 To ensure that as many stakeholders as possible could participate in the consultation, including those who had restricted internet access, who were unable to view content online, or found it uncomfortable, a telephone number was made available for them to call. OCC officers were available to answer questions or arrange for printed versions of the consultation materials to be issued to stakeholders. A total of 27 people requested printed versions of the consultation materials including the boards, the FAQ document, feedback form and a stamp addressed envelope to return comments.

2.30 The aim of the consultation was to gain feedback on the updated Scheme designs for consideration during later design stages.

2.31 To publicise the consultation, a wide range of consultation activities were launched prior to and during the consultation.

2.32 Letters were sent to over 22,000 residences in the area advertising the consultation and providing high-level information on the Scheme, as well as the individual sections. Appendix F provides a copy of the letter sent out to local residences.

2.33 A newspaper advert was published in the Herald series and Oxford Mail every Wednesday and Thursday from 18 March to 30 April 2020. A digital banner was also displayed on the newspaper websites from 19 March to 30 April 2020. The printed advert provided a brief introduction to the Scheme, alongside details of the online consultation. The digital advert allowed readers to click through to be redirected to the online consultation room. Please see Appendix G for a copy of the newspaper digital advertisement featured on The Herald website.

2.34 A radio advert campaign was promoted across three Jack Media Oxfordshire Ltd radio stations, including Jack FM, Jack 2 and Jack 3 Oxfordshire. The advert ran from 2 April to 30 April 2020 and was broadcast a total of 525 times. The advert introduced the Scheme, highlighting the proposed road that will cross the River Thames and the Clifton Hampden bypass, and directed listeners to the online consultation room. A mobile phone number was also provided for those without internet access who wished to discuss the proposals or request hard copies. See Appendix H for confirmation of Jack FM airtime.

2.35 Social media posts were also published on OCC's Facebook and Twitter pages during the consultation period, promoting the online consultation room. A screen grab of the Twitter and Facebook social media post can be found in Appendix I.

2.36 An email was sent out to members of the press and local councillors the day before the consultation began, notifying them that the online consultation room was live.

2.37 Emails were also issued to 415 stakeholders the day the consultation began, these included Parish Councils, local businesses, schools, and landowners.

2.38 Table 3 provides a breakdown of how respondents heard about the consultation. In total, 686 consultation responses were received. It should be noted that there were 181 respondents who did not provide a response. Table 3 is based on 505 respondents and respondents could select more than one response.

Table 3: Method of how people heard about the consultation

Method	Number of responses
Letter (as a local resident)	340
Letter (as a named landowner)	6
Newspaper advert (in the paper)	15
Newspaper advert (online)	3
Radio advert	8
OCC Facebook	21
OCC Twitter	7
OCC website	14
OCC email	25
From your parish council	32

Method	Number of responses
From your employer	23
Word of mouth	82
Other	43
Total	**619**

2.39 Respondents were asked to provide comments in relation to each of the four scheme sections and for any general comments on the proposed Scheme as a whole. Open-ended comment boxes were provided for each of the five questions. Responses for each question have been analysed and then grouped into common themes. All feedback collected was categorised into key themes which were subsequently analysed and are presented in section 3 of this report.

2.40 In addition to the wider consultation, a Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) was undertaken to gain an understanding of all relevant existing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians (the users) in the local area, to provide background user information that could be referred to throughout the design process and to identify opportunities for improvement for users. Further detail about this engagement is outlined in the section titled 'Targeted Consultation'.

Targeted Consultation

2.41 Constructive engagement with stakeholders has been valuable to the development of the Scheme design. This section provides an overview of the targeted engagement activities undertaken with groups identified based on their potential to be impacted or interested in the proposals.

Elected members and Parish Councils

2.42 Engagement with elected members and Parish Councils began in 2018 and has continued throughout the development of the Scheme through to the submission of the planning application. This engagement has taken various forms including:

- Briefings
- In-person and online meetings
- Site walkovers
- Email correspondence

2.43 Engagement has taken place with elected members and parish councils outlined in Table 4 to encourage open and transparent dialogue and provide updated plans as the Scheme developed.

Table 4: List of elected members and Parish Councils

Parish & Town Councils	Elected members
Appleford Parish Council	Elected member for Sutton Courtenay and Marcham Division
Berinsfield Parish Council	Elected member for Hendreds and Harwell Division

Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council	Elected member for Didcot East and Hagbourne Division
Culham Parish Council	Elected member for Didcot West Division
Didcot Town Council	Elected member for Didcot Ladygrove Division
Harwell Parish Council	Elected member for Wallingford Division
Didcot Town Council	Elected member for Berinsfield and Garsington Division
Long Wittenham Parish Council	
Milton (Abingdon) Parish Council	
Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council	
Sutton Courtenay Parish Council	
Newington Parish Council	
Stadhampton Parish Council	

2.44 Table 5 outlines the key themes discussed with elected members and Parish Councils during online and in-person meetings held in 2020 and 2021.

Table 5: Key themes discussed with elected members and parish councils during online and in-person meetings held in 2020 and 2021.

Theme	Scheme section	Comments
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	A4130 Widening	It was highlighted that Cow Lane Bridleway (243/1/10) is often unusable in the winter months due to the surface. It was explained that the proposal for Cow Lane Bridleway is to relocate the entrance and replicate the existing gate feature. Any improvements to the surface will be delivered by the developer of Valley Park.
Construction	A4130 Widening	Following public consultation, OCC have revised the A1430 widening scheme to retain the existing southern ditch. The redesign retains circa. 60% of the ditch, this will enable the construction of the majority of new carriageway to be done offline.
Pedestrian and cycling Infrastructure	Didcot Science Bridge	Confirmation that the proposed bi-directional cycleways on the link between the Didcot Science Bridge and the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road will have priority over vehicles over most junctions.
	Didcot to Culham River Crossing	Pedestrian and cycling provision on the river crossing have been relocated to the eastern side of the road, improving the pedestrian and cycle connectivity to Appleford village. The cycle strategy for the River Thames Crossing has been revised, which switches the 3m bi-directional cycleway from the western to eastern

		kerb line. The re-design provides an improvement in terms of connection to the proposed cycle links on the A415 and potential connection to the River Thames towpath.
Design	Didcot to Culham River Crossing	Concern that the river crossing proximity is too close to Appleford. OCC explained that the alignment was moved further away following feedback from the 2018 consultation. Officers explained they had reviewed various options and for reasons of land-use, topography, transport planning, environmental and cost constraints, the current and approved alignment, with mitigation, still offers the best option for the new road and bridges between Didcot and Culham. The scheme section proposes a roundabout on B4016 towards Sutton Courtenay, rather than a priority junction as for Appleford. This is because a roundabout reduces speeds on the new river crossing road and makes it more convenient for vehicles from the Sutton Courtenay direction to pull out onto the new road.
Traffic	Clifton Hampden Bypass	Discussed changes to the Clifton Hampden Bypass as a result of the 2020 consultation. These included lowering the speed limit to allow the road alignment to be moved further north away from residential properties, removal of the roundabout (instead providing a right turn lane junction) and helping to move the road further north and make drivers less likely to continue using the village as a through route. Possibility to not include street lighting at this junction to help maintain the rural feel of the area and reduce visual impacts.

EIA scoping consultation

2.45 During the 2020 consultation period, a number of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders were consulted on the Scoping Opinion. A Scoping Report was submitted to the Local Planning Authority in April 2020 and helped form the basis of the Environmental Statement (ES).

2.46 Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council, Culham Parish Council, Harwell Parish Council and Sutton Courtenay Parish Council responded to the EIA scoping consultation. A summary of the feedback is outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of the feedback from the 2020 EIA scoping consultation

Parish Council	Summary of feedback
Burcot and Clifton Hampden Parish Council	Request for an assessment of the direct and indirect effects of the Scheme on the Oxford Green Belt (OGB) and mitigation of effects informed by evidence from proposed changes to landscape, visual impact, biodiversity and recreation. Concerns of environmental impacts during construction and post completion of the Scheme across the wider district. Request for traffic modelling and air quality sites at or beyond the northern end of the Clifton Hampden Bypass.

	Insight into the noise and vibration impact for residential dwellings adjacent to the A415 by the Culham Science Centre, or at the northern end of the bypass on the B4015.
Culham Parish Council	Request for the ES to include a description of alternative routes considered for the location of the Didcot to Culham River Crossing and a description of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option. Request for the ES to be in line with other developments, e.g. proposed expansion of the Didcot to Oxford Railway line. The quantitative assessment should include consideration of issues such as flood risk, landscape and visual impacts, permanent loss of agricultural land, light pollution, air quality impacts, noise and vibration, nature conservation impacts, fragmentation of agricultural land holdings, water quality and traffic impacts.
Harwell Parish Council	Harwell Parish Council had no objections, but requested that the impact of road schemes and extra traffic volume to be taken into account and alternatives to using motor vehicles offered.
Sutton Courtenay Parish Council	Sutton Courtenay Parish Council objected to the proposal on the basis of unclear guidance on how the work will be implemented and the traffic impact on Sutton Courtenay both during construction and when operational. There are concerns over the cumulative impact of future developments following implementation. Sutton Courtenay Parish Council also objected regarding the negative impact on Sutton Courtenay in respect of noise and light pollution both during and after construction and also, vibrations caused by construction works.

Appleford-on-Thames Position Paper

2.47 Appleford Parish Council (APC) submitted a Position Paper in January 2021, summarising its position on the Didcot to Culham River Crossing scheme. Though APC support the proposed road and river crossing, the predominant areas of concern covered within the paper included consultation, road alignment and junction type. See Appendix J and K for the full Appleford-on-Thames Position paper and OCC's response respectively.

2.48 OCC responded to the position paper in March 2021, addressing the concerns of APC. This is detailed below.

Consultation

2.49 APC criticised OCC's consultation regarding the Scheme, stating "*its disappointment with aspects of the consultation process which omitted relevant and important information of concern to residents".*

2.50 OCC responded by summarising that "*OCC maintains that extensive consultation has been undertaken over many years. In both the 2018 and 2020 Scheme consultations, OCC received comments from Appleford residents regarding the location of the road and bridge in relation to the village. OCC has investigated options to address these concerns, and where feasible has moved the Scheme further west, away from the village."*

Road Alignment

2.51 APC requested that the alignment for the Didcot to Culham River Crossing be moved further west from the village. APC went on to suggest OCC consider alternative routes, including traversing a modern land fill site with on-going operations, or through a lake.

2.52 OCC responded by summarising that "*Officers have reviewed various alignment options in response to the APC Position Paper and for reasons of land-use, topography, transport planning, environmental and cost constraints, the current and approved alignment, with mitigation, still offers the best option for the new road and bridges between Didcot and Culham.*"

Junction Type

2.53 APC stated that they do not agree with the proposed un-signalised ghost right T-junction that will join the new road from the existing B1016 Appleford Road. Stating that "*This will require drivers to wait to join the traffic on the proposed road, followed by an approach to a roundabout that will provide a turn-off to Sutton Courtenay. This arrangement will impede vehicle movement between the two villages.*"

2.54 OCC maintains that the junction is the most suitable layout. Stating that *"Officers have advised that a balance must be found to enable Appleford residents to access the new road, without inviting significant numbers of drivers from other areas to travel through the village. The proposed junction has been designed in accordance with modern design standards, and many examples can be seen across the country."*

2.55 OCC has continued to liaise with APC on these matters, with APC proposing additional alternative routes. OCC has reviewed all proposals and informed APC that the previous position remains.

Walking Cycling and Horse-riding (WCH) engagement

Walking, Cycling and Horse-rider Assessment and Review (WCHAR)

2.56 During the 2020 consultation period, engagement with local non-motorised user (NMU) groups, including Walking, Cycling and Horse-riders, was undertaken to inform the production of the WCHAR. The aim of the WCHAR was to gain an understanding of all relevant existing facilities for these groups and provide local insight that can be referred to throughout the design process to identify improvement opportunities for these types of users.

2.57 A WCH specific questionnaire was produced and sent on 8 April 2020 to 24 stakeholders representing 14 different organisations and interest groups, including OCC officers responsible for Public Rights of Way, public health and active travel. A total of seven questionnaire responses were submitted by the following groups:

- Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group (HarBUG);
- Cyclox, Cycling UK;
- Milton Park Bike Users' Group (MilBUG);
- Oxfordshire Cycling Network (OCN);
- Oxfordshire Transport and Access Group (OXTRAG);
- Public Rights of Way Access Strategy & Development; and
- Oxfordshire County Council Public Health

2.58 The British Horse Society (BHS) was also consulted in relation to the WCHAR, and a meeting was held with a BHS representative.

2.59 In general, all respondents to the questionnaire supported the walking cycling and horse-riding improvements.

2.60 The WCHAR questionnaire feedback included suggestions on how further improvements can be made for people who wish to walk, cycle or horse ride. This feedback has been incorporated within the planning application submission where possible.

2.61 A WCHAR Report for each of the Scheme's sections has been submitted alongside the ES as part of the planning application submission.

2021 Briefings

2.62 Engagement with WCH groups continued into 2021. Online briefings were held to provide groups with an update on the project and highlight changes to the proposed plans as a result of the consultation. These included:

- Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group (HarBUG);
- Culham Science Centre Bicycle Users Group (CulBUG);
- Oxfordshire Cycling Network (OCN);
- Oxfordshire Transport and Access Group (OXTRAG); and
- The British Horse Society.

2.63 The briefings began with a short presentation, followed by a run-through of the non-technical general arrangement drawings.

2.64 Several members of the project team were in attendance and attendees were encouraged to comment and ask questions throughout the briefings. A summary of the discussions is outlined in Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of the discussions during briefing sessions with WCH groups

Theme	Scheme section	Comment	Response
Pedestrian and cycling Infrastructure	General	Comments focused on types of surface and how they will be laid, and delineation to be used on shared paths.	Asphalt surfacing with no lining, and machine techniques will be used where possible.
		Request to consider how street furniture and lighting is incorporated, and types of tactile used at crossings to aid people with visual and mobility difficulties.	This will be addressed during the detailed design phase.
		Question raised as to whether horse-riders will be able to use the shared pedestrian/cycle path.	Paths have been designed to facilitate pedestrian and cycle movements. OCC will explore the legalities of designating the pedestrian/cycle path to include horse-riders.
	A4310 Widening	Request for proposal to be amended to include less swale and more verge.	The verge in this area comprises of existing vegetation. There is the need to retain as much vegetation as possible for ecology reasons and provide sufficient drainage.

		Request for the final crossing to be changed from a toucan crossing to a parallel crossing.	This cannot be done due to the speed limit.
	Didcot Science Bridge	Enquired as to whether the bridge itself will be able to facilitate wheelchair users and provide rest stop areas.	Yes, it will be able to facilitate wheelchair users and other users i.e. cyclists and pushchairs. Flatter areas (possibly including benches) will be included on the bridge approaches to allow people to rest.
		Could a “zig zag” path be used to connect the bridge and the A4130.	A “zig-zag” path from the embankment to the A4130 is not possible due to the noted land constraints. However, the developers of Valley Park will be building a link from the Science Bridge roundabout to the A4130.
		Asked if the shared path to the rear of the lagoon (at Southmead Industrial Estate) could be moved closer to the carriageway.	The shared path is located to the rear of the lagoon due to constraints with utilities. However, from a safety perspective, non-motorised user sections are currently being designed to be lit throughout the Scheme.
	Clifton Hampden Bypass	It was noted that there is a lack of a connection between each side of A4074.	Unfortunately, this is beyond the extent of the Scheme, although there are options for future development to link these up.
Design	Didcot to Culham River Crossing	Asked if it possible to make the splitter island at the roundabout bigger with the crossings further back?	OCC noted the request, explaining there is little demand for a crossing here because people will likely use other routes. However, site developers will be responsible for fixing any issues with existing accesses.
Environment	General	Recommendation to include grass strips throughout the Scheme to help prevent debris spreading from the highway.	OCC confirmed that grass strips would be incorporated where possible, although these are unlikely to feature on structures such as the River Crossing Bridge.
Traffic	A4130 Widening	Request for details of speed reducing methods.	Speed has been reduced to 40mph and lanes have been narrowed with additional landscaping incorporated.
	Clifton Hampden Bypass	What is the speed limit?	The speed limit along this section has been reduced to 50mph (with the exception of roundabout approaches). This allowed for the curve to be increased and for the alignment of the road to be moved further away from the nearby Clifton Hampden village. The speed limit approaching the roundabout has also been reduced, from 60mph to 40mph.

		A comment was made that Nuneham Courtney traffic will increase in the future, noting that the area is already difficult for pedestrians. Suggested that the proposed new development sites will only make this worse and a bypass may be needed here.	The Scheme will enable development sites to concentrate on how they can promote active modes of travel. However, people will be able to raise issues with individual developments during the planning process for the developments themselves.
Public Rights of Way	A4130 Widening	Details of Cow Brook bridleway be affected.	Access to Cow Brook bridleway will move as a result of the Scheme. The Valley Park development should provide improvements to the bridleway which will likely include an upgrade to the surface to make the path more user friendly. The entrance to the bridleway will join to the proposed shared pedestrian/cycle path.

2.65 The design team will continue to engage with these interest groups and consider opportunities for further improvements throughout the progression of the Scheme's detailed design stage.

2.66 Discussions regarding bus stop provision have also taken place to ensure that future bus services are appropriate to encourage public transport use. Bus stop infrastructure has been designed in consultation with OCC Transport and Public Transport Operators. An online workshop with Thames Travel and Oxford Bus Company took place in June 2020. Further liaison with the bus operators was undertaken as designs evolved.

Website

2.67 Following the 2020 online virtual exhibition, all information and associated materials continued to be accessible to the public, including the exhibition boards and FAQs. A notification was published on the platform informing visitors that the consultation was closed.

2.68 In Spring 2021, the online consultation room was taken offline, and a new, dedicated project webpage was launched on the OCC website to provide stakeholders and interested parties with an update on the Scheme's progression and updated designs. The page provides an overview of the Scheme, its funding and connection to Local Plans and policies. It also outlines the objectives and benefits of the Scheme.

2.69 Contact information has also been made available should visitors have questions about the overall Scheme package or its individual sections.

3. Feedback and analysis

Introduction

3.1 This section of the SCI provides a summary of the feedback received during the 2018 and 2020 consultation stages. For both 2018 and 2020, feedback was submitted via online and hard-copy feedback forms.

3.2 On 15th October 2019, a Cabinet Report was published in which the Cabinet recommended for the HIF1 programme to be included in the Capital Programme and be allocated funding. In addition to the Cabinet Report, a consultation report was produced containing a summary of the feedback received from the 2018 consultation. The consultation report has been used to form the basis of the analysis section for the 2018 consultation.

3.3 On 20th July 2020, a second Cabinet Report was published that set out the steps taken to progress the HIF1 programme, in which the Cabinet recommended to approve the preferred alignments. Details and feedback from the 2020 consultation were also contained within the Annex of the Cabinet Report. The Annex of the Cabinet Report has been used to form the basis of the analysis section for the 2020 consultation.

2018 public consultation

3.4 As part of the 2018 consultation, which involved an in-person exhibition (7 and 17 November 2018) and online exhibition (2 – 25 November 2018), 307 feedback forms were submitted by stakeholders. These comprised 236 responses submitted online, 56 via hard-copy forms, 14 via email and 1 via post. A breakdown is provided in Figure 3. The feedback form asked two demographic questions which are outlined in Section 3.3 and 3.4. The main feedback form question is outlined in Section 3.5.

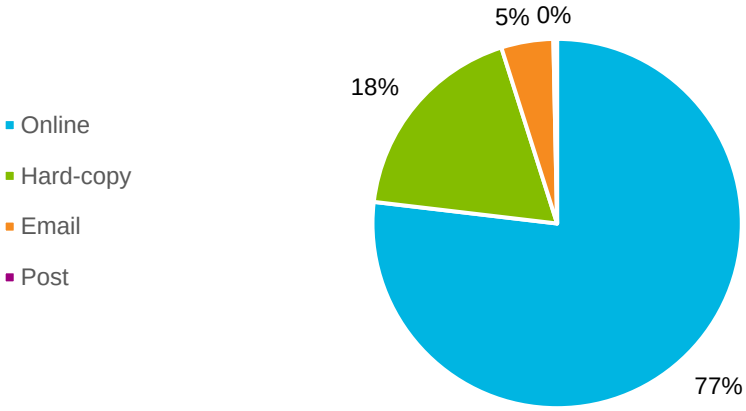


Figure 3: How feedback was submitted during the 2018 consultation (307 responses)

3.5 The feedback form asked respondents to specify whether they lived and/or worked in Didcot or the surrounding area. 36% of respondents stated that they lived in the surrounding area, followed by 30% of respondents who stated they lived in Didcot. 24% stated that they worked in the surrounding area, followed by 9% who stated they worked in Didcot. A breakdown of the responses is provided in Figure 4.

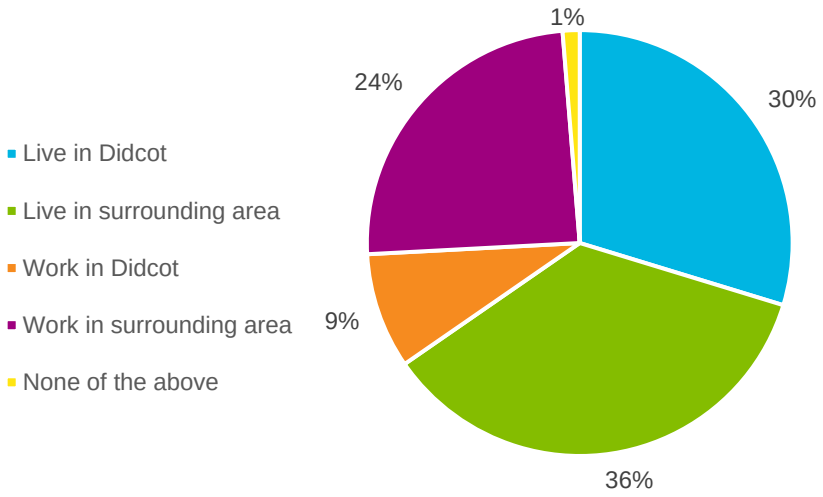


Figure 4: Breakdown of whether respondents lived and/or worked in Didcot or the surrounding area

3.6 The feedback form also asked respondents to state whether they were responding as an individual, business/group/organisation or on behalf of a parish/town/district/county council. 90% of respondents were answering as an individual, followed by 8% on behalf of a business/group/organisation and only 2% were answering on behalf of a parish/town/district or county council. A breakdown of the responses is provided in Figure 5.

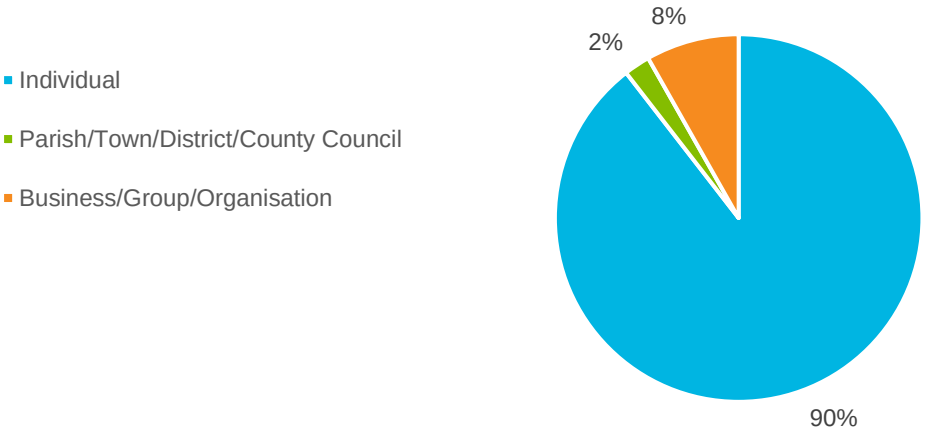


Figure 5: Breakdown of respondent by type (individual, business, council)

3.7 The main feedback form question asked respondents via an open-ended question: "*Do you have any comments on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area to support planned growth?".* Each response has been allocated a category that best summarised the response.

3.8 The first area of categorisation was based on whether respondents supported, objected or supported and objected to the package of schemes. Out of 109 responses, the majority of respondents supported the package of schemes (82%), with only 15% of respondents objecting to the package of schemes. 3% of respondents showed support and objection. A breakdown is provided in Figure 6.

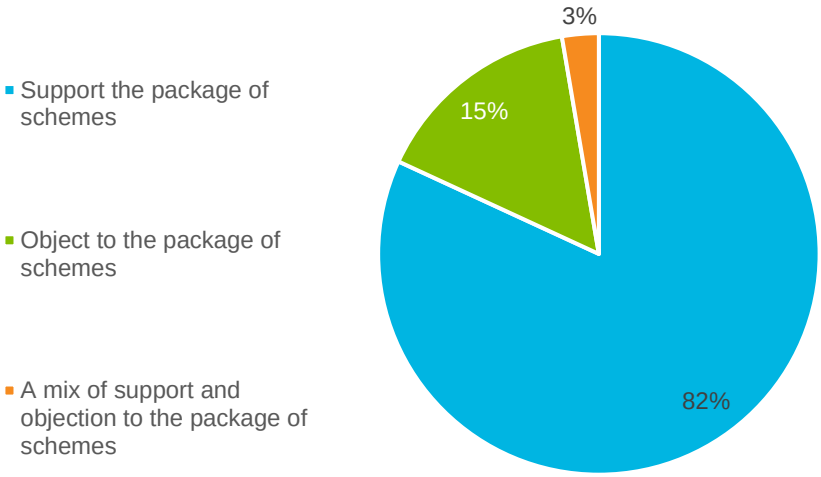


Figure 6: Categorisation of whether respondents supported, objected or supported and objected the package of schemes

3.9 Whilst a number of respondents stated their overall support for specific sections of works, several also added comments stating they did not support the presented option or alignment. For the Culham to Didcot River Crossing, 29 of the respondents who supported the overall principle of the improvement also said they did not support the presented alignment. For the A4130 capacity improvements, five of the respondents who supported the overall principle of the improvement, also said they did not support the presented option. Finally, for the Science Bridge, one person supported the overall principle of the improvement, but also said they did not support the presented option. A breakdown is provided in Figure 7.

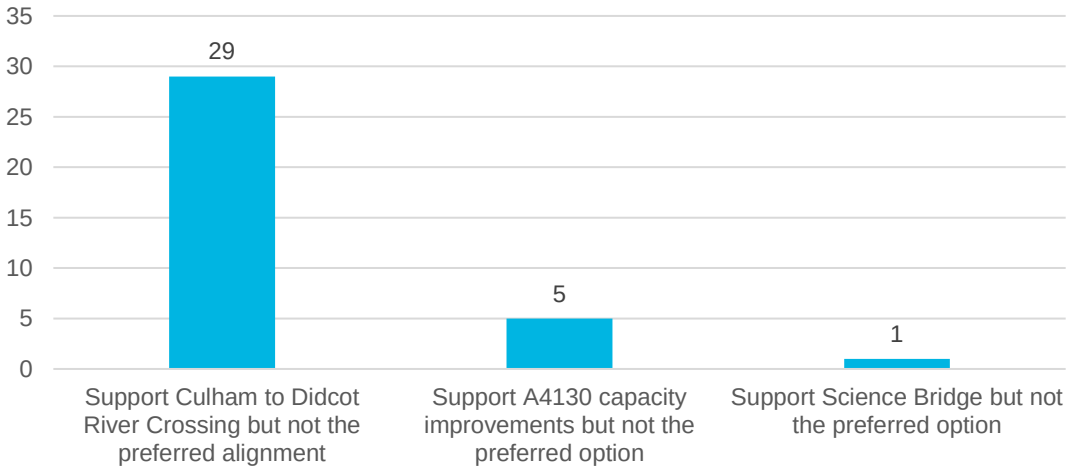


Figure 7: Number of respondents that stated their overall support for a specific section of works, but also added comments stating they did not support the presented option or alignment

3.10 65 respondents raised concerns over the Scheme or made suggestions for improvements. The largest concern was that the impact of the Scheme on local areas with 42% of respondents making reference to this. Specifically, 19% of respondents were concerned about the impact of the Didcot to Culham River Crossing on the

village of Appleford, 17% of respondents were concerned about the general impact of the entire Scheme on surrounding villages and junctions and 6% of respondents were concerned about the impact of the Clifton Hampden Bypass on the village of Clifton Hampden.

3.11 39% of respondents suggested that more focus should be given to improving walking, cycling and public transport routes, 13% raised concerns over environmental impact of the Scheme and 6% raised concerns about how the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will be incorporated. Respondents could provide more than one comment. A breakdown is provided in Figure 8.

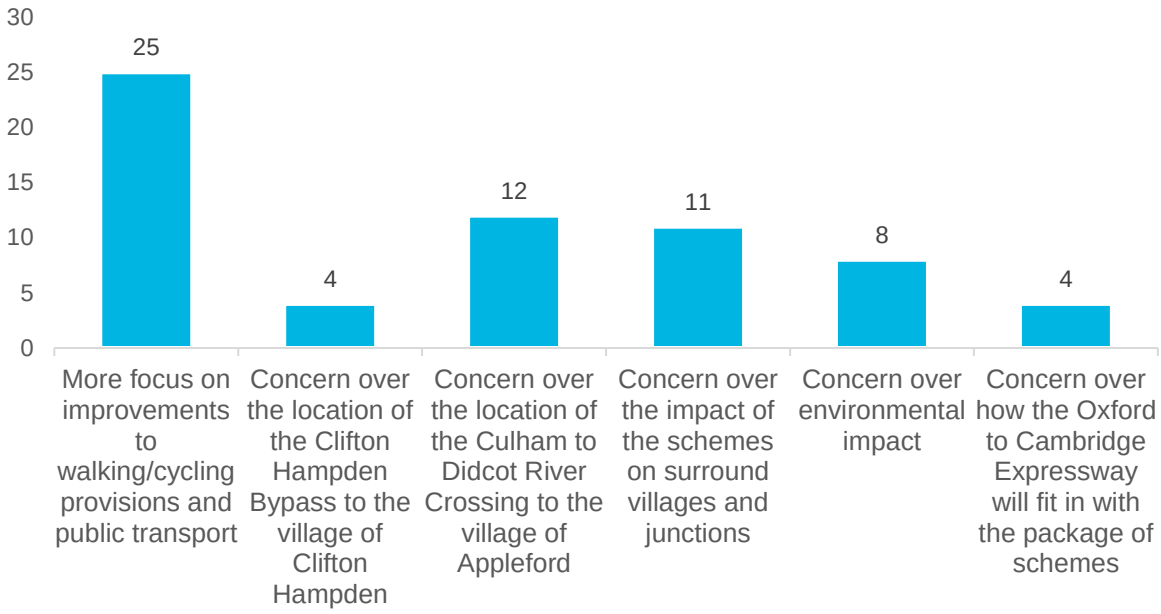


Figure 8: Concerns and suggestions made during the 2018 consultation

3.12 Other areas that respondent's comments fell under included:

- 11 people saying that further evidence was required for needing the improvement.
- One person stated that the proposals were too late.
- Eight people said they supported the Scheme, but more information was needed.

3.13 A summary of the key topics mentioned for each of the Scheme sections is outlined below:

A4130 Widening

- Dualling of the road should be extended further.
- Bus lanes along the A4130 should be considered.

Didcot Science Bridge

- Connections to Milton Park should be considered.

Didcot to Culham River Crossing

- Impact of alignment 1 on the village of Appleford.
- Alignment 1 would require two roundabouts on the A415.
- Alignment 3 and 4 would link closely to Culham Science Centre and the proposed Clifton Hampden Bypass.
- Consideration should be given of an alignment further west of Appleford using the existing Haul road.

Clifton Hampden Bypass

- The bypass should be further north or designed to be further away from properties.

General

- More focus to be made on public transport, cycling and walking.
- Consequential traffic problems in Nuneham Courtenay, Stadhampton and Chiselhampton and Golden Balls Roundabout.
- Concerns about how the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will fit in with the schemes.
- Schemes should be delivered prior to new housing development.
- Consideration to improve the A34 needs to be made.
- Concerns that new roads may encourage more traffic.
- Traffic modelling/ traffic data was not shown to evidence how the schemes will help.
- Concerns about the impact on the environment.

2020 consultation

3.14 As part of the 2020 consultation (20 March – 30 April 2020), 686 pieces of feedback were submitted by stakeholders. These comprised 613 responses submitted via the online consultation feedback form, 48 via email, 13 via hard copy posted forms, eight via the phone and four via the live chat in the online consultation room. A breakdown of how responses were submitted is provided in Figure 9.

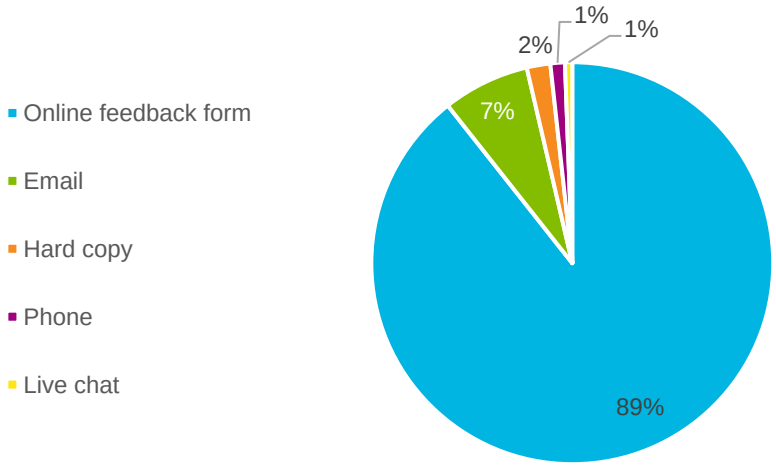


Figure 9: Feedback methods for the 2020 consultation (686 responses)

3.15 The feedback form asked two demographic questions which are outlined in section 3.16 and 3.17. The main feedback form question is outlined in section 3.18.

3.16 The feedback form asked respondents to specify whether they lived and/or worked in Didcot or the surrounding area. 37% of respondents stated that they lived in the surrounding area, followed by 33% of respondents who stated they lived in Didcot. 23% stated that they worked in the surrounding area, followed by 6% who stated they worked in Didcot. A breakdown of the responses is provided in Figure 10.

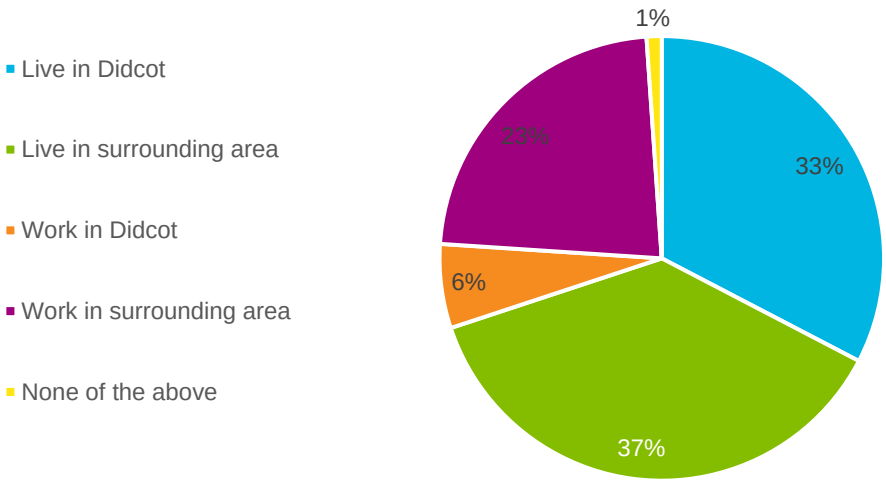


Figure 10: Breakdown of whether respondents specified whether they lived and/or worked in Didcot or the surrounding area

3.17 The feedback form also asked respondents to state whether they were responding as an individual, business/group/organisation or on behalf of a parish/town/district/county council. Of those who responded, 92% of respondents were answering as an individual, followed by 6% on behalf of a business/group/organisation and only 2% were answering on behalf of a parish/town/district or county council. A breakdown of the responses is provided in Figure 11.

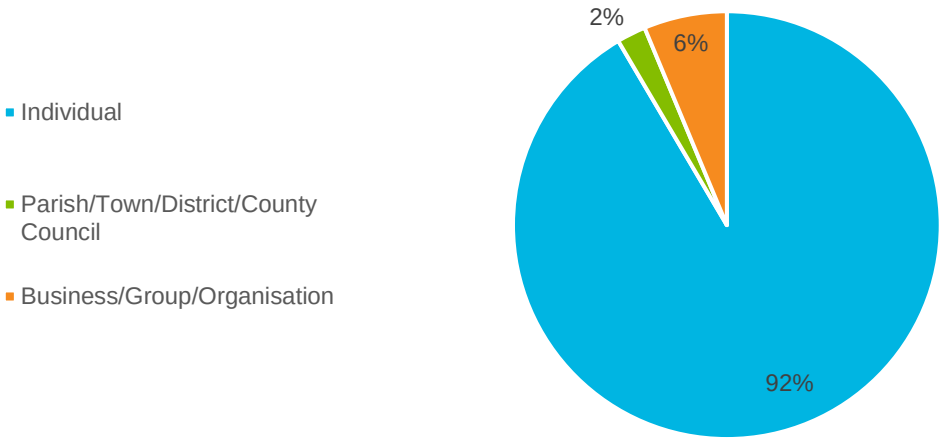


Figure 11: Breakdown of respondent type (individual, business, council)

3.18 The main feedback form requested comments on five areas including:

1. Please provide us with comments you may have on the A4130 Widening Scheme.
2. Please provide us with comments you may have on the Didcot Science Bridge Scheme.
3. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the Didcot to Culham River Crossing Scheme.
4. Please provide us with any comments you may have on Clifton Hampden Bypass Scheme.
5. Please provide us with any general comments on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements.

3.19 Analysis of each question is provided in sections 3.20 – 3.34. Note that where one respondent has made multiple comments that fit different categories, these comments have been counted twice and categorised as appropriate. Therefore, the total number of comments per category often totals above the number of responses submitted overall.

Each question was categorised based on whether comments supported or objected to the Scheme, made a suggestion or asked a question. The majority of comments were supportive of the Scheme as can be seen in the summary in Figure 12. A full breakdown for each section of the Scheme, including themes can be found in the subsections below.

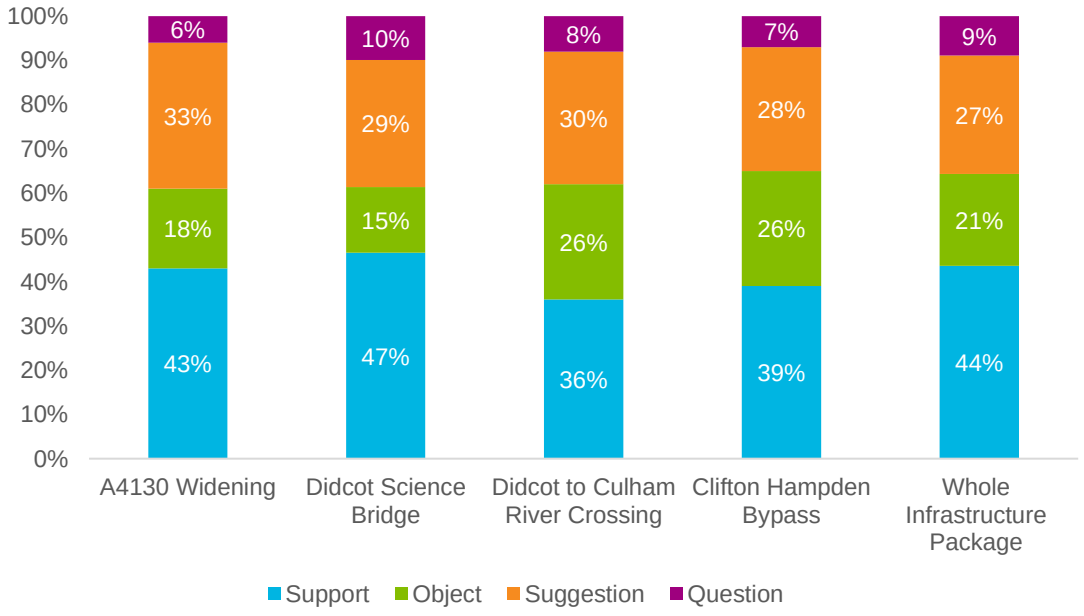


Figure 12: Categorisation on whether the comments supported or objected the scheme(s), made a suggestion or asked a question

Question 1: Please provide us with comments you may have on the A4130 Widening scheme.

3.20 Most respondents were positive towards the A4130 Widening scheme with 43% making comments of support, compared with 18% making comments of objection. 33% of comments made a suggestion and 6% were questions or seeking clarification on a point. See Figure 12.

3.21 The comments received for Question 1 have been categorised into twelve themes outlined below and are presented in graphs based on sentiment including support, object, suggestion/consideration and question.

3.22 Respondents were generally supportive of proposed improvements to cycling infrastructure, traffic movements and pedestrian infrastructure. However, concerns were raised with regard to impact on surrounding villages and junctions, environmental and construction impacts. See Figure 13.

Key:

Support Object Suggestion/consideration Question

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
158	Cycling infrastructure	41% 15% 40% 5%
121	Road scheme design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions and roundabouts)	17% 18% 57% 7%
110	Traffic impacts	63% 23% 7% 7%
95	Pedestrian infrastructure	39% 19% 37% 5%
60	Environmental impacts	8% 47% 40% 5%
23	Autonomous vehicles	39% 13% 26% 22%
22	Safety	23% 14% 59% 5%

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
17	Impact on surrounding villages and junctions	18% 53% 29%
14	Bus infrastructure	7% 7% 86%
10	Construction impact	20% 60% 20%
9	Onward cycling connections	22% 67% 11%
4	Public Rights of Way	25% 50% 25%

Figure 13: Sentiment analysis of Question 1, categorised into twelve themes

Question 2: Please provide us with comments you may have on the Didcot Science Bridge scheme

3.23 Most respondents were positive towards the Didcot Science Bridge scheme with 47% making comments of support, compared with 44% making comments of objection. 29% of comments made a suggestion and 10% were questions or seeking clarification on a point. See Figure 12.

3.24 The comments received for Question 2 have been categorised into thirteen themes outlined below and are presented in graphs based on sentiment including support, object, suggestion/consideration and question.

3.25 Respondents were generally supportive of proposed improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, traffic movements and safety. However, concerns were raised with regards to environmental impacts, impacts on surrounding villages and junctions and bus infrastructure. See Figure 14.

Key:

Support Object Suggestion/consideration Question

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
95	Traffic impact	73% 14% 4% 9%

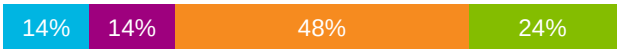
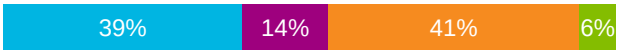
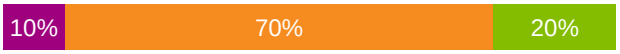
Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
91	Cycling infrastructure	
85	Road scheme design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions and roundabouts)	
51	Pedestrian infrastructure	
42	Environmental impacts	
15	Impact on surrounding villages and junctions	
10	Onward cycling connections	
8	Bus infrastructure	
8	Safety	
6	Construction impact	
5	Autonomous vehicles	
4	Economic	
1	Public Rights of Way	

Figure 14: Sentiment analysis of Question 2, categorised into thirteen themes

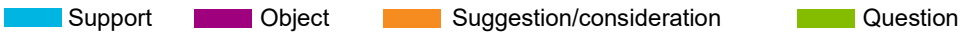
Question 3: Please provide us with comments you may have on the Didcot to Culham River Crossing scheme

3.26 Most respondents were positive towards the Didcot to Culham River Crossings scheme with 36% making comments of support, compared to 26% making comments of objection. 30% of comments made a suggestion and 8% were questions or seeking clarification on a point. See Figure 12.

3.27 The comments received for Question 3 have been categorised into thirteen themes outlined below and are presented in graphs based on sentiment including support, object, suggestion/consideration and question.

3.28 Respondents were generally supportive of proposed improvements to cycling and pedestrian infrastructure and traffic movements. However, some concerns were raised with regards to road scheme design, environmental impacts, impacts on surrounding villages and junctions, safety and construction impact. See Figure 15.

Key:



Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
178	Road scheme design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions and roundabouts)	12% 29% 46% 13%
139	Traffic impact	58% 32% 6% 4%
128	Environmental impacts	12% 48% 30% 10%
88	Cycling infrastructure	40% 9% 41% 10%
81	Impact on surrounding villages and junctions	27% 52% 17% 4%
44	Pedestrian infrastructure	36% 7% 45% 11%
32	Onward cycling connections	3% 16% 63% 19%

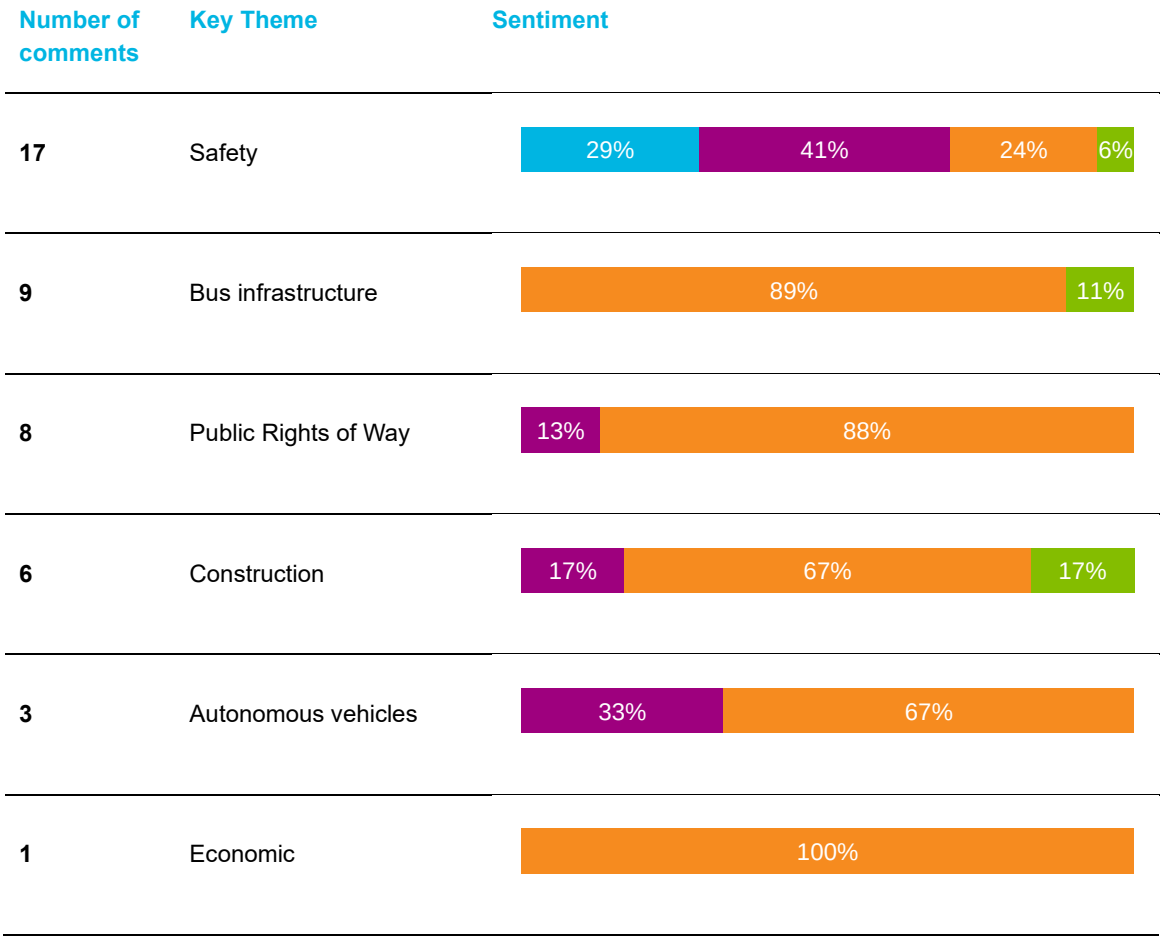


Figure 15: Sentiment analysis of Question 3, categorised into thirteen themes

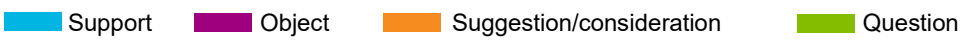
Question 4: Please provide us with comments you may have on the Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme

3.29 Most respondents were positive towards the River Crossings scheme with 39% making comments of support, compared to 26% making comments of objection. 28% of comments made a suggestion and 7% were questions or seeking clarification on a point. See Figure 12.

3.30 The comments received for Question 4 have been categorised into thirteen themes outlined below and are presented in graphs based on sentiment including support, object, suggestion/consideration and question.

3.31 Respondents were generally supportive of proposed improvements to pedestrian infrastructure, traffic movements and Public Rights of Way. However, concerns were raised regarding road scheme design, environmental impact, impact on surrounding villages and junctions and safety. See Figure 16.

Key:



Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
109	Traffic impact	
96	Road scheme design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions and roundabouts)	
73	Cycling infrastructure	
69	Environmental impact	
51	Pedestrian infrastructure	
41	Impact on surrounding villages and junctions	
22	Safety	
13	Onward cycling connections	
9	Bus infrastructure	
8	Public Rights of Way	
2	Construction	
2	Autonomous vehicles	

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
1	Economic	100%

Figure 16: Sentiment analysis of Question 4, categorised into thirteen themes

Question 5: Please provide us with general comments on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements

3.32 The final question asked respondents to provide general comments on the Scheme. Most respondents were positive with 44% making comments of support, compared with 21% making comments of objection. 27% of comments made a suggestion and 9% were questions or seeking clarification on a point. See Figure 12.

3.33 The comments received for Question 5 have been categorised into twelve themes outlined below and are presented in graphs based on sentiment including support, object, suggestion/consideration and question.

3.34 Respondents were generally supportive of proposed improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and safety. However, some concerns were raised regarding impact on traffic movements, environmental impact, impact on surround villages and junctions and construction impact. See Figure 17.

Key:

Support Object Suggestion/consideration Question

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
125	Traffic impact	7% 48% 27% 18%
99	Cycling infrastructure	34% 10% 47% 8%
73	Road scheme design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions and roundabouts)	12% 18% 59% 11%
67	Environmental impact	7% 48% 27% 18%
43	Pedestrian infrastructure	49% 19% 28% 5%

Number of comments	Key Theme	Sentiment
33	Impact on surrounding villages and junctions	15% 48% 24% 12%
26	Onward cycling connections	8% 12% 62% 19%
20	Bus infrastructure	5% 20% 70% 5%
14	Construction	21% 29% 29% 21%
11	Economic	55% 18% 9% 18%
8	Safety	38% 13% 50%
5	Autonomous vehicles	60% 20% 20%

Figure 17: Sentiment analysis of Question 5, categorised into twelve themes

4. Scheme development

4.1 This section explains how the feedback received from stakeholders has influenced the Scheme including the Scheme design, the approach to assessments (ES and other technical assessments), proposed mitigation and proposed planning contributions.

Key Themes

4.2 Throughout the 2018 and 2020 consultation periods a number of consistent key themes emerged through feedback received and discussions as part of one-to-one meetings.

4.3 A summary of the key emerging themes are:

- **Traffic impact** – comments related to speed limits, traffic capacity, impact on neighbouring villages and junctions.
- **Environmental** – comments related to impact on air quality, noise and loss of roadside vegetation and biodiversity.
- **Cycle infrastructure** – comments related to the inclusion of segregated cycleways and safe crossings, as well as connectivity to existing cycleways.
- **Pedestrian infrastructure** – comments related to the inclusion of segregated pedestrian walkways and safe crossings including signalised crossings.
- **Bus infrastructure** – comments related to the provision of additional bus stops as a more sustainable transport method.
- **Safety** – comments related to concerns around a lack of segregation of walkways and cycleways from roads, speed limits and provision of safe pedestrian crossings.
- **Construction** – comments related to potential disruption caused by construction and mitigation measures to be put in place, as well as how residents will be kept informed.
- **Public Rights of Way** – comments related to how new the schemes will integrated with existing public rights of way and the provision of bridleways and pedestrian/cycling routes.

Applicant's response to key themes

4.4 A summary of the key themes for each scheme are outlined in the tables below, along with a response by the design team.

Table 8: Summary of the key themes for each scheme

A4130 Widening

Key theme	Theme summary	Response
Traffic impact	Key comments included speed limits to protect pedestrians, traffic capacity, increased volume through Didcot town and too much focus on road development rather than improving	Traffic speeds have been determined by considering the existing speed limits and the future adjacent land use, which will see an increase in the number of pedestrians and cyclists. The speed limit for the A4130 Widening is 40mph (with the exception of a small section at the eastern end of the scheme which is 30mph). On the main road, pedestrians and cyclists will be generally set

	infrastructure for sustainable transport options.	back from the carriageway edge, and controlled crossings will be provided where they are expected to cross the roads. On the side roads lower speed limits are proposed. A full Transport Assessment and traffic modelling assessment have been undertaken to assess traffic impact of the scheme. Further details can be found in Section 5: Modelling Assessment and Section 6: Assessment of Impacts in the supporting Transport Assessment.
Environmental	Key comments included the impact on air quality and noise, and the consideration of planting to take account for loss of roadside trees and improve the landscape, acting as natural sound barriers.	Landscaping has been carefully considered, and where possible trees and bushes along the southern ditch will be retained. New planting is proposed along the new/widened road, with new grassland, trees and shrubs to be planted to improve the landscape and soften the impact of the new infrastructure. Detailed ecological assessments of the existing condition and proposed scenario have been undertaken to ensure any ecological impacts are mitigated. See the Environmental Statement (ES) for details. Noise and air impacts have also been considered and assessed. Where the scheme results in adverse impact, mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the impact. See Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration and Chapter 6: Air Quality in the ES for details.
Cycle infrastructure	Key comments included the provision of segregated cycleways to improve safety for cyclists at crossings and requests to consider signalised crossings.	Cyclist safety is a top consideration which is why the latest Cycle Infrastructure Design standards have been followed to provide the required stopping sight distance (SSD) for cyclists. The greatest practical separation has been provided between the carriageway and cycleway, and green infrastructure is incorporated to create a more pleasant and less traffic-dominated environment to encourage more active travel. Signalised toucan crossings are proposed where cyclists are expected to cross the proposed 40mph road. Previously, the signalised junction at the western access of the Valley Park development was proposed as a staggered crossing. However, due to comments raised within the Walking, Cycling, Horse-riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) report, this has now been updated to an in-line layout
Pedestrian infrastructure	Key comments included the provision of segregated walkways for pedestrians to improve safety.	Segregated cycleways and footways are provided on the southern side of the carriageway. Shared use footways are proposed north of Backhill Roundabout, at accesses to new developments, and at tie-in locations. This is a result of delivering consistent facilities, and constrained available widths that prevent provision of segregated facilities.
Bus infrastructure	Key comments included the need for additional bus stops and bus only lanes across the scheme.	The locations of bus stops have been identified through discussions with OCC Transport and Public Transport Operators to ensure that they accommodate future bus services serving the local area. The preliminary stage review identified opportunities for four new bus stops (two in each direction), which support the existing and potential new bus route(s) along this scheme. Two of the proposed bus stops have already been provided west of the Backhill roundabout, another two will be placed at the Valley Park T-junction and the other two will be located east of the old A4130

		roundabout. Traffic modelling does not currently support the need for bus lanes.
Safety	Key comments included a lack of segregation of cycle/footways from the dual carriageway, with safety barriers mentioned by a number of respondents. Traffic speeds were mentioned as an area causing safety concerns.	The greatest practical separation has been provided between the carriageway and cycleway, and green infrastructure is incorporated to create a more pleasant and less traffic-dominated environment to encourage more active travel. An indicative safety barrier design has been developed using relevant guidance including "Requirement for Road Restraint Systems" and "Design & Maintenance Guidance for Local Authority Roads - Provision of Road Restraint Systems on Local Authority Roads". A lower, more consistent speed limit is proposed, along with three new roundabouts and a new signalised junction which should result in lower traffic speeds.
Construction	Key comments included concerns about disruption caused as a result of construction and requests for clarity over what measures would be put in place to keep residents informed.	As with any major infrastructure improvement scheme, some impacts will be caused due to construction. However, a Construction Management Plan will be produced prior to works starting to outline the mitigation measures in place to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum.
Public Rights of Way	Respondents raised concerns over a lack of consideration for horse riders, through provision of bridleways and circular routes, and lack of clarify for how public rights of way integrate with proposed road network.	A Walking, Cycling, Horse-riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) was completed for the scheme and the British Horse Society has been engaged to provide comments for consideration. It was initially indicated that there is little demand for equestrian use of the public rights of ways the immediate area of the A4130 scheme. However, subsequent meetings it was noted that riders may still want to use the A4130 and the legality of this needed to be understood.

Didcot Science Bridge

Key theme	Theme summary	Response
Traffic impact	Key comments included upgrading the proposals for the Didcot Science Bridge to a dual carriageway, rather single lanes in both directions, and more consideration of commercial vehicles. Also, consideration to provide better connections from Great Western Park and Milton Road to the new road.	The future traffic model has indicated that forecast volumes can be accommodated in a single carriageway, and a wider road is not required. Commercial vehicles have been fully considered in the design and the proposed road geometry will support the largest legal vehicles. Given the level difference between the proposed Didcot Science Bridge (that must pass over the electrified rail line) and the surrounding developments, opportunities to directly link the new road to these developments are limited. Where practical, connections have been provided although these might not be on the most direct alignment.
Environmental	Key comments included the removal of green space and trees resulting in a loss of natural wildlife habitat and sound barriers, leading to increased noise and air quality impacts.	Detailed ecological assessments of the existing condition and proposed scenario have been undertaken to ensure any ecological impacts are mitigated. See the Environmental Statement (ES) for details. Noise and air impact have also been considered and assessed. Where the scheme results in adverse impact, mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the impact. See Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration and Chapter 6: Air Quality in the ES for details.

Cycle infrastructure	Key comments included concerns regarding cycling connectivity to GWP and Milton Park, a lack of controlled/signalised crossings for cyclists and not enough segregation between vehicles and cyclists.	Connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians is proposed to be provided by developers along the foot of the approach embankments to the Didcot Science Bridge. To Great Western Park a shared use path is proposed to the east of the southern embankment through the planned Valley Park development. For Milton Park, a similar path is proposed to the east of the northern embankment through the approved Data Centre development linking to Milton Road. A buffer strip meeting the Designing for walking, cycling and horse-riding standards is to be provided between the carriageway and cycleway, and with traffic speeds along this section to be much slower than the rest of the HIF1 scheme, this is considered appropriate. Four controlled parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings are proposed at regular intervals, giving priority for pedestrians and cyclists over other road users, and a signalised toucan crossing is proposed at the eastern end where the National Cycle Network Route 5 crosses the new road.
Pedestrian infrastructure	Key comments included lack of signalised crossings for pedestrians and poor connectivity to Milton Park. Suggestions included the provision of green segregated walking routes.	Four controlled parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings are proposed at regular intervals giving priority for cyclists and pedestrians over other road users, with traffic speeds along this section to be much slower than the rest of the HIF1 scheme, this is considered appropriate. A signalised toucan crossing is proposed at the eastern end where the National Cycle Network Route 5 crosses the new road and where crossing volumes are expected to be greater. Connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians is proposed to be provided by developers along the eastern foot of the northern embankment through the approved Data Centre development linking to Milton Road and on to Milton Park. Pedestrians will generally be segregated from vehicles and cyclists. For the majority of the scheme, pedestrians will be more than 3m away from the edge of the main road (behind the cycleway), and where widths allow at the eastern end, landscaped areas are proposed to enhance the walking experience.
Bus infrastructure	Key comments included a lack of consideration for priority being given to public transport over cars and requests for improvements to the bus services and frequencies to encourage public transport usage.	Currently due to the severance created by the River Thames and GWML as well as severe congestion in Didcot and surrounding villages this has resulted in poor journey time reliability. Therefore, bus services and patronage are currently low in Didcot and Science Vale. As a result, Didcot does not have the demand to support an increase in the amount of buses per hour and for dedicated lanes/priority junctions. OCC and bus operators discussed and agreed the benefits of Didcot Science Bridge in reducing congestion at the known traffic hotspots in Didcot and the bus stops within scheme itself, noting there would not be any bus priority at junctions. See Options Appraisal Report, Section 5, Option 5 for more information.
Safety	Key comments included the safety of the connecting new road to the A4130 and suitability for turning traffic. Comments were also made in relation to implementing traffic management measures to enforce the speed limit.	The new Didcot Science Bridge and associated link road will be subject to a 30mph speed limit. This reflects the proposed developments along the road, and planned walking and cycling facilities. Visibility has been checked at the new T-junction between the new Science Bridge Link Road and the old A4130. A toucan crossing is also proposed to the east of the ghost right T-junction with traffic islands in the centre of the carriageway to prevent overtaking through the crossing and junction.

		While outside of this scheme's scope, it is suggested to reduce the current 50mph speed limit on the existing A4130 between the Purchas Road roundabout and the Mendip Heights roundabout to 30mph. This is to reflect the removed strategic importance of this link and to promote road safety and the use by non-motorised users.
Construction	Key comments included requests for the Science Bridge to be constructed before the A4130 work commences and for mitigation measures to be put in place to reduce the noise.	A Construction Management Plan (CMP) will be produced prior to works starting to outline the mitigation measures in place to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum and appropriate noise reduction measures incorporated. The CMP will also consider the construction phasing of the Science Bridge and A4130 to minimise the impact of construction works.
Public Rights of Way	Respondents raised concerns over a lack of consideration for horse riders, through provision of bridleways and circular routes, and lack of clarify for how public rights of way integrate with proposed road network.	A WCHAR was completed for the scheme and the British Horse Society has been engaged to provide comment for consideration. It was indicated that these is little demand for equestrian use of the public rights of ways in the immediate area of the Didcot Science Bridge scheme. However, subsequent meetings it was noted that riders may still use the surrounding roads at weekends and the legality of this needed to be understood.

Didcot to Culham River Crossing

Key theme	Theme summary	Response
Traffic impact	Key comments included the displacement of traffic causing congestion elsewhere, particularly in Sutton Courtenay, Abington, at the Golden Balls roundabout, around the A415 and along the river crossing. Concerns were also raised around the lack of provision for more sustainable forms of transport. As well as the impact of rat running through neighbouring villages and noise from traffic due to the proximity of the single lane bridge to the surrounding villages.	A full Transport Assessment and traffic modelling assessment have been undertaken to assess traffic impact of the scheme. Further details can be found in the supporting Transport Assessment. The new road is forecast to take traffic away from neighbouring villages by providing a new route that is more direct and improves journey times between Didcot and Culham
Environmental	Key comments included the impact on the Appleford Gravel Pits, as well as potential loss of wildlife and plants. Respondents requested for consideration to reduce noise impacts through tree planting and improving air quality.	Detailed ecological assessments of the existing condition and proposed scenario have been undertaken to ensure any ecological impacts are mitigated. See Environmental Statement (ES) for details. Noise and air impacts have also been considered and assessed. Where the scheme results in adverse impact, mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the impact. See Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration and Chapter 9: Air Quality in the ES for details.
Cycle infrastructure	Key commented included requests for segregated cycleways on either side of the crossings and widening of cycle paths. Clarification is sought for how the proposals	Segregated footway/cycleways are proposed along the whole length of the new link road comprising of a 2.0m wide footway and 4.0m (3.0m on bridge structures) wide cycleway adjacent to the southbound carriageway. In the southern section of the new link road, through the proposed Enterprise Zone, a segregated 2.0m wide footway and 3.0m wide cycleway is also provided on the

	link NCN5 to the cycling provisions.	western side of the road. On the A415, a segregated footway and cycleway is proposed on the northern side of the carriageway towards Clifton Hampden Bypass. The scheme includes four toucan crossings and five parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings which are positioned to ensure the most appropriate routes are maintained. A bridleway is proposed to connect the new link road with the National Cycling Route 5 adjacent to Hill Farm.
Pedestrian infrastructure	Key comments included lack of controlled and signalised crossings for pedestrians, which impacts on their safety.	The proposed scheme will include traffic signal equipment at four toucan crossings, these have been positioned in such a way to maximise visibility of signals for traffic and on the most appropriate route for users of the crossing. As part of the preliminary design, five parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings have been incorporated where considered appropriate based on demand.
Bus infrastructure	Key comments included a lack of bus stops for Appleford and Sutton Courtenay junctions.	Two bus stops are proposed in this location as part of the design to support future demand for public transport.
Safety	Key comments included provision of safe crossings for WCHs under the Didcot Park railway and more bus stops and safe provisions for public transport.	A Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) report has been carried out and reviewed through the design process. Opportunities and issues were raised, considered and incorporated into the design where appropriate to provide for WCHs.
Construction	Key comments included the maintenance of the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road and rail access during construction to minimise disruption to businesses and commuters.	A Construction Management Plan (CMP) will be produced prior to works starting to outline the mitigation measures in place to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum. The scheme should not impact rail access.
Public Rights of Way	A small number of respondents raised concerns over a lack of consideration for horse riders, through provision of bridleways and circular routes, and lack of clarify for how public rights of way integrate with proposed road network.	Existing Bridleways will be maintained with improvement to the facilities. A proposed separated bridleway is proposed on the western side of the new link road from Hill Farm, continue into the realigned Portway towards the landfill and quarry area. The British Horse Society has been engaged to provide comments for consideration.

Clifton Hampden Bypass

Key theme	Theme summary	Response
Traffic impact	Key comments included the displacement of traffic causing congestion at the Golden Balls roundabout through Nuneham Courtenay and increased traffic volumes between Oxford and Didcot, and Oxford and Culham.	A full Transport Assessment and traffic modelling assessment have been undertaken to assess traffic impact of the scheme. Further details can be found in the supporting Transport Assessment.
Environmental	Key comments included noise and air quality impact as a result of the proximity of the proposed realignment to local villages, as well as impact on local wildlife and biodiversity.	Detailed ecological assessments of the existing condition and proposed scenario have been undertaken to ensure any ecological impacts are mitigated. See Environmental Statement (ES) for details.

	Respondents requested for more tree planting to mitigate these impacts.	Noise and air impacts have also been considered and assessed. Where the scheme results in adverse impact, mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the impact. See Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration and Chapter 6: Air Quality in the ES for details.
Cycle infrastructure	Key comments included a lack of uncontrolled crossings, a fully integrated cycleway between Abingdon and CHB, and insufficient consideration of underpasses for cyclist safety at the bypass.	As part of the preliminary design, parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings have been included on the section of segregated cycleway/footway between Station Road and Culham Science Centre. A toucan crossing has been provided, linking the shared use route from the Culham Science Centre access to the existing A415 access. Uncontrolled crossings have also been provided along the Bypass to retain accessibility along public rights of ways which have been impacted by the proposals.
Pedestrian infrastructure	Key comments included lack of signalised pedestrian crossings on roundabouts, resulting in safety impacts for pedestrians.	As part of the preliminary design parallel cycle-pedestrian crossings have been included on the section of segregated cycleway/footway between Station Road and Culham Science Centre. A toucan crossing has been provided, linking the shared use route from the Culham Science Centre access to the existing A415 access. Uncontrolled crossings have also been provided along the Bypass to retain accessibility along public rights of way.
Bus infrastructure	Key comments included the need for more bus stops and provision of space for bus turning.	Bus stop provision has been designed in consultation with OCC Transport and Public Transport Operators. Four stops are proposed on this scheme.
Safety	Key comments included a need for additional crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, in relation to the proximity of the road alignment to houses and a nursey.	Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) detection has been proposed due to 40mph (and over) speed limit as requested by OCC. This shall improve safety and provide a better crossing operation.
Construction	Key comments included the need for diversion routes avoiding the Air Quality Management Area of Abingdon.	As set out in the scheme opinion scoping, the study area for the air quality assessment is 2km from the Abingdon Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This AQMA is therefore not included in the air quality assessment.
Public Rights of Way	A small number of respondents raised concerns over a lack of consideration for horse riders, through provision of bridleways and circular routes, and lack of clarity for how public rights of way integrate with proposed road network.	Existing Bridleways will be maintained with new links provided when existing facilities are impacted by the scheme. A Walking, Cycling, Horse-riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) Report was completed for the scheme and the British Horse Society has been engaged to provide comment for consideration.

General package of works

Key theme	Theme summary	Response
Traffic impact	Key comments about traffic raised generally included the impact of new housing developments and ability of proposed infrastructure to cope with demand for increased traffic capacity.	The preferred four schemes have been informed by a detailed and multi-stage optioneering exercise, which considered future housing development and growth. This process included the production of an Options Appraisal Report to identify the appropriate interventions and subsequent public consultation, engineering, traffic modelling, and impact assessment work to identify the preferred alignments.
Environmental	Key concerns included how the proposals fit in with local climate policies and request for clarification on mitigation measures being implemented to protect wildlife and biodiversity.	A number of environmental surveys and investigations for the schemes have been undertaken including air quality and noise monitoring. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the four schemes will provide detailed information on how environmental factors have been taken into consideration to mitigate impacts. As part of the Environmental Statement (ES), the following plans will be included: Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan, Site Waste Management Plan, Outline Environmental Management Plan. Also see Chapter 15: Climate of the ES. The Scheme will also aim to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10% which will be calculated using the DEFRA 3.0 calculator. A BNG assessment was carried out and based on the current proposals and outlined assumptions, the Scheme is predicted to result in an overall net gain of approximately 11.11% of habitat units, 13.37% of hedgerow habitats and 1.26% linear (river) habitat units. Therefore, further habitat mitigation is required to achieve a minimum of a 10% net gain in biodiversity for river habitat units. See Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report for more information

5. Conclusion

5.1 The purpose of this SCI is to provide an overview of the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken by OCC, prior to submitting a planning application for improvements to the existing A4130 road and the development of three new roads. The four schemes being submitted as part of the application are:

- **A4130 Widening** – the dualling of the existing road between Milton Gate and the link to the new Didcot Science Bridge, with segregated walking and cycling facilities. Several new junctions into adjacent proposed developments.
- **Didcot Science Bridge** – a new single carriageway bridge over the A4130, Great Western Railway Main Line, and Milton Road, with segregated walking and cycling facilities. A new single carriageway link road through the former Didcot A Power Station site, re-joining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road north of the Purchas Road/Hawksworth roundabout with segregated walking and cycling facilities.
- **Didcot to Culham River Crossing** – providing a new road connecting the A4130 at Didcot with the A415 at Culham, including a bridge over the River Thames and another bridge over a private rail sidings, and connections to Appleford and Sutton Courtenay via the B4016, all with segregated walking and cycling facilitates.
- **Clifton Hampden Bypass** – a new relief road northwest of the village, between the A415 at Culham Science Centre and the B4015 Oxford Road, north of Clifton Hampden. A new roundabout at the western end near Culham Science Centre and Culham Rail Station, and other access junctions along the Bypass. Walking and cycling facilities segregated from the carriageway.

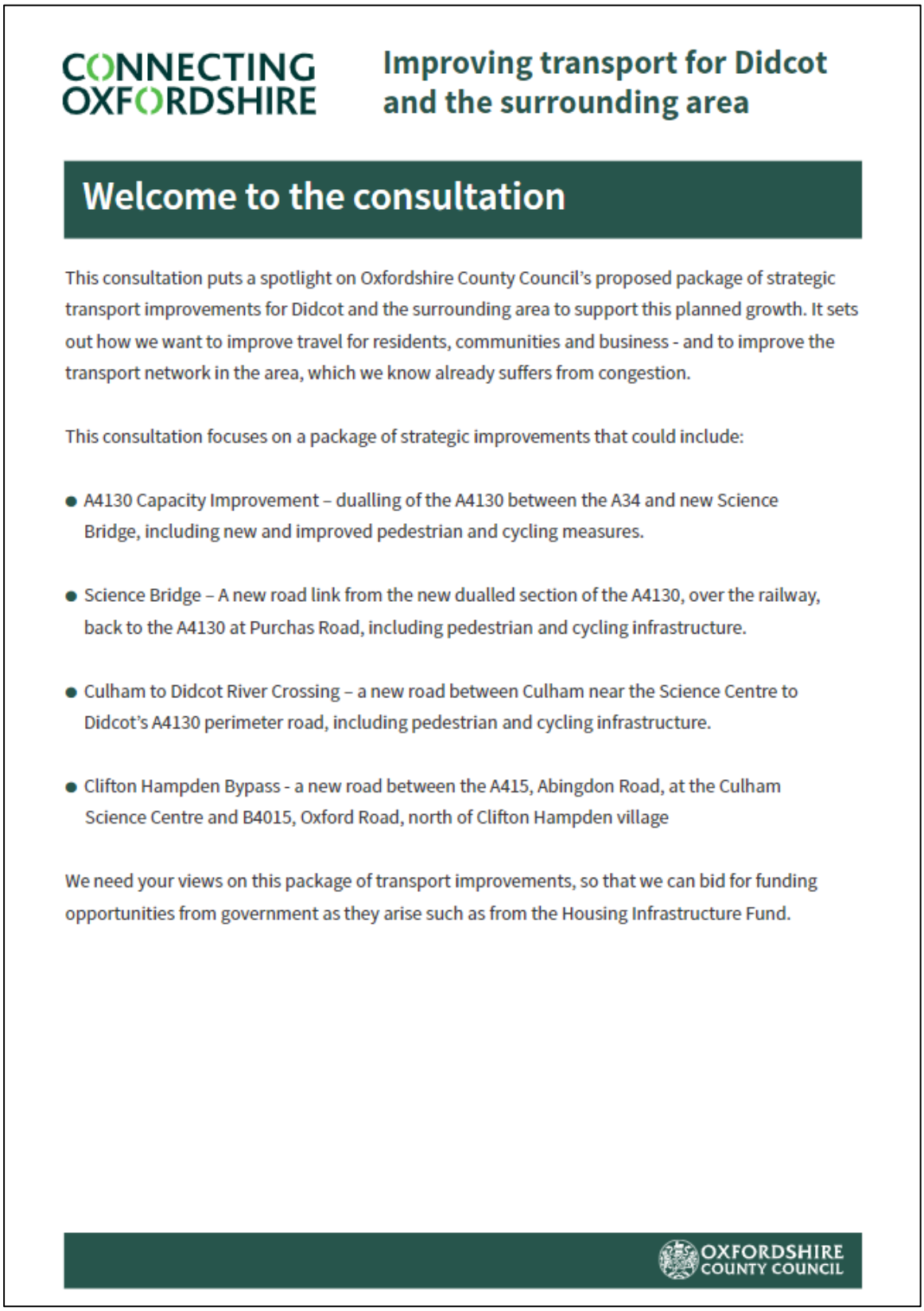
5.2 There will also be controlled crossings, landscaping, lighting, noise barriers and sustainable drainage systems.

5.3 Section 2 of the SCI provides an overview of the engagement activities carried out between 2018 and 2021. This comprised a consultation period in 2018 including online and in-person events, followed by a second consultation period in 2020 which included a virtual consultation. Both consultation periods allowed local residents to provide feedback on the proposed designs.

5.4 Section 3 provides an overview of the feedback analysis for both the 2018 and 2020 consultation periods. Feedback comments were categorised into themes which have been acknowledged and considered by the design team.

Appendices

Appendix A 2018 consultation materials



CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Welcome to the consultation

This consultation puts a spotlight on Oxfordshire County Council's proposed package of strategic transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area to support this planned growth. It sets out how we want to improve travel for residents, communities and business - and to improve the transport network in the area, which we know already suffers from congestion.

This consultation focuses on a package of strategic improvements that could include:

- A4130 Capacity Improvement – dualling of the A4130 between the A34 and new Science Bridge, including new and improved pedestrian and cycling measures.
- Science Bridge – A new road link from the new dualled section of the A4130, over the railway, back to the A4130 at Purchas Road, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- Culham to Didcot River Crossing – a new road between Culham near the Science Centre to Didcot's A4130 perimeter road, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- Clifton Hampden Bypass - a new road between the A415, Abingdon Road, at the Culham Science Centre and B4015, Oxford Road, north of Clifton Hampden village

We need your views on this package of transport improvements, so that we can bid for funding opportunities from government as they arise such as from the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

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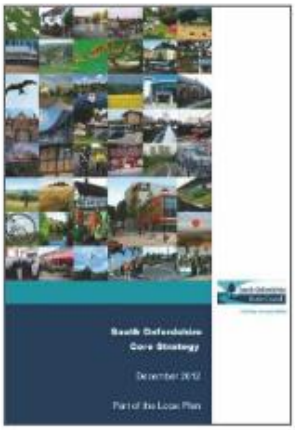
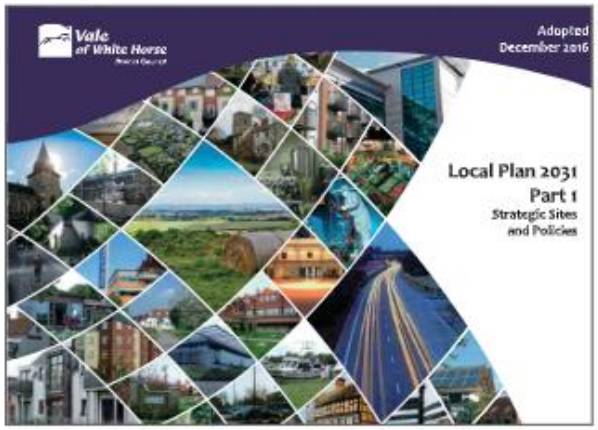
Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Planned growth

Oxfordshire is a prosperous and vibrant county, combining a thriving economy with a high-quality environment. Current forecasts are for over 85,000 new jobs and 100,000 new homes in Oxfordshire by 2031. A considerable proportion of this housing and employment growth is planned for the Didcot area through both the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plans.





Didcot was first designated as a growth area in 1979 and has been developing ever since. In 2015 the town was awarded garden town status by the government to help plan for the expected 16,000 homes due to be built over the next 20 to 25 years. In addition, the next 20 years will see 20,000 new jobs created in and around the town and the Science Vale area.

Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles

North East Didcot Masterplan

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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Why we need to improve transport

Why we need to improved transport

The road network in and around Didcot already suffers from severe congestion. The planned growth for the area will have a big effect on our roads and other transport infrastructure and lead to unacceptable levels of traffic, if intervention is not provided.

New transport infrastructure provides additional capacity on the transport network and gives the opportunity to introduce new options for sustainable movement including:

- Cycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Improved bus services and bus infrastructure
- Opportunities for Connected Autonomous Vehicles

Autonomous Vehicle

Didcot Station

Issues / Challenges

- The historic road network in Didcot and its surrounding areas is not fit for purpose with the planned growth.
- There is congestion at key points, including where new developments access the road network.
- There have been increasing impacts on the villages and their historic cores due to congestion, noise, air quality, road safety etc.
- Transport connectivity is poor with limited links making it difficult to travel between existing housing and employment sites.
- The location of railway lines create physical barriers between some housing and employment sites, including areas proposed for new development because of limited crossings, which are already reaching capacity.
- The River Thames is also a barrier with limited bridges crossing it.
- The existing river bridges at Culham and Clifton Hampden, built over 200 years ago, are no longer sufficient to deal with the volume of traffic.
- How people and goods travel is changing. Didcot is a centre for distribution meaning there are more HGVs on the transport network than in other areas, adding to congestion and delay.
- We need to plan now for all forms of travel including ones that are only just starting to be tested (e.g. autonomous vehicles.)

Clifton Hampden bridge

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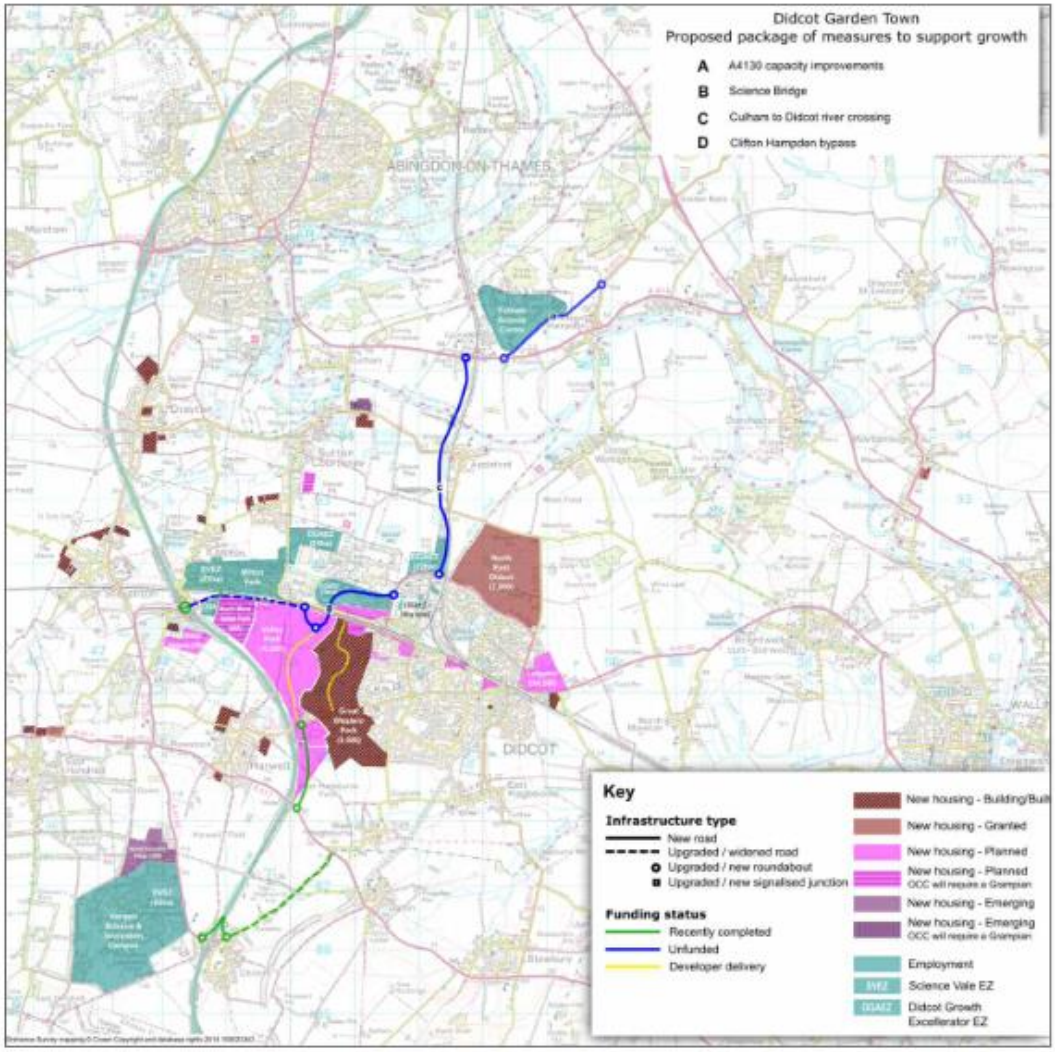
Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

We have worked with the District Council's to look at the impact of the planned growth across the Didcot area. In our *Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015 – 2031* we set out an Area Strategy for Didcot and the surrounding area called the Science Vale Strategy. This document covers both strategic transport improvement schemes as well as smaller scale infrastructure schemes and public transport improvements for the area. This document can be found at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/connectingoxfordshire

This map shows the proposed package of transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area to support planned development. The details of each of the four proposed transport improvements in the package are set-out on the following boards.

Planned development with proposed package of transport improvements schemes



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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

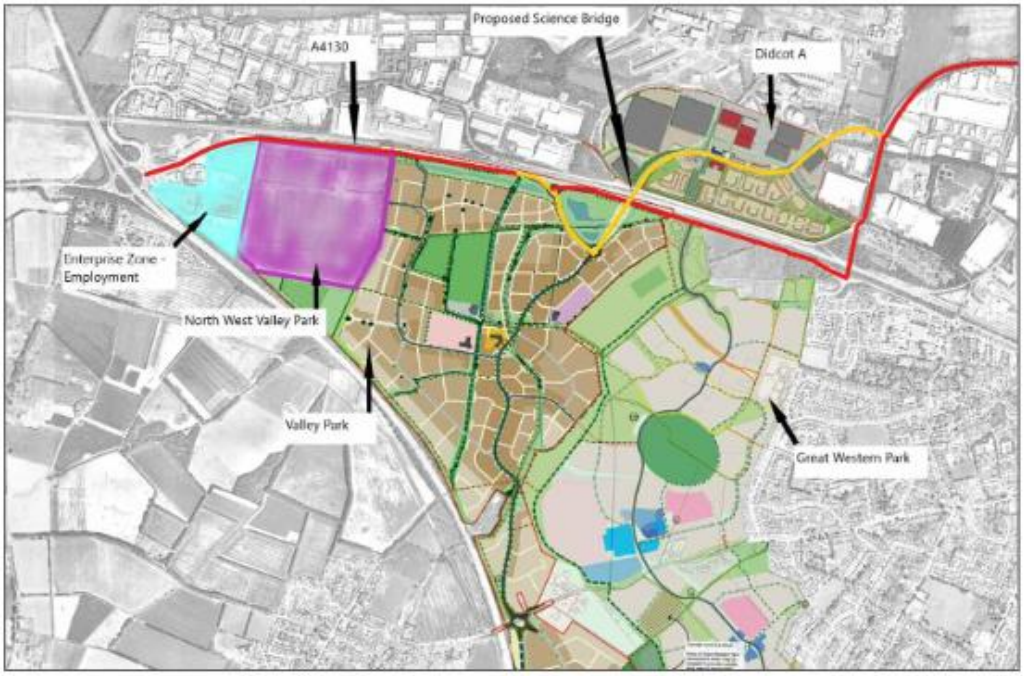
Scheme A: A4130 Capacity Improvements

What are the A4130 Capacity Improvements?

- A proposed new dual carriageway section on the A4130 between the A34 (Milton Interchange) and the new Science Bridge, so that there are two lanes in both directions.
- It will include new and improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along its length.

Why are A4130 capacity improvements needed?

- To significantly increase road capacity to meet future traffic demand and support planned growth and economic development.
- To link housing directly to employment sites, including Didcot Garden Town developments.
- To improve direct access to the A34 (Strategic Road Network).
- To improve access to Didcot Parkway Station and Didcot Town Centre.
- To improve journey time reliability for bus passengers due to increased capacity.
- To deliver new high-quality cycle paths, making it more attractive for people to cycle
- To future proof the road network for the latest ways of travel including autonomous vehicles.



Development along the A4130 corridor

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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

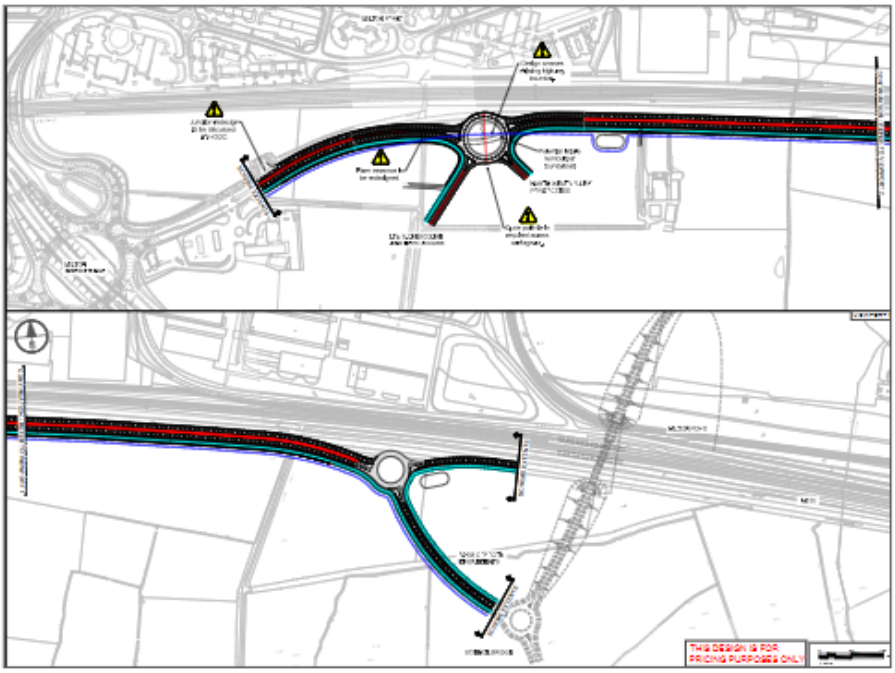
Scheme A: A4130 Capacity Improvements

Options:

The following options were all considered as part of the A4130 Capacity Improvements

Options	Pros	Cons
Introducing higher capacity/quality pedestrian/cycle lanes	• Introduce improved pedestrian and cycle access • Improved modal choice • Links housing directly to employment	• Requires land • Doesn't give additional capacity required • Doesn't offer improved bus journey times
Roundabout at Great Western Park (GWP)	• Slight capacity improvement at GWP	• Doesn't give additional capacity required • Doesn't allow for future growth
Introducing Bus only lanes	• Improved journey time reliability for bus passengers • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure • Improved modal choice • Links housing directly to employment	• Requires land • Would be same cost as dualling without the additional capacity benefits • Current bus service frequency may encourage abuse of bus lane by other motorists
Dualling (preferred option)	• Significant capacity improvement • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure • Links housing directly to employment • Increased journey time reliability for bus passengers due to increased capacity	• Requires land

Illustrative plan of A4130 Capacity Improvements (for indicative purposes only)



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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

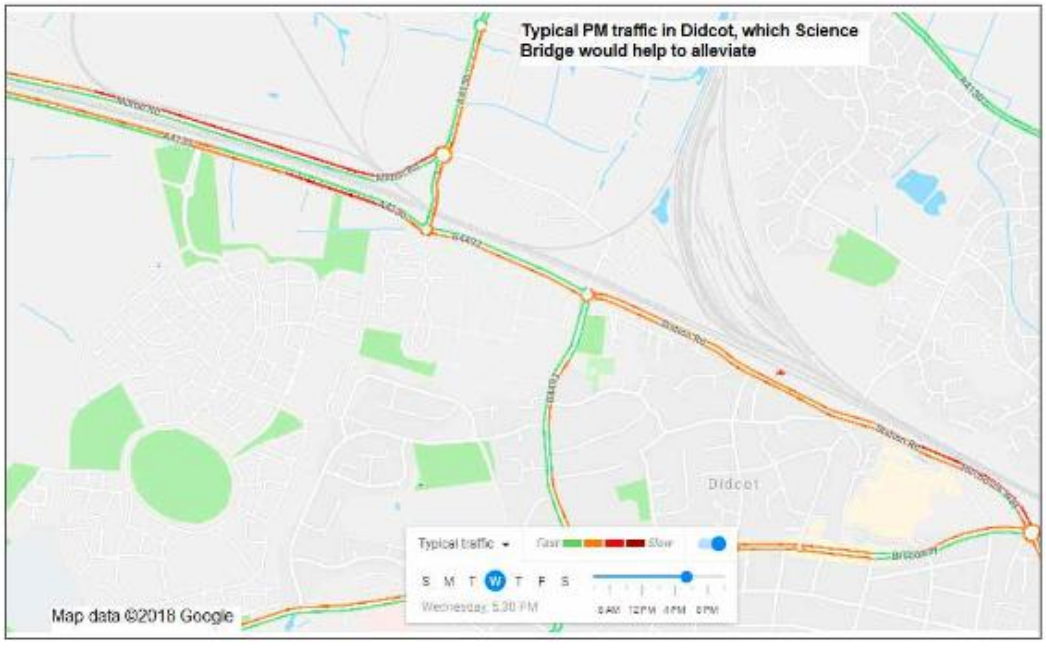
Scheme B: Science Bridge

What is Science Bridge?

- A new road link from the new dualled section of the A4130. It will:
  - Cross back over the A4130 (to the west of Great Western park)
  - Then cross the railway line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site
  - Then connect back to the A4130 at Purchas Rd Roundabout.
- Science Bridge will include pedestrian & cycle infrastructure along its length.

Why is Science Bridge needed?

- To add capacity to the transport network to aid delivery of housing in the centre and at North East Didcot.
- To encourage use of the A4130 distributor road rather than through traffic travelling through Didcot Town centre
- To aid regeneration at Didcot A site (former PowerStation).
- To support employment growth at Milton Park and the Enterprise Zones and the continued success of these important employment sites.
- To deliver new high-quality cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, making it more attractive for people to walk and cycle



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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

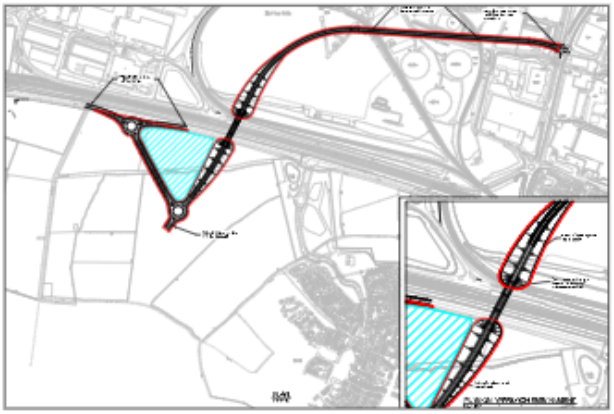
Scheme B: Science Bridge

Options:

The following options were all considered for Science Bridge.

Options	Pros	Cons
Alignment A (next to Manor Bridge)	• Introduce improved pedestrian and cycle access across at this location	• Expensive due to additional dualling and Rail crossing • Doesn't give additional road capacity • Doesn't help reduce congestion at GWP • Would require land with properties on • Difficult to deliver in engineering terms • Additional dualling would be required - causing further delay when constructing
Roundabout at Great Western Park (GWP)	• Slight road capacity improvement on A4130 at GWP access	• Doesn't give additional road capacity • Doesn't allow for future planned growth
Alignment B	• Introduce improved pedestrian and cycle access across the bridge	• Expensive due to rail & road crossing need • Would tie-in on the south at GWP junction – not enough space to achieve this alignment • Would reduce the developable space of Didcot A development – potentially making it unviable
Alignment C (preferred option)	• Significant road capacity improvement • Reduction in congestion within the Town Centre and Station Rd • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure • Links housing directly to employment • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle • Much of land already secured through existing developments • Can predominantly be built off-line (away from the current road network) – reducing impact on current road network	• Expensive due to rail & road crossing need

Illustrative Plan of Science Bridge: (this plan is for indicative purposes only)



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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Scheme C: Culham to Didcot River Crossing

What is the Culham to Didcot River Crossing?

- A new road crossing the River Thames between Culham (near the Culham Science Centre) and Didcot (to The A4130 Northern Perimeter Road).
- It will include pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along its length.

Why is the Culham to Didcot River Crossing needed?

- There is already severe congestion at the two pre-existing historic bridges in the area, with limited other river Thames crossing opportunities.
- To help deliver planned growth and economic development and mitigate its impact on the existing road transport network.
- To create additional capacity for north/south trips and to offer an alternative route to the A34, between Oxford and Didcot.
- To create strong linkages between Didcot and employment sites located at Culham Science Centre, Milton Park and Harwell Campus.
- To introduce high quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.

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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Scheme C: Culham to Didcot River Crossing

Options:

The following options were all considered for Culham to Didcot River Crossing:

Options	Pros	Cons
Brightwell Scheme Alignment 5	• Lowest costs as shortest length of new road	• Doesn't give required additional road capacity • Not an attractive alternative – too far for vehicles to divert • Partly in Green Belt
Widening A34	• Slight road capacity improvement on A34 in Didcot the area	• Expensive as significant current structures need alteration • Highways England National Route (also European Route E05) – not appropriate to take significant amounts of localised traffic • Partly in Green Belt
Alignment 2	• Joins directly to the Clifton Hampden Bypass at Culham Science Centre • Provides additional road capacity to alleviate existing congestion issues	• Directly passes through a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the south of the River Thames • Passes close to the village of Appleford • Potential tie-in issues at the northern end with Culham Science Centre and Clifton Hampden bypass (may require significant land)
Alignment 3	• Provides additional road capacity to alleviate existing congestion issues • Joins directly to the Clifton Hampden Bypass at Culham Science Centre • Passes but does not directly affect any Scheduled Ancient Monuments	• Potential tie-in issues at the northern end with Culham Science Centre and Clifton Hampden bypass (may require significant land) Partly in Green Belt • Requires widening of the B4016, Lady Grove
Alignment 4	• Provides additional road capacity to alleviate existing congestion issues.	• Direct impact on Long Wittenham Conservation Area • Partly in Green Belt • Requires widening of the B4016, Lady Grove
Alignment 1 (preferred option)	• Provides additional road capacity to alleviate existing congestion issues • Directly links employment sites at Culham and Enterprise Zones in Didcot	• Possible impact on the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument to north of the River Thames • Partly in Green Belt

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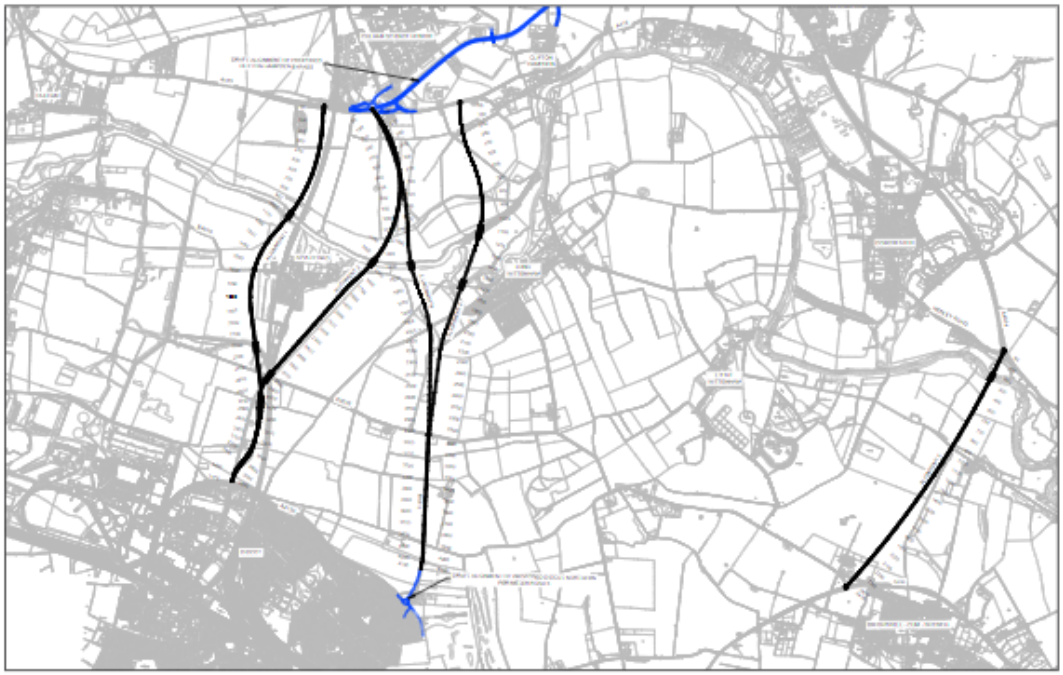
Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Scheme C: Culham to Didcot river crossing

Plan of alignments considered for Culham to Didcot River Crossing: (plan is for indicative purposes only)



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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass

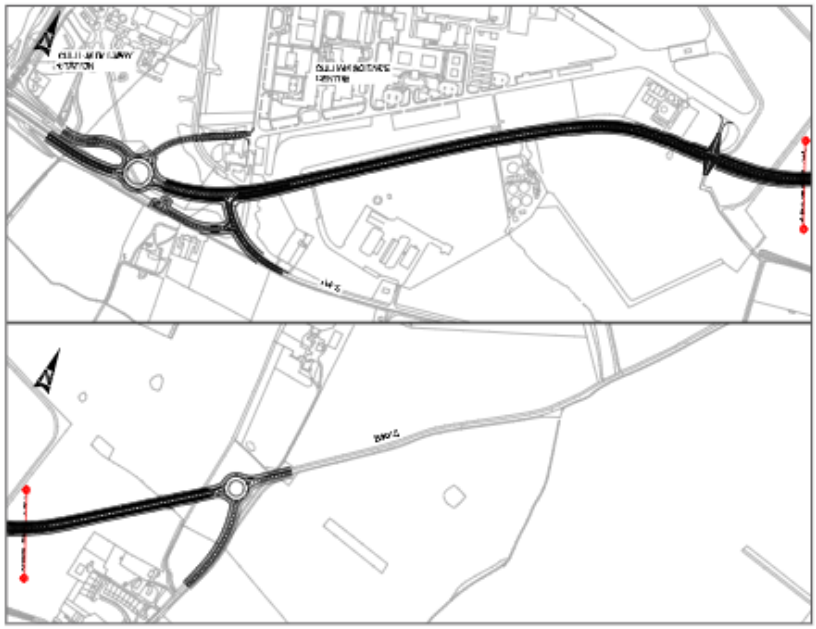
What is the Clifton Hampden Bypass?

- A new road stretching between the A415 Abingdon Road (at Culham Science Centre) and the B4015, Oxford Road (north of the Village).
- It will include pedestrian & cycle infrastructure along its length.

Why is the Clifton Hampden Bypass needed?

- To reduce traffic through the staggered junction, greatly helping to ease traffic congestion in the village, whilst improving access across the area.
- To link to the proposed Culham to Didcot River Crossing which aims to introduce a new bridge across the Thames to alleviate the highly congested historic bridges currently located there.
- To help deliver planned growth and economic development.

Illustrative plan of Clifton Hampden Bypass (the plan is for indicative purposes only)



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CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Options:

The following options were considered for Clifton Hampden Bypass.

Options	Pros	Cons
Change Signal Timings	• Low cost	• Doesn't give additional road capacity • Could cause gridlock if traffic backs up on to Clifton Hampden Bridge
Localised widening at the staggered junction	• Slight road capacity improvement	• Reduces pedestrian access • Would require additional land from residential gardens • Doesn't give additional road capacity required
Southern Bypass	• Slight road capacity improvement • Reduction in traffic through Clifton Hampden village • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure	• Expensive due to river crossing requirement • Not optimal capacity improvement due to south flow not being the main flow. • Increases traffic through Long Wittenham • Potentially within Green Belt • Additional noise for residents near the bypass route
Northern Bypass (preferred option)	• Significant road capacity improvement in the area. • Reduction in traffic through Clifton Hampden village • Links to proposed Culham river Crossing scheme to allow direct access to housing and employment • Helps facilitate planned growth in the area • Opportunity for improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure	• Substantial land required • Built within Green Belt Additional noise for residents near the bypass route

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area

Next steps

Thank you for coming to the exhibition.

Have your say:

Please give us your views on the proposed package of transport improvements to support planned development in Didcot and the surrounding area.

- Fill in a copy of the consultation feedback form that is available at this exhibition and post it in the box provided

or

- View a copy of the plans and fill in the online form at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

The closing date for comments is Sunday 25th November 2018 at 11:55pm.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Feedback Form

Improving transport in Didcot and the surrounding area

1. Please tick one of the following that best describe the capacity you are completing this questionnaire in:

☐ As an individual

☐ As a representative of a business/group/organisation.
Please give the name of the business/group/organisation you represent

☐ As a Councillor (Parish/Town/District/County)
Please give your name and the area(s) you represent

☐ Rather not say

2. Do you live and/or work in Didcot or the surrounding area?

☐ Live in Didcot

☐ Live in surrounding

☐ Work in Didcot

☐ Work in surrounding area

☐ None of the above

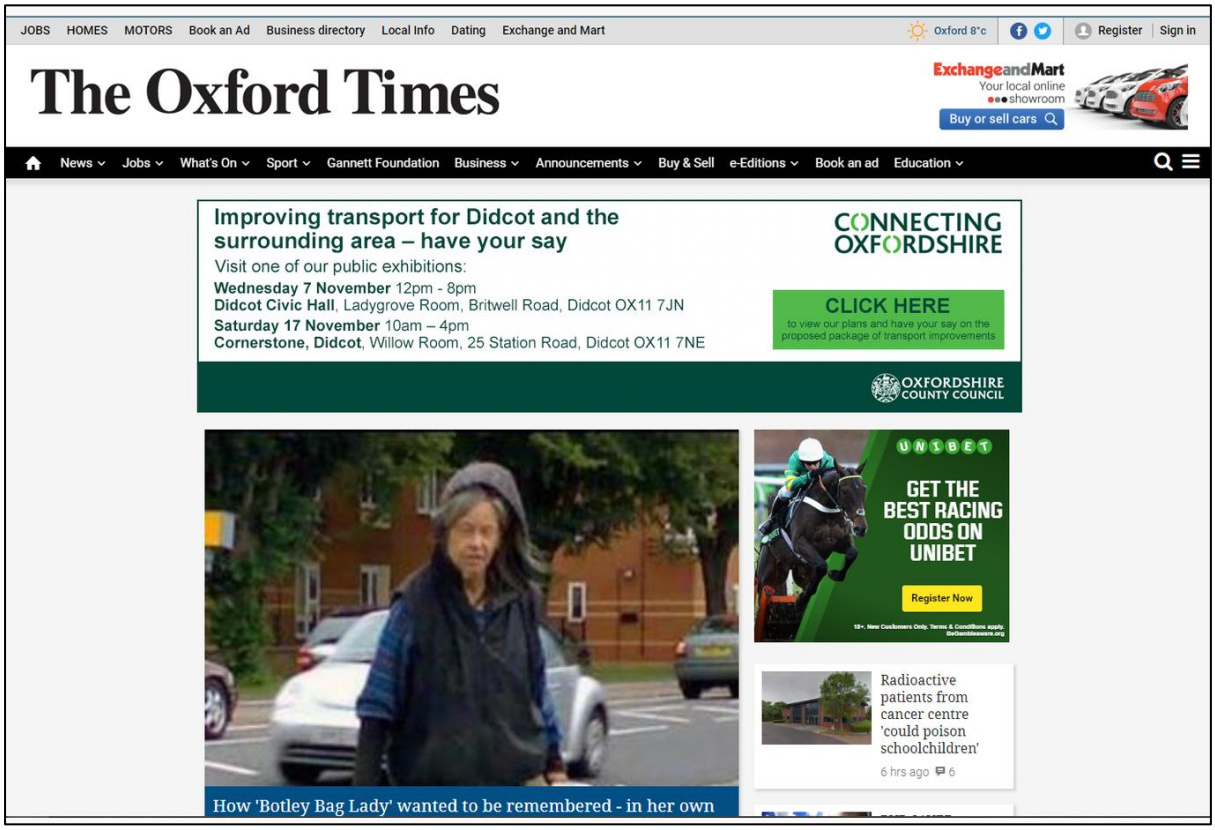
☐ Prefer not to say

3. Please give the first 5 digits of your postcode e.g. OX11 6.

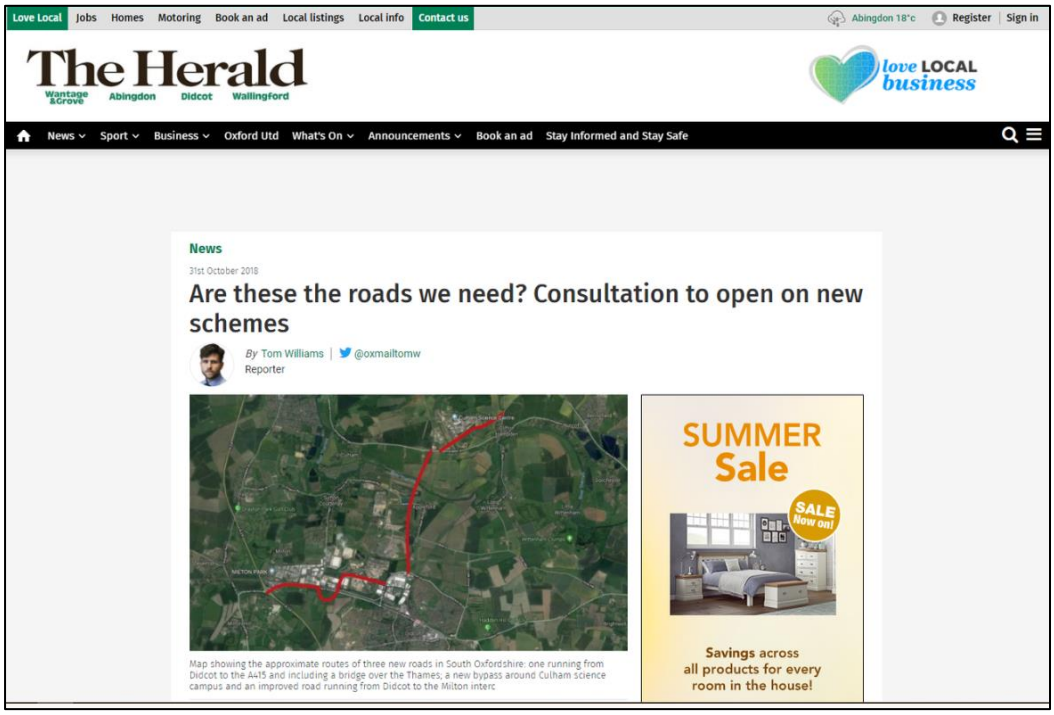
4. Do you have any comments on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area to support planned growth?

Appendix B 2018 consultation poster

Appendix C Oxford Times online advertisement



Appendix D 2018 consultation news stories published on The Herald and OCC websites



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The Herald
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News

31st October 2018

Are these the roads we need? Consultation to open on new schemes

By Tom Williams | @oxmailtomw
Reporter

Map showing the approximate routes of three new roads in South Oxfordshire: one running from Didcot to the A415 and including a bridge over the Thames; a new bypass around Culham science campus and an improved road running from Didcot to the Milton interc

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Home > Business > News from Oxfordshire County Council > Didcot transport plans online now and set for public exhibitions - have your say

02 November 2018

Didcot transport plans online now and set for public exhibitions - have your say

Share this release

Didcot transport plans online now and set for public exhibitions - have your say

share

Social media

Local people are being asked to give their view on a package of proposed measures aimed at improving future transport provision in and around Didcot.

Oxfordshire County Council is consulting on initiatives that will be put forward as part of a Government bid for funding under the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

Significant growth and employment ahead

There is significant housing and employment growth for Didcot and the area through the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire district council local plans. However the road network in the area already suffers from congestion and without action there will be unacceptable levels of traffic seeking to use this already constrained transport system.

In order to increase capacity the county council has drawn up options that could include:

- A4130 Capacity Improvement – dualling of the A4130 between the A34 and new Science Bridge, new and improved pedestrian and cycling measures
- Science Bridge – A new road link from the new dualled section of the A4130 back to the A4130 at Purchas Road, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure
- Culham River Crossing – a new road between Culham near the science centre to Didcot's A4130 perimeter road.
- Clifton Hampden Bypass- a new road between the A415 Abingdon Road at the science centre and B4105 Oxford Road north of the village

Thriving communities need better transport systems

Susan Halliwell, Oxfordshire County Council's Director for Planning and Place, said: "Didcot is a thriving community and growing town. It and the surrounding area is playing a big part in Oxfordshire's current and future economic success. However, with this comes challenges.

"The current road network in the Didcot area is no longer fit for purpose. Links between housing and employment are limited mainly due to the River Thames and railway lines.

"The package of potential improvements that we are hoping to put forward for government funding look to address current and future transport needs."

Have your say

There will be two public exhibitions where you can find out more and give feedback on the proposals:

Wednesday 7 November

12pm - 8pm

Didcot Civic Hall

Ladygrove Room

Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JN

Saturday 17 November

10am – 4pm

Cornerstone, Didcot

Willow Room

25 Station Road, Didcot, OX11 7NE

You can also view the plans and have your say online from 2 November via www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot - the consultation ends on 25 November 2018.

Appendix E 2020 consultation materials

CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

1

Welcome to the consultation

In March 2019 Government announced that Oxfordshire County Council's bid for £218 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) was successful. This is towards the £234 million cost of the infrastructure package for Didcot and surrounding areas, as shown on the map to the right. Although the funding for the transport improvements has been announced, Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the final stages of negotiating the details of the funding agreement with Government.

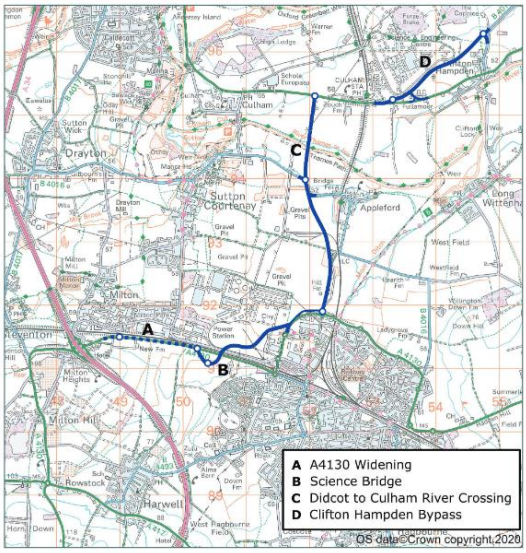
We have undertaken feasibility design work, leading to updated designs. The schemes are a mixture of improving existing roads and building new roads, all with high quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. These schemes are:

A. A4130 Widening
B. Science Bridge
C. Didcot to Culham River Crossing
D. Clifton Hampden Bypass

We are now sharing with you the latest scheme designs and asking for your comments, so we can consider them in later stages of design.

As part of this consultation, public exhibitions were planned across various locations in the local area over the last two weeks in March. Unfortunately, due to the advice from Government with respect to Coronavirus (COVID-19) these have been cancelled.

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and you think would be interested in this consultation, we would appreciate your help in telling them about it. They can call us on: 07392 318945 or 07833 401067 to discuss the proposals and request printed copies of the consultation materials.



Scheme location plan

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

2

Policies and Previous Consultations

Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan

The Local Transport Plan was agreed by full council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year.

It includes these schemes as specific proposals:

"SV 2.6 Delivering Science Bridge and widening of A4130 to provide relief to Manor Bridge and support/ enable development in the area including Didcot A, NE Didcot, Valley Park and NW Valley Park."

"SV 2.13 Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre (CSC) Phase 1 (new road from CSC entrance to the B4015 north of Clifton Hampden) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC."

"SV 2.16 Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre (CSC) Phase 2 - new river crossing (between Didcot and CSC) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC. This scheme also increases capacity for north/south movements across southern Oxfordshire and reduces pressure on the A34, whilst increasing network resilience across the Thames floodplain."

November 2018 Consultation and Public Exhibitions

Oxfordshire County Council held a consultation and public exhibitions to describe the need for these schemes, explain other options that were considered but discounted, and to show early indicative plans of the schemes. 307 responses were received.

All information is available here:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

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CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

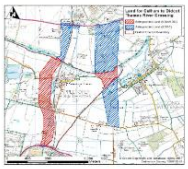
3

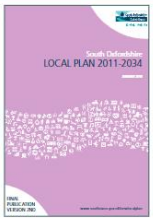
Policies and Previous Consultations

Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031

Part 1 and Part 2 (adopted)

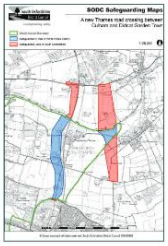
These Local Plans include policies to safeguard land for future transport schemes, as seen in these maps. Local Plan Part 2 refined the River Crossing safeguarding, as seen in the amended map.





South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2034 (submitted for examination)

This submitted Local Plan proposes policies to safeguard land for future transport schemes, as seen in these maps. This Local Plan has not yet been examined and subsequently adopted, therefore these are not adopted policy as of March 2020.



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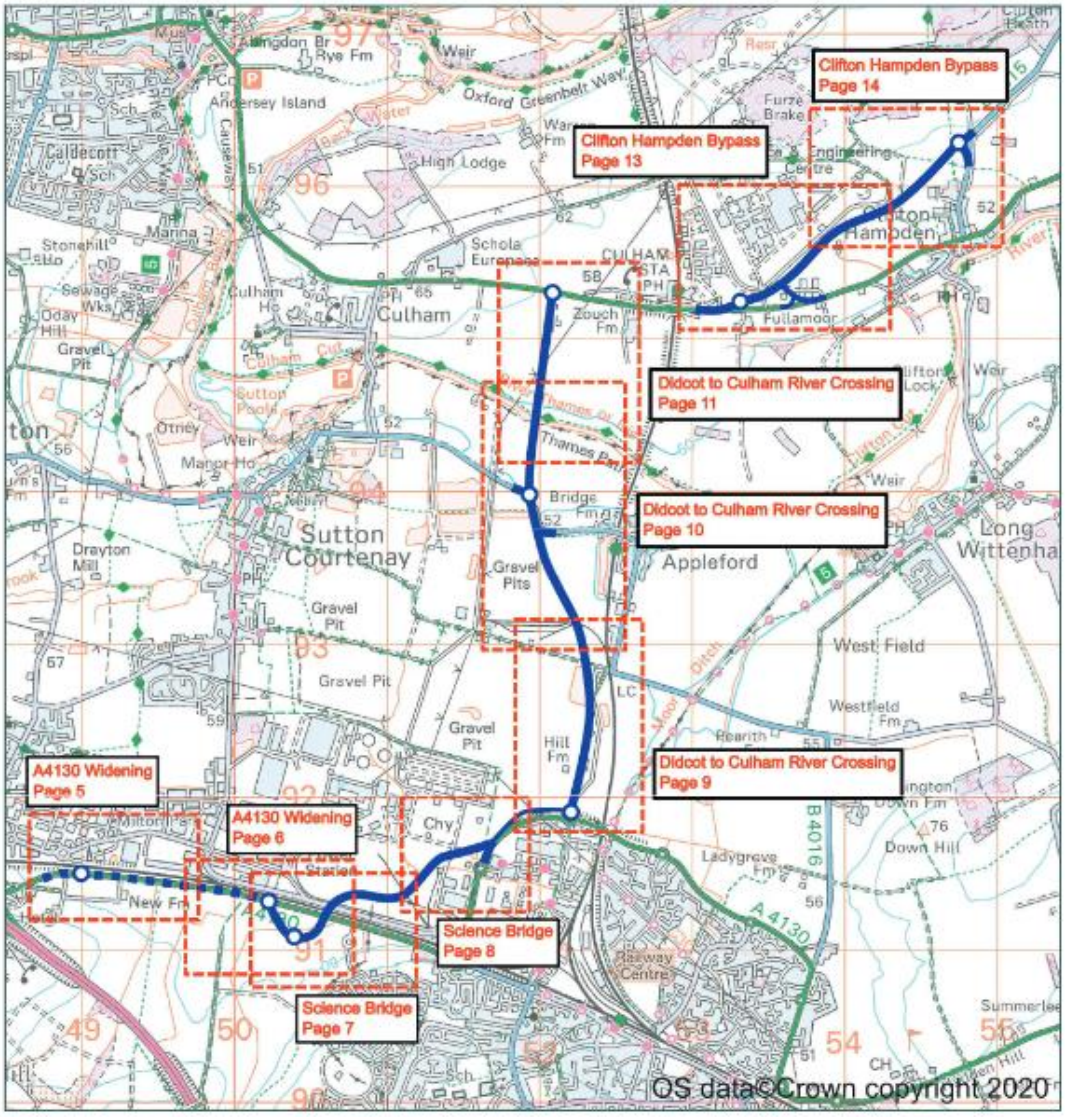
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

4

Indicative scheme plans

The following pages show the latest scheme designs for you to comment on. This map shows on which page each of the indicative scheme plans can be found.



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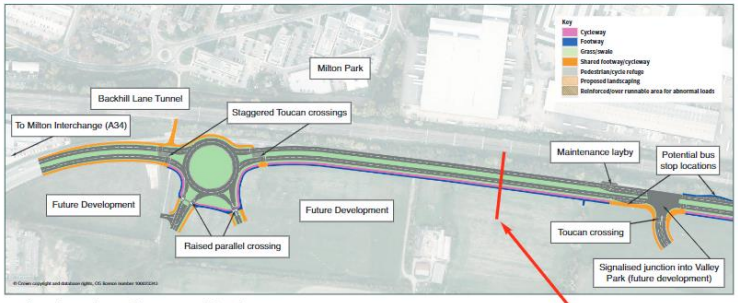
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

5

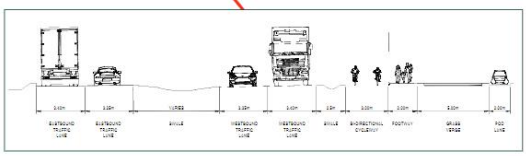
Scheme A: A4130 Widening



Indicative plan of A4130 Widening

Artist's impression

Indicative cross-section



Note: the potential for the autonomous (self-driving) pod lane is to be considered in the next stages of design to future-proof the proposals.

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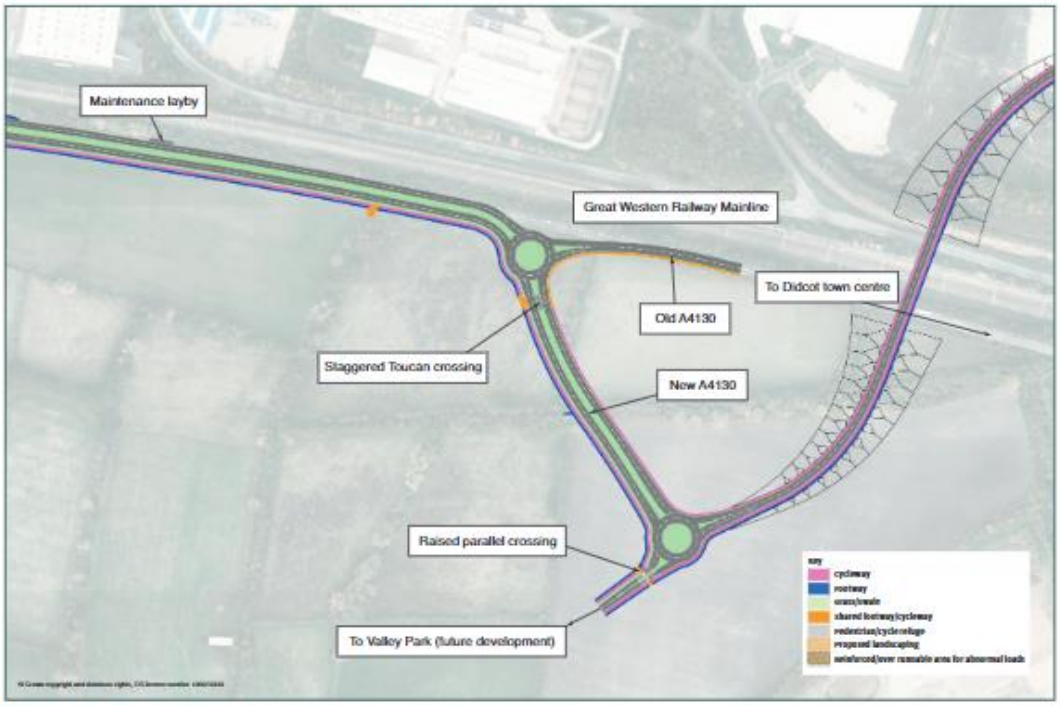
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

6

Scheme A: A4130 Widening



Indicative plan of A4130 Widening

Artist's impression

1 of 1

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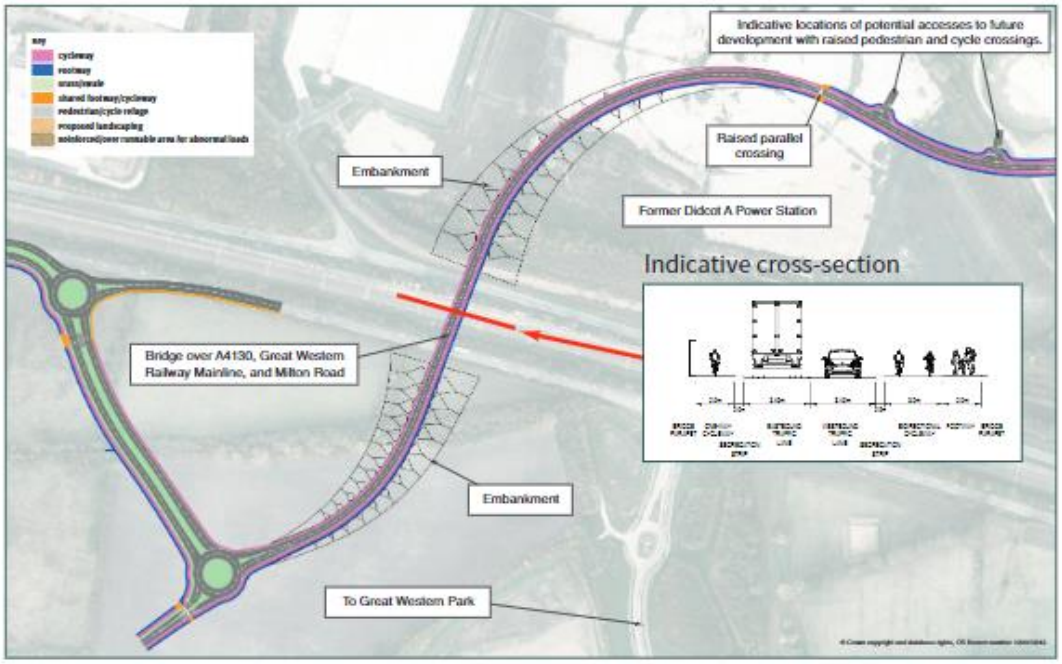
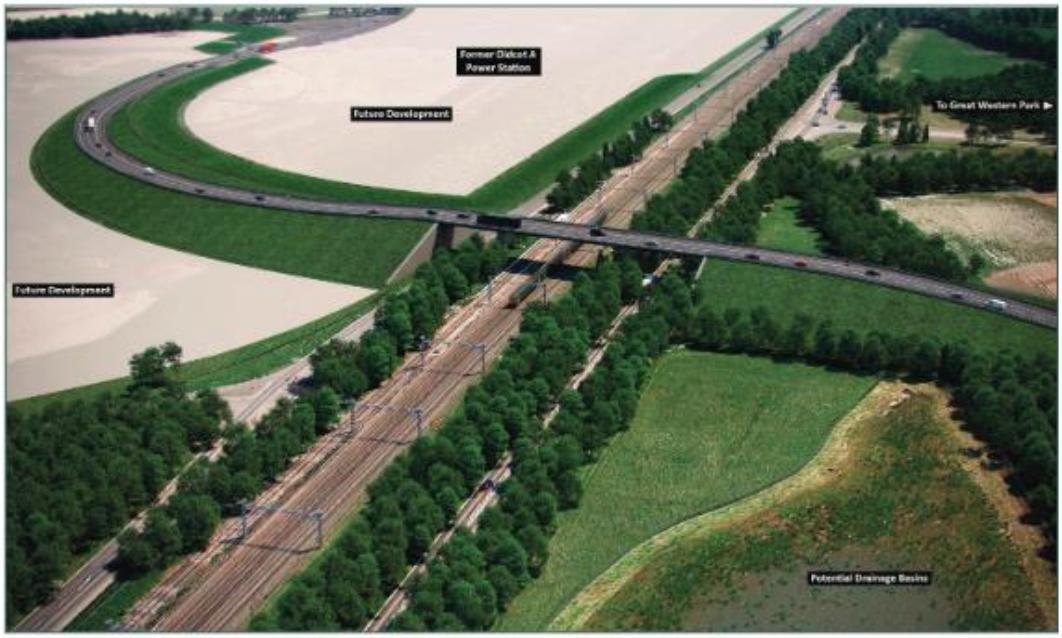
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

7

Scheme B: Science Bridge



Indicative plan of Didcot Science Bridge



Artist's impression

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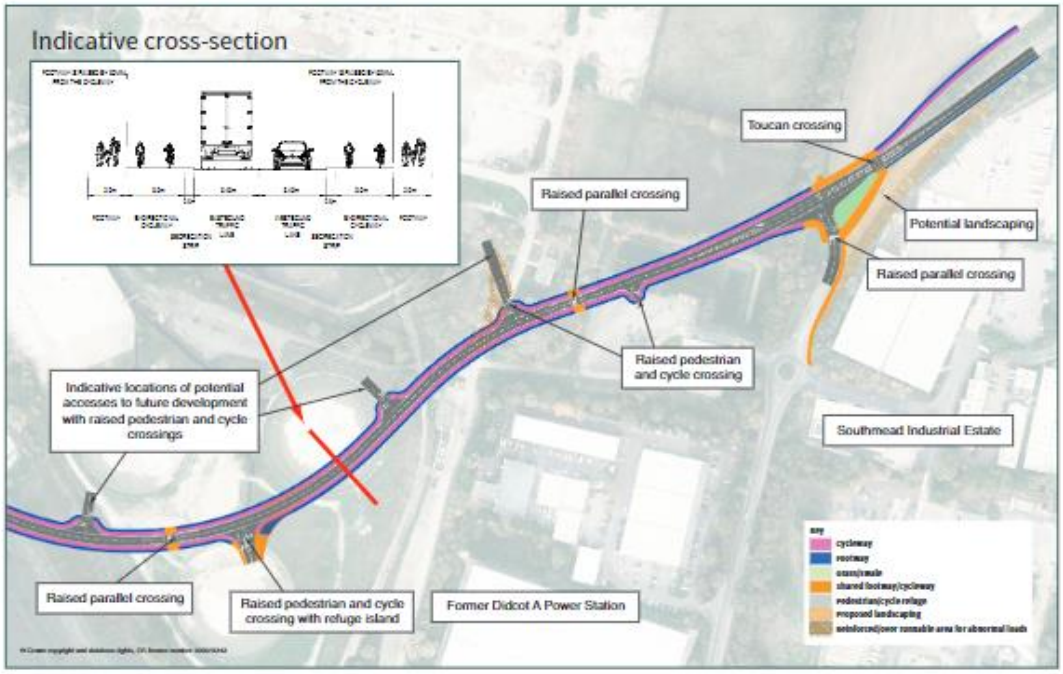
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

8

Scheme B: Science Bridge



Indicative plan of Didcot Science Bridge

Artist's impression

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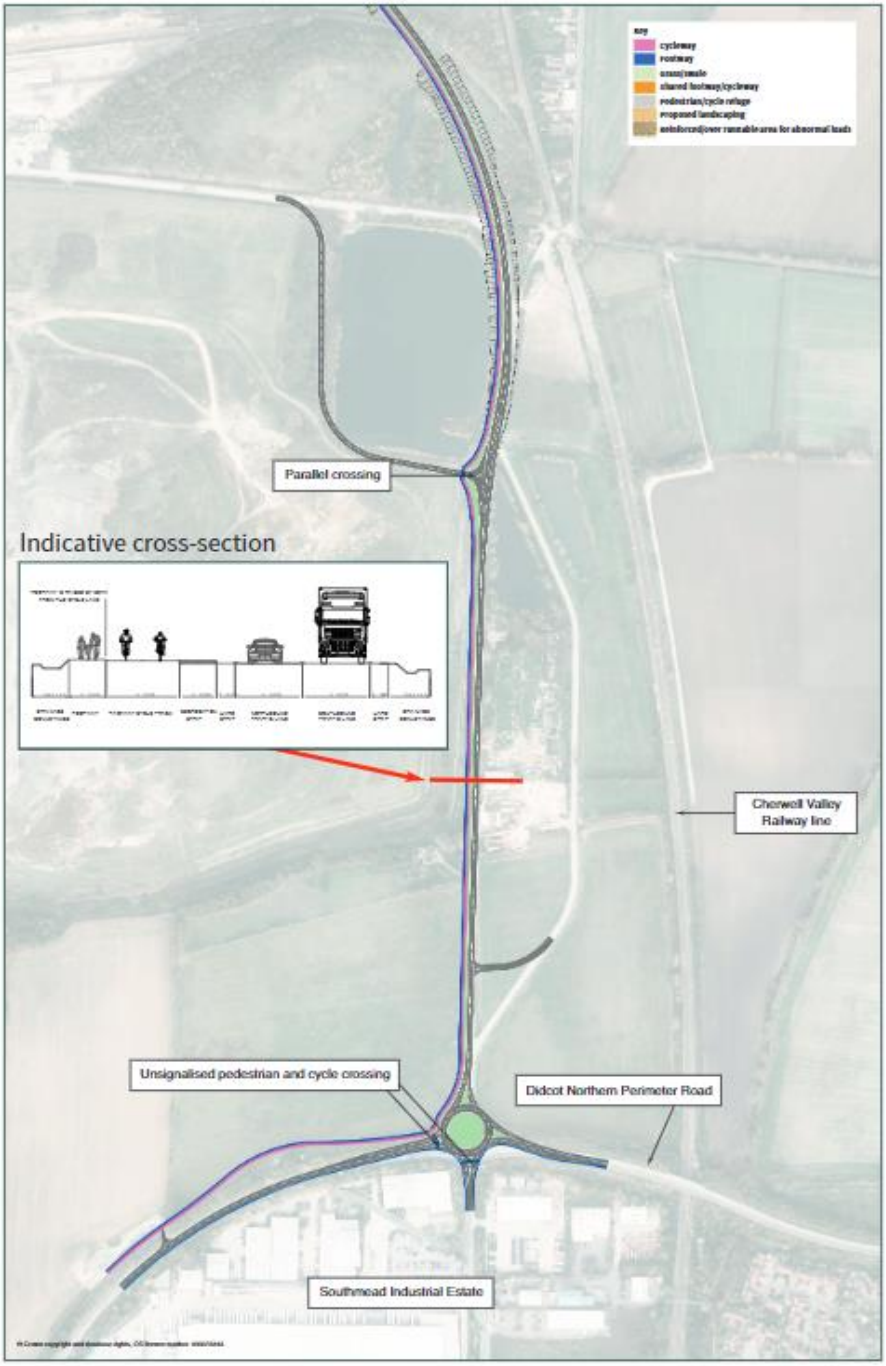
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

9

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

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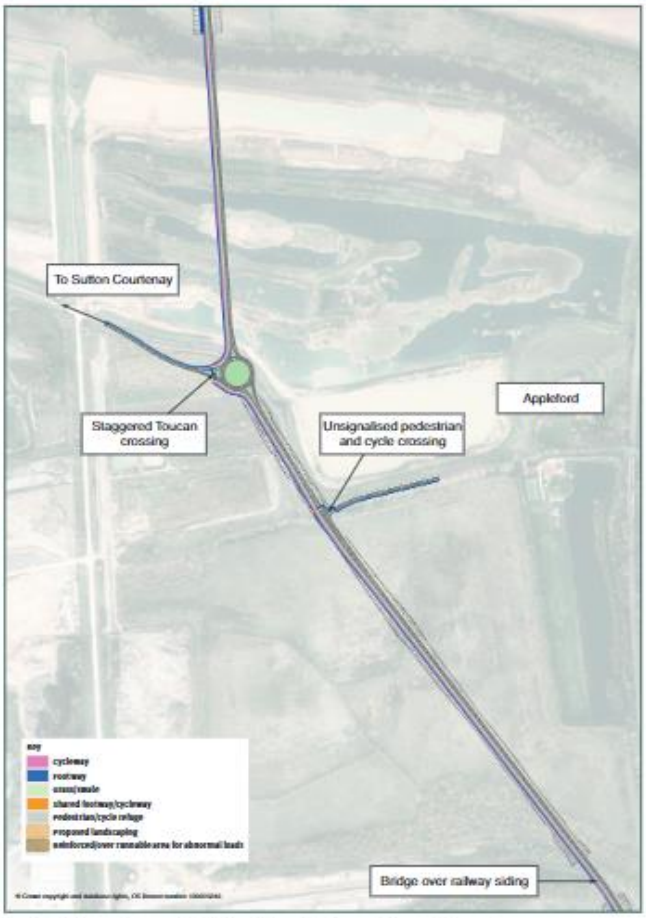
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

10

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

Artist's impression

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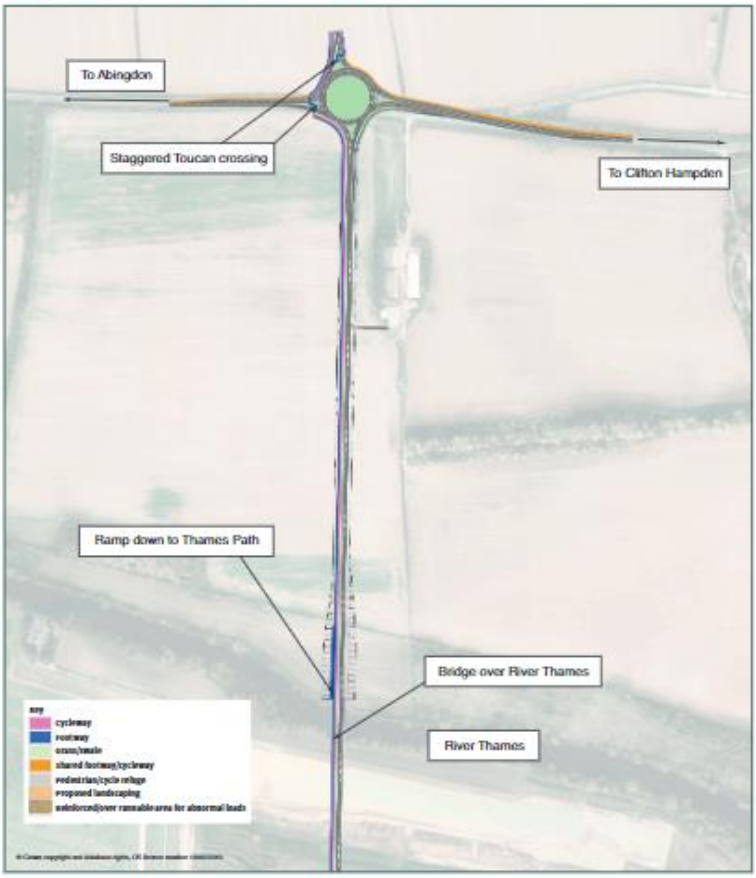
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

11

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

Artist's impression

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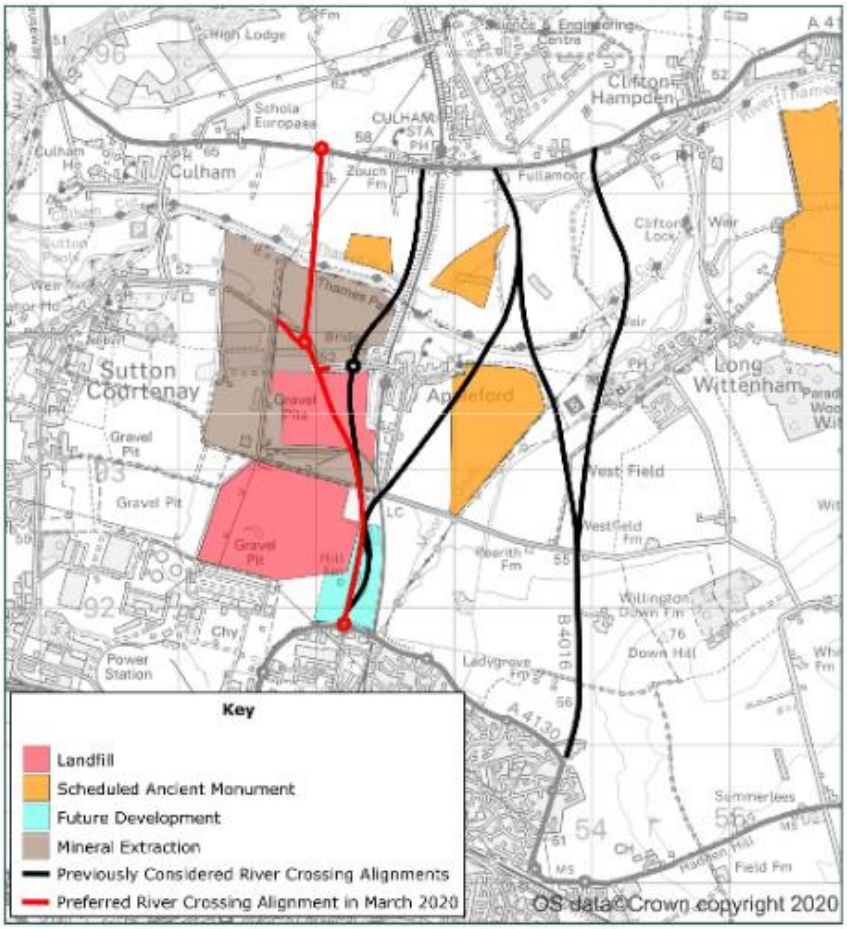
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

12

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing – Overview of alignments considered



Plan illustrating some of the River Crossing alignment options considered

The black lines show some of the previously considered river crossing alignments. Additional information is available in the November 2018 consultation **www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot**

To address comments received from the above consultation and following further design work, a new preferred alignment has been identified, in red:

- It is further from residential properties
- It is further from Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- It utilises old mineral extraction and landfill areas for a significant proportion of the route, minimising the impact on agricultural land
- Traffic modelling, which predicts the likely road network performance in future years, shows the latest alignment performs better than others due to the larger distance between the northern roundabout and the proposed Clifton Hampden Bypass A415 roundabout
- Better serves future development sites e.g. Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone (blue on map)

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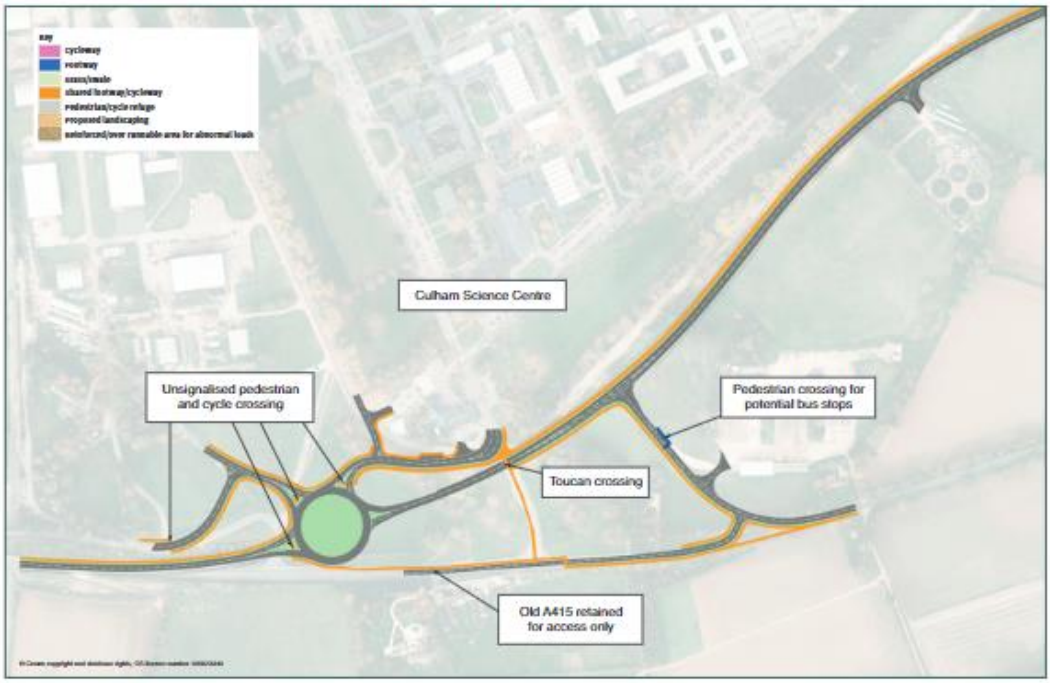
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

13

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass



Indicative plan of Clifton Hampden Bypass

Artist's impression

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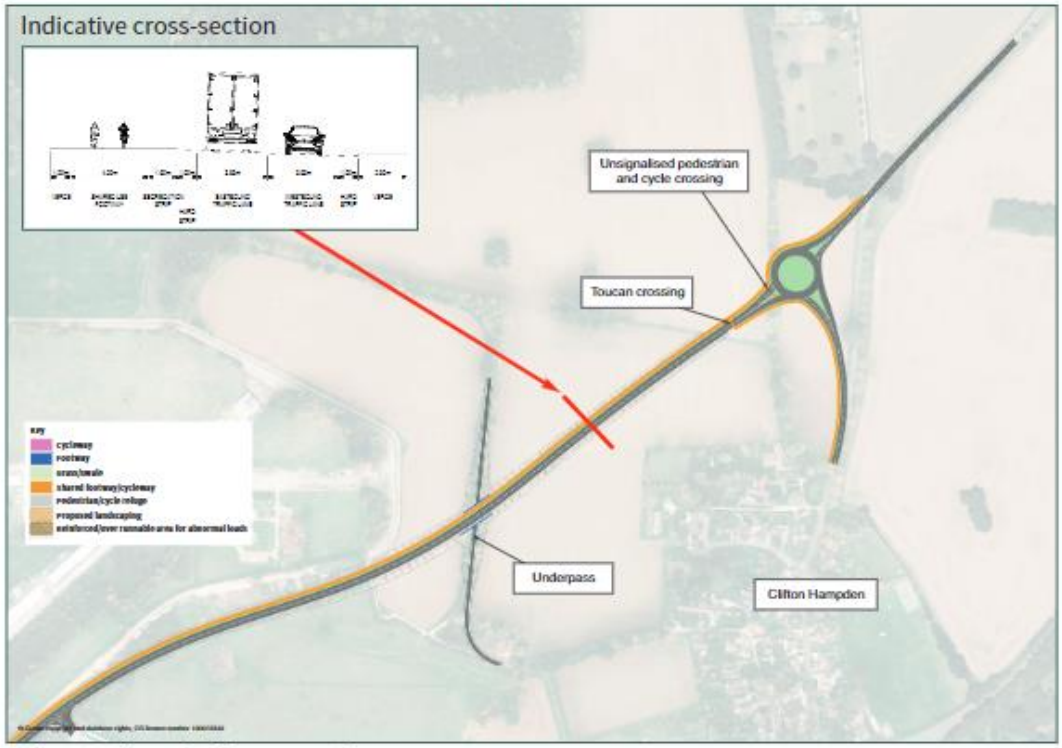
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

14

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass



Indicative plan of Clifton Hampden Bypass

Artist's impression

1 of 1

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Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

15

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass - Overview of alignments considered

Multiple options were considered for this section of the network including (but not limited to):

- Changing the traffic signal timings at existing staggered junction
- Localised widening at existing staggered junction
- Southern bypass

Further information is available in the November 2018 consultation
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

A northern bypass was determined to be the preferred option as it was the only one to deliver satisfactory road network performance in future years. Through the latest design work we have investigated different alignment options to move the bypass further away from residential properties.

- Green: Previous alignment
- Red: Further from properties but does not meet Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards
- Blue: The new preferred alignment which is further from properties whilst still meeting DMRB standards

Plan showing alignment options considered for Clifton Hampden Bypass

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

16

Have Your Say

Thank you for viewing the online consultation.

Please share your views on the proposed schemes with us by filling in the online form at:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcotupdate

The closing date for comments is **Thursday 30 April 2020 at 11:59pm**

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these proposals please email us at:
HIF1project@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Or call us on:
07392 318945 or **07833 401067**

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and you think would be interested in this consultation, we would appreciate your help in telling them about it. They can call us on the telephone numbers above to discuss the proposals and request printed copies of the consultation materials.

Next Steps

Next stages of scheme design, to be informed by the comments received in this consultation and further survey work (including environmental, ecological, and archaeological)	Ongoing
Planning application submission including statutory consultation	Winter 2021
Compulsory Purchase Order submission	Spring 2021
Construction start	Summer 2022
Open to traffic	Spring 2024

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Frequently Asked Questions

This document will be updated throughout the consultation to include new frequently asked questions as we receive them.

Date of this version: 24.04.2020

What are you asking me to comment on and why?
We are now sharing with you the latest scheme designs and asking for your comments, so we can consider them in later stages of design. We welcome all relevant comments on any aspects of the scheme designs, hence the open-ended questions on the feedback form.

In order to meet the funding terms set by Government we have to soon move into the next stage of scheme design, therefore if we do not consult now it will be too late to incorporate comments into the schemes. This consultation follows a previous consultation and public exhibition in November 2018. The principle of the schemes and land safeguarding for them has also formed part of the consultation processes associated with the adopted Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, the adopted Vale of White Horse District Council's Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2, and the submitted for examination South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan 2011-2034.

Why is the consultation only happening online?
As a result of Government restrictions on social distancing in response to COVID-19, it was unfortunately not possible to hold the five public exhibitions that were scheduled for the last two weeks of March 2020. Due to the very tight timescales imposed by Government with respect to the terms of the funding (via the Housing Infrastructure Fund), it was necessary to continue with an online consultation in order to avoid delay to the project programme. When the planning application for the schemes is submitted, statutory consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable planning legislation. There will also be ongoing liaison with key stakeholders and statutory bodies as the schemes progress as well as further non-statutory public consultations / exhibitions.

In light of the COVID-19 related restrictions on social distancing, what have you done to ensure local people can respond to the consultation?
This consultation was originally planned to last 4 weeks, which is usual for a non-statutory consultation such as this, but this duration was extended to 6 weeks to allow people more time to respond.

We are going above and beyond the usual steps taken in a non-statutory consultation; we are doing everything we can to reach as many people as we can in this unprecedented time, including:

- Sending letters to over 22,000 residences in the area
- Using an innovative virtual exhibition room with live chat function (we are the first council in the world to use this particular platform)
- Including phone numbers on all correspondence for people to call
- Directly contacting landowners with whom we have already been dealing
- Newspaper adverts in print (published each week during the consultation period)
- Newspaper adverts online (throughout the consultation period)
- Radio adverts (throughout the consultation period)
- OCC Facebook (17,800 people 'like' the OCC Facebook page)
- OCC Twitter (42,000 followers)
- OCC website
- Directly contacting OCC Councillors
- Directly contacting District Councillors

- Directly contacting Parish Councils
- Directly contacting major employment sites and asking them to disseminate to staff
- Sending printed versions of the materials to those who request them due to lack of internet access
- Extending the consultation – the usual period would be 3-4 weeks whereas this was for 6 weeks

How are you reaching people without access to the internet?
According to the Office for National Statistics, 93% of households had access to internet in 2019, therefore the vast majority of people should be able to access the online consultation. However, we want to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved so we are also trying to reach people without internet, whilst adhering to Government's instructions regarding COVID-19:

- We are sending letters to over 22,000 residential properties in the area, which includes a telephone number for people to call
- Letters have been sent to all landowners with whom we have been in previous contact regarding land access for surveys
- Radio adverts about the consultation, including a telephone number for people to call
- Printed newspaper adverts, including a telephone number for people to call
- Parish Councils have been informed of the consultation and provided a telephone number to call

What major changes have you made since the last consultation?
In response to your feedback from the previous consultation in November 2018, Clifton Hampden Bypass has been re-aligned further from residences in the north of the village. The Didcot to Culham River Crossing has also been moved further west from residential properties in Appleford village. Following further transport modelling work, which forecasts the anticipated growth in traffic in future years, the link road through the Former Didcot A Power Station site is proposed to connect into the existing A4130 approximately 100 metres north of the Purchas Road/A4130/Hawksworth roundabout, whereas previously it was proposed to connect directly into the existing roundabout. The drawings now show more developed high-quality pedestrian and cycle facilities with varying types of road crossings.

Where is the money coming from?
The cost of these schemes is £234 million. £218 million of this comes from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund and the rest has been secured through developer obligations in the area. Although the funding for the transport improvements has been announced, Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the final stages of negotiating the details of the funding agreement with Government.

Why are we building this infrastructure?
We are proposing to build new roads and improve existing roads because the highway network was not designed to cope with modern traffic levels. The housing and employment growth allocated in the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 and proposed in the submitted South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2034 requires a significant upgrade to the current network in order to help facilitate this growth.

As part of these improvements, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is encouraging the use of sustainable travel modes through the provision of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure. Future work on these schemes will also include examining how they connect to existing Public Rights of Way and other pedestrian and cycle routes in the area, including the National Cycle Network 5 route.

How is the land being obtained for these schemes?
OCC will primarily be attempting to obtain the land required through negotiation. However, should this not prove possible, OCC may be required to use its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the land necessary to deliver the infrastructure.

How will this affect Golden Balls Roundabout and Nuneham Courtenay and why are there no proposals for these locations?
Through the Housing and Growth Deal, funding is available to investigate future changes to the Golden Balls Roundabout. Study work undertaken on this junction will also need to take into account the impact of traffic through Nuneham Courtenay on the A4074 and also align with transport proposals in Oxford.

The funding announced by Government for the schemes being consulting on (£218 million) was as a result of a competitive bidding process against many other councils across the country. The £218 million is amongst the highest sums awarded (see the full list of 33 here). Including any other schemes as part of this package could have significantly reduced the chance of a successful bid. Additionally, there are currently no schemes designed for Golden Balls Roundabout and Nuneham Courtenay, so it would not have been possible to have included them in a bid where it is required that schemes are shown with robust costs.

How will this affect Appleford?
The Didcot to Culham River Crossing will alleviate some of the traffic passing through Appleford as it will provide a more direct alternative route across the River Thames and to Didcot. OCC will liaise with the parish council and local community in Appleford throughout scheme development.

Will this fix all the traffic issues in the area?
The network will still have a lot of traffic flowing through it due to existing traffic and expected growth, but it will flow a lot more smoothly as a number of pinch points will be removed, significantly reducing congestion.

Will construction traffic cause traffic disruption in Didcot?
There will be some disruption during construction but, through the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, this disruption will be minimised. The construction of the four schemes will also be carefully phased in order to avoid, where possible, works taking place simultaneously in multiple locations on the existing highway network.

Is the Northern Perimeter Road Phase 3 (NPR3) scheme part of this project?
No, NPR3 has been partially held up by progress on these schemes as it was necessary to establish how they would best fit with each other. Now that preferred alignments for these schemes have been identified, it will be possible to progress further design work on the NPR3 scheme. At present, the proposals for this scheme include a roundabout at the A4130/B4016 junction, a new road down to A4130 (roughly along the line of the boundary of the golf course), and a new roundabout on A4130 to the east of the Hadden Hill Retail Park / Tesco roundabout

Are the schemes safe?
A Road Safety Audit (RSA) Stage 1 has been carried out on every aspect of the schemes in their present stage of design. Where appropriate, recommendations from the RSA report will be incorporated into the next stage of scheme design. Further RSAs will be undertaken as necessary throughout the development of the schemes.

What about the impact on wildlife and the environment?
The impact on the environment, wildlife, and ecology will be investigated through an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure any impacts are properly mitigated or avoided where possible in accordance with the applicable legislation. The EIA will also include, amongst other chapters, an Air Quality Impact Assessment and Noise Impact Assessment. As part of the landscaping strategy there is the potential for planting alongside some sections of the schemes. This will be investigated as work on the schemes continues.

Where will bus stops be located?
Proposed locations for bus stops have been identified on some parts of the schemes. The locations of other bus stops will be identified during the next stage of design through liaison with bus operators and other stakeholders.

What are the speed limits of these schemes?
The speed limits are proposed as follows:

- A4130 Widening: 40mph
- Science Bridge: 30mph
- Didcot to Culham River Crossing: 50mph
- Clifton Hampden Bypass: 60mph

Why are the pedestrian and cycle crossings different across the schemes?
The type of each pedestrian and cycle crossing depends on the nature of the environment, the anticipated usage, and proposed speed limit in each location. For example, the crossings on the A4130 are signal controlled (traffic lights), staggered toucan (pedestrians and cyclists) crossings due to the proposed speed limit (40mph) and the width of the road, whereas the crossings over most of the side roads onto the A4130 are proposed to be raised parallel crossings (zebra crossings that cyclists can also legally use) as these roads will have a lower speed limit (see Glossary section for further info on terminology). The next stages of design will further consider the appropriateness of each type of crossing, taking into account the comments received as part of this consultation and further Road Safety Audits.

Why does the 'Next Steps' section say that the planning application will be submitted in Winter 2021 and the CPO submission in Spring 2021?
The 'Next Steps' section is in chronological order. 'Winter 2021' refers to the early months of 2021, not the end of it.

Why is there a t-junction rather than a roundabout where the existing A4130 meets the new A4130?
One of the key aims of these infrastructure schemes is to provide a strategic route for traffic to travel around the periphery of Didcot and to encourage traffic to use the Science Bridge route, which is intended to form a new section of the A4130. This will reduce traffic movements at the Mendip Heights and Milton Road roundabouts, which are already very congested. One of the main ways this can be achieved is to discourage traffic from using the existing A4130 between the Mendip Heights and Purchas Road roundabouts by creating a priority t-junction instead of a roundabout where the existing A4130 meets the new A4130, thus giving priority to the peripheral route. The roundabout at the Collett access to the Southmead Industrial Estate will still remain and so provides easier access for HGV movements eastwards.

Glossary of terms

Hard Strip: an extension of the road surface alongside a carriageway, typically only required on faster roads and normally delineated by a painted white line.

Parallel Crossing: a type of 'uncontrolled' pedestrian and cycle crossing, i.e. without requirement to press a button to activate a green signal. This is similar to a Zebra crossing but is designed to allow both pedestrians and cyclists to use it (unlike a Zebra, which is for pedestrians only). In most locations these will be raised to make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to use.

Toucan Crossing: a type of 'controlled' crossing, i.e. with the requirement to press a button and to wait for a green signal indicating that it is safe to cross. These are designed for use by both pedestrians and cyclists, whereas Puffin and Pelican crossings are for pedestrians only. In some locations, where the roads are wide, these will need to be staggered so that pedestrians and cyclists will be required to cross in two stages.

Reinforced/over runnable area for abnormal loads: this applies to two junctions on the link road through the former Didcot A power station site, which forms part of the Science Bridge scheme. This is to accommodate very long heavy goods vehicles that are occasionally required to transport equipment to and from the Didcot B power station site. These vehicles are accompanied by special safety escorts and usually take place at night to minimise disruption to the highway network.

Scheduled Ancient Monument: an archaeological site of national importance. These have special protections and any impacts on them must be minimised or mitigated in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Segregation Strip: a 'gap' that physically separates a footway or cycleway and the carriageway for safety purposes. This may be a paved or grass surface. Unlike a Hard Strip, a Segregation Strip is typically at the same level as the pedestrian/cycling provision, rather than at the same level as the carriageway.

Swale: a shallow trough running parallel to a carriageway for drainage purposes. These are typically covered in grass and are sometimes planted with reeds.

Appendix F 2020 consultation letter sent to residents

CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

Oxfordshire County Council is holding an online consultation to update local people on the proposed package of infrastructure improvements in Didcot and surrounding areas. The schemes are:

- A4130 Widening
- Didcot to Culham River Crossing
- Science Bridge
- Clifton Hampden Bypass

Artist's impression of A4130 Widening

Have your say

As part of this consultation, public exhibitions were planned across various locations in the local area over the last two weeks in March. Unfortunately, due to instructions from Government with respect to Coronavirus (COVID-19) these have been cancelled.

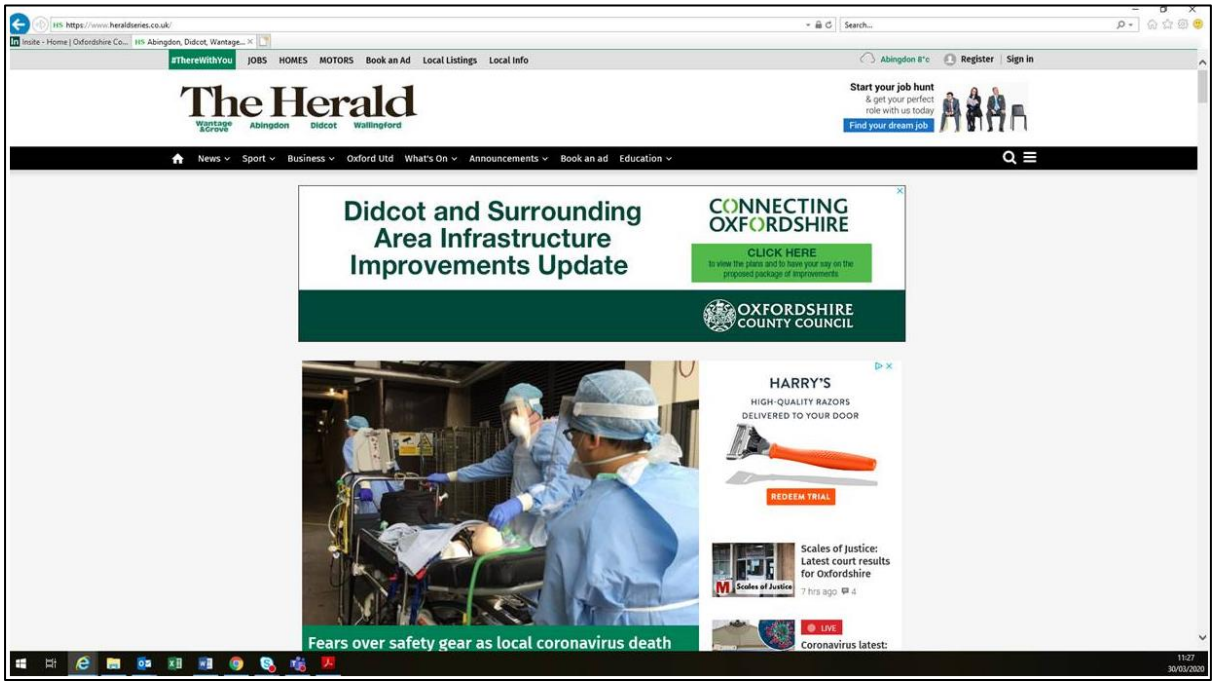
You can view the plans and give feedback online via:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcotupdate

If you do not have access to the internet, please call us on **07392 318945** or **07833 401067** to request printed copies of the consultation materials and to discuss the proposals.

The consultation ends on **30 April 2020** at 11:59pm.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Appendix G 2020 consultation digital advert featured in The Herald



Appendix H Confirmation of Jack FM airtime

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17:21:40 (A) 30 | 17:56:55 (A) 31

28/04/20 - JACK 3 Oxfordshire

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28/04/20 - JACKfm

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29/04/20 - JACK 2

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29/04/20 - JACK 3 Oxfordshire

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30/04/20 - JACK 2

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30/04/20 - JACK 3 Oxfordshire

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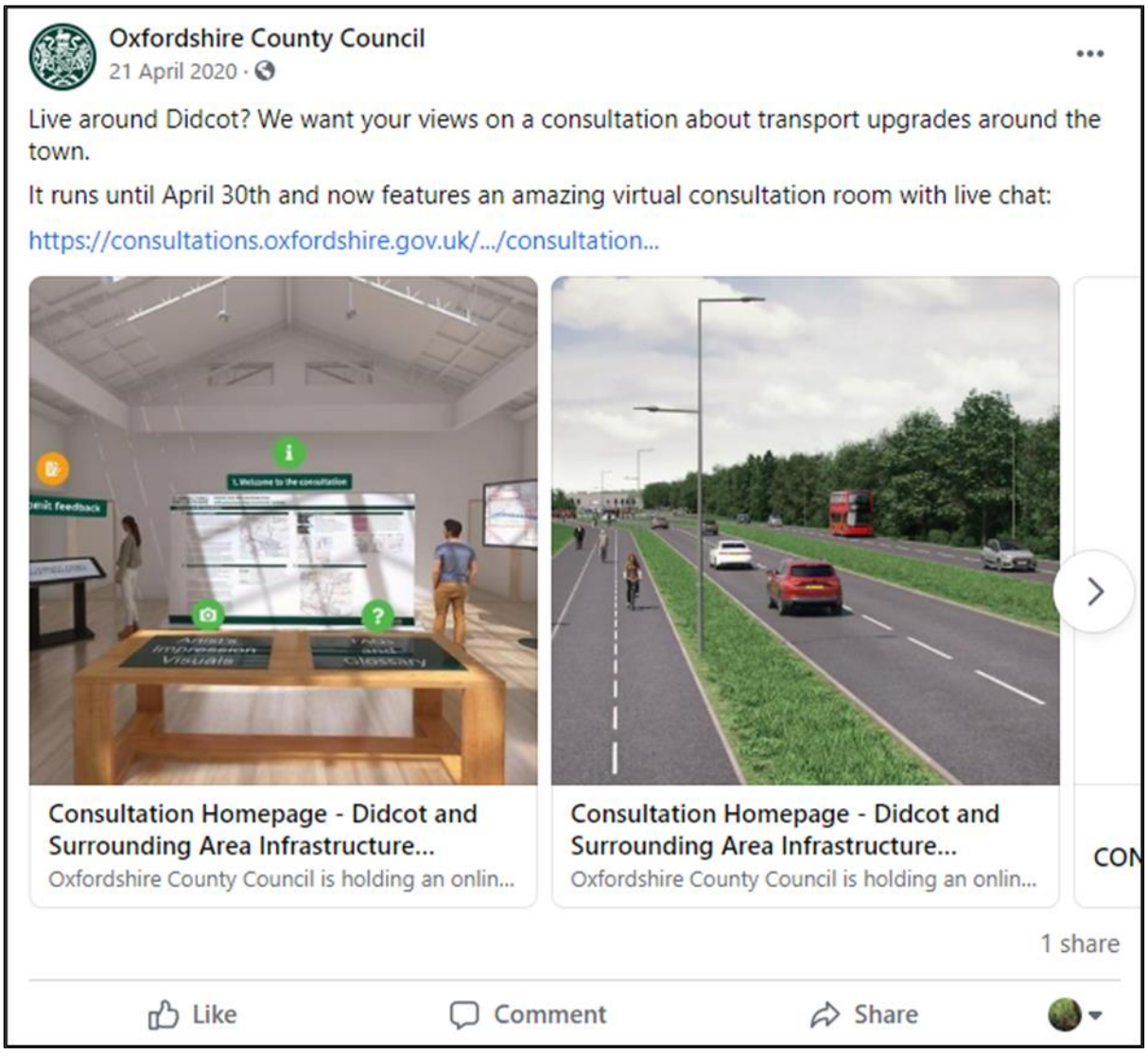
Total Spots 525

(S) Scheduled Time (A) Aired Time

Scheduled Times reported prior to broadcast may be subject to change.

Appendix I Social media posts promoting the 2020 consultation



Appendix J Appleford-on-Thames Position paper

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES
POSITION PAPER

APPLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL
7 JANUARY 2021

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

Contents

1

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 HISTORY

Appleford-on-Thames is a village and civil parish on the south bank of the Thames and part of the Vale of White Horse District Council area. Located immediately north of Didcot it is nestled between Sutton Courtenay to the west and Long Wittenham to the east, on the rail line to Oxford.

Appleford's history stretches back to a Roman settlement nearby and the village is named in the Doomsday Book. A church was built in Appleford in the 12th Century and was first linked with Sutton Courtenay in 1496. Edmond Bradstock[1] (d 1607 see Blue Plaque), benefactor to the poor of Appleford and Sutton Courtenay and whose charitable trust still survives today also underlines the historical links between the villages. More recently Appleford is famous for the Appleford Hoard discovered in 1968 and now on display in the Ashmolean Museum. It is also renowned for steam rallies and racing dating back to the middle of the last century.

In June 2019 Appleford participated in the 175th anniversary celebrations of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's rail line between Didcot and Oxford. This line has made a significant contribution to Oxford and Oxfordshire. During WW1 trains regularly stopped at Appleford to collect the Prime Minister (RH. H.H. Asquith) and ferry him between his home in Sutton Courtenay and London.

1.2 VILLAGE CHARACTERISTICS

Appleford has approximately 150 residences and a population of 380 (estimate 2018). It has long established historical links with Sutton Courtenay. It also has strong social links to Sutton Courtenay such the primary school, nurseries, local shops, the post office (for pick up deliveries), pubs and restaurants, garage, hairdressers, music school and rotating Church services and community events.

The villages share a nature reserve (Millennium Common), access to which will be broken if road links are not adequate. It also has links with other villages (Drayton, Culham and Long Wittenham) which it is keen to retain and protect.

Appleford is one of only three stations on the rail line between Didcot and Oxford. It has the potential to provide a valuable access point to the rail network for Sutton Courtenay and other villages in the immediate hinterland.

[1] Bradstock: Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Scheme (oxonblueplaques.org.uk)

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

Appleford wishes to retain its traditional character as a quiet **country village** in South Oxfordshire.

1.3 PURPOSE OF POSITION PAPER

The purpose of this document is to summarise Appleford's position on Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing.

Appleford **does not oppose** the proposed road and river crossing. However, it anticipates alterations to Scheme C will be made following on-going consultations.2.

Appleford notes the terms of the Cabinet decision made 21 July 2020 and the provision for changes to be brought back (to cabinet) for a decision.

Figure 1 Cabinet Approval & Recommendation

Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund:
Preferred Scheme Alignments

Report by Director of Growth and Economy

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
   - (a) **Approve the identified preferred alignments as illustrated in Figure 1 as the basis to progress into the next stage of scheme design for the four schemes that constitute the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure programme.**
   - (b) **Note the various optioneering exercises that have informed the preferred alignments set out in paragraphs 24 to 30.**
   - (c) **Note the findings of the recent consultation exercise set out in paragraphs 31 to 36 which sought the views of local people and other stakeholders to be taken into consideration in the next stage of design, yielding a predominantly positive response to the preferred scheme alignments.**

     NB: Slight variations to alignments maybe required during the next design phase. Any significant changes would be brought back for decision or managed through the CPO process as necessary.

How will this affect Appleford?
The Didcot to Culham River Crossing will alleviate some of the traffic passing through Appleford as it will provide a more direct alternative route across the River Thames and to Didcot. OCC will liaise with the parish council and local community in Appleford throughout scheme development.

[2] Cabinet meeting 21 Jul 2020. 57/20.
Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 21 July 2020, 2.00 pm (oxfordshire.gov.uk)

3

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

1.4 VILLAGE SURVEY

In October 2020, Appleford conducted a confidential on-line 'Village Survey' (with special arrangements for circa 8 paper returns). The methodology was overseen by an academic and the results (126 responses) are statistically valid and represent approximately 44% of the adult population.

The Survey findings were presented to OCC planners at a liaison meeting in November. A copy of the presentation has also been provided. The findings represent the views of the village and provides a **mandate** for Appleford Parish Council (APC) to negotiate on behalf of the village and seek reasonable amendments to the road design.

Key findings of the survey are:

- Appleford is not opposed to the new road and acknowledges some benefits.
- The road is too close to the village (less than 70m at southern tip of village)
- The flyover bridge over the private railway sidings and trailing raised embankment will be a major visual intrusion that will overshadow and damage the village.
- Traffic noise and pollution from an elevated road will have an adverse health impact.
- The road will create a physical divide between Appleford and Sutton Courtenay.

Appleford is seeking **reasonable** (& potentially cost saving) **adjustments** so the road is at grade (ground level) to reduce associated risks and the valid concerns of residents.

4

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

2 HOUSING AND ROAD DEVELOPMENT

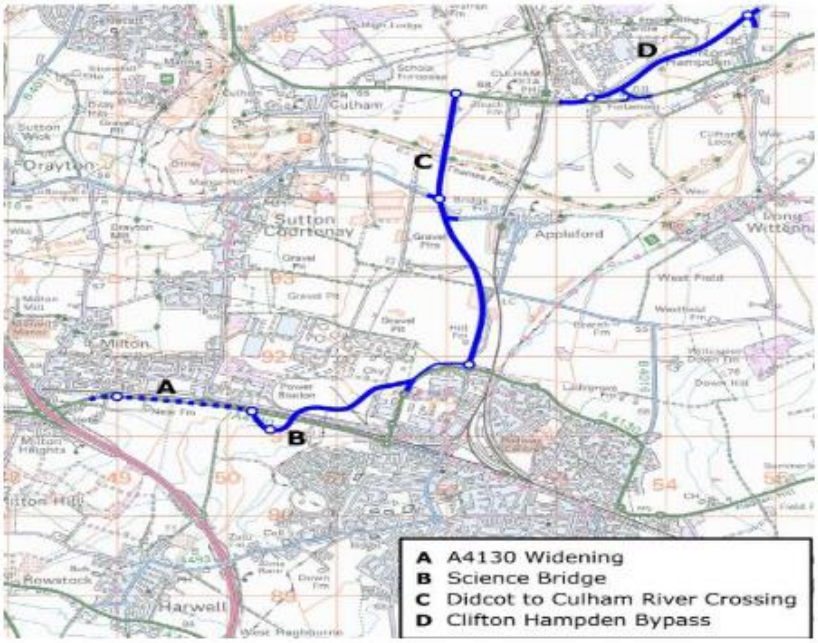
2.1 CABINET DECISION

In 2020 Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) conducted an online consultation for a package of infrastructure improvement schemes for Didcot and the surrounding areas under the Housing Infrastructure Fund (**HIF**) of £218m.

The consultation provided four road alignments. The route was approved by OCC cabinet at a meeting on 21 July 2030. The route is potentially the most challenging and most costly in that as presently conceived it requires a second bridge over the rail sidings used by three companies (FCC Environment, Hanson and Futura) typically no more than 8 times per day on average.

Appleford Parish Council (APC), welcome OCC's commitment "to liaise (meaningfully) with the Parish Council and the local community in Appleford throughout scheme development".

Figure 2 Preferred Scheme Alignment Overview (para 29)



[3] https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AIId=21664

5

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

2.2 CONSULTATION ON DESIGN

On reviewing responses to the consultation exercise, OCC recognised that the Didcot-to-Culham- River- Crossing section elicited the largest number of comments overall and largest number of negative comments. Tabulation of responses showed that main objections concerned highway design, impact on other villages (i.e., Appleford, Sutton Courtenay) and environmental concerns.

APC contends that the current design proposals for Scheme C impact Appleford village more than any other along the entire development and seeks to have its reasonable concerns addressed by ensuring the road is built at grade (ground level).

Recommendations to Cabinet stated that "the views of local people and other stakeholders to be taken into consideration in the next stage of design. Slight variations to alignment may be required…any significant changes would be brought back for decision".

Further the meeting report states that "OCC will liaise with the Parish Council and the local community in Appleford throughout scheme development."

APC anticipate that alterations to the road plans will follow the consultation exercise which resolve the real fears of residents concerning potential damage to the village character and the health of its residents from a busy raised road.

Appleford must put on record its disappointment with aspects of the consultation process which omitted relevant and important information of concern to residents.

2.3 APPLEFORDS CONCERNS

As previously stated, whilst Appleford is not against the road and chosen route in principle, it has serious concerns. APC is looking to work with OCC to find solutions such that the risks identified to public health and wellbeing and retention of the character of Appleford as a country village are addressed.

2.3.1 TRAFFIC

The Didcot to Culham river crossing road will be heavily used by commuter traffic, public transport and regional traffic connecting the A34 to east Oxford and the M40. This regional traffic is likely to have a high proportion of heavy good vehicles consistent with one of the stated HIF objectives - "Provide relief to the A34"

The impact of high levels of commercial and transit traffic immediately adjacent to Appleford is a major concern of residents and the Parish Council.

6

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

2.3.2 BRIDGE OVER APPLEFORD SIDINGS

The bridge over the sidings and the proximity to the village is a major concern for Appleford. This creates a number of issues: -

- Span of the Bridge
- Traffic noise and pollution with heavy commercial traffic
- Pollution raining down on the village due prevailing SW wind
- Bridge design with noise funnel
- Construction costs compared to a road at grade (ground)
- Medium term plans for land between Appleford & Sutton Courtenay.

These above concerns are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

It should be noted that Scheme C had the largest number of comments (920 in total) noted during the consultation process.

Figure 3 Extract Annex 3 – OCC Consultation Analysis Report (Summary of Findings by OCC)

Didcot to Culham River Crossing	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	136	1	0	0
Traffic Impacts	81	44	9	4
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	15	62	38	13
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	0	1	2	0
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	35	8	36	9
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	16	3	20	5
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	22	51	80	23
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	0	0	8	1
Onward cycling connections	1	5	20	6
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	22	42	14	3
Safety	5	7	4	1
Construction	0	1	4	1
Public Rights of Way	0	1	7	0
Economic	0	0	1	0
Other	1	15	30	6
Total	**334**	**241**	**273**	**72**

6.10. **Didcot to Culham River Crossing:** This scheme had the largest number of comments relating to it with 920 in total. This scheme had the smallest disparity between positive (334) and negative (241) comments, although this still equates to a difference of 10 per cent. The matters of most concern amongst the objections related to traffic impacts (44), environmental / archaeological / historical impacts (62), highway design (51), and impacts on surrounding villages / towns / junctions (42).

7

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

2.4 INTERSECTION OF B4016 WITH NEW ROAD (T JUNCTION).

Appleford and Sutton Courtenay have social and historical community links that need to be retained. Appleford village relies on access to important social facilities in Sutton Courtenay, such as the primary school, nurseries, local shops, the post office (for pick up deliveries), pubs and restaurants, garage, hairdressers, music school and rotating Church services and community events. All Saints Church, Sutton Courtenay is the lead Church in the Damascus Parish of which Appleford is a constituent member. The local religious ministry team are based at 'All Saints', Sutton Courtenay.

Appleford share the Millennium Common with Sutton Courtenay and encourage the latter (SC) residents to use Appleford Station as an access point to the rail network. The current direct and convenient road link, B4016, between the two villages needs to be maintained.

The consultation sketches show a dislocation of the existing B1016 Appleford Road between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford. The sketch shows the Appleford section of the B4016 joining the proposed road at an un-signalised T-junction (Figure 4). This will require drivers to wait to join the traffic on the proposed road, followed by an approach to a roundabout that will provide a turn-off to Sutton Courtenay. This arrangement will impede vehicle movement between the two villages.

Appleford residents require a more direct road link at the proposed roundabout, which would allow a direct road crossing onwards to Sutton Courtenay. Appleford have considered the option of signalising the T junction, but this, within a short distance of a roundabout, will impede traffic on the proposed Didcot-Culham road.

Appleford is aware of the risk of non-local traffic from the proposed road passing through Appleford, along Main Road. To discourage this, Appleford will require vehicle speed and access restrictions at both ends of the village.

8

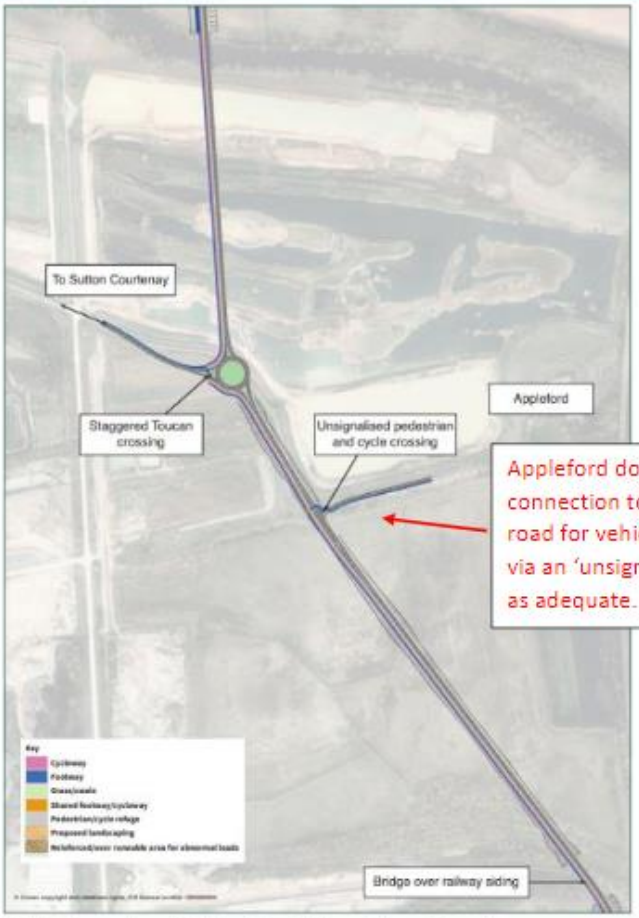
APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

Figure 4 Scheme C Indicative Plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE **Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update** **10**

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

9

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

2.5 FOOTPATH CYCLE WAY CONNECTING APPLEFORD & SUTTON COURTENAY.

Appleford welcomes OCC's proposal for the provision of a footpath and cycle way between the village and Sutton Courtenay. Subject to consultation with affected residents, a signalised single lane access over Appleford railway bridge, leading into the village will remove a well-known accident danger spot. It will also facilitate a footway over the bridge for access to the station, which is currently lacking.

A signalised single lane would bring this bridge into line with the nearby Culham and Clifton Hampden bridges over the Thames.

A network of footpaths and bridleways connect Appleford to Sutton Courtenay. These run east-west from Appleford level crossing at the southern end of the village and from close to Appleford Station at the north end of the village. Appleford requires that these be retained and upgraded to cycleway provision within the project for the Didcot to Culham road.

There are a number of local destinations that these pathways should serve: Appleford Station, the Millennium Common at Sutton Courtenay, the wetland reserve north of the B4016, and future open space after restoration of landfill sites.

It will be beneficial for these paths to connect with the proposed north-south foot and cycleway as part of the road proposal. However, these connections must be achieved without the hazard of crossing the vehicle carriageways of the road at uncontrolled intersections.

We note that a vision document published by FCC environment[4], owners of adjacent land, show anticipated potential for housing, education, and business development. This would generate an additional network of footpaths and cycle routes. It would be essential that these make frequent connected to the north-south footpath cycleway proposed within the Didcot-Culham road proposal.

FCC11767_Radcot_B
4 riefing_Note_cv6.pd

10

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

3 BRIDGE OVER APPLEFORD SIDINGS

The Implications of running a road over Appleford sidings has been insufficiently explored and explained in the consultation documents issued by OCC in 2020[5]. Awareness of these issues is now emerging and requires to be addressed urgently.

APC has already highlighted that Scheme C - Fig 9 and Fig 10 do not explain the need for a bridge over the private railway sidings adjacent to Appleford, unlike Fig 11 which highlights a ramp at the river crossing. Thus, the nature of the proposal was unclear to many residents.

Therefore, a principal concern is the elevating of the road on raised embankments and a bridge over the Appleford sidings. Appleford have developed its own architectural model.

Figure 5 Visualisation of Road Alignment as represented in the Consultation plans

PROPOSED ROAD: DIDCOT TO CULHAM RIVER CROSSING
Aerial view looking east towards Appleford Main Road.
Illustration prepared by Appleford Parish Council for resident's information

Note: The bridge over the siding will be longer and higher and the embankments will be broader than originally proposed, as the Appleford sidings are to be enlarged to form a shunting yard. This increase in scope and cost would not have been apparent to the Cabinet .

[5] https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/DidcotAreaInfrastructureUpdate/consultationHome

11

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

Elevating the road is not acceptable to the residents and Parish Council for the following reasons:

3.1 ADDITIONAL BRIDGE SPAN (HANSON RAIL SIDINGS APPROVAL)

Planning permission for the Hanson planning application was approved on 26 Oct. 2020. Once constructed, 'Appleford Siding' will comprise a shunting yard of 3 tracks off the main line and around the curve of the tracks. The intersecting acute angle of the proposed road bridge will require a long span to clear the shunting yard. This will not have been considered by the cabinet. The resulting height of the bridge will put it well above the roofline of adjacent houses in Appleford.

In addition, the associated embankments to form the approaches to the bridge will form a dominant visual barrier adjacent to local houses. Continuous trafficking of high sided lorries and other vehicles will define the outlook and skyline to the west of Appleford. The elevation of the entire section of the road significantly worsens the impact on the visual intrusion, noise and traffic pollution that will impact residents.

3.2 TRAFFIC NOISE – HEAVY COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Recognizing that the proposed road will be intensively used, including heavy good vehicles, the gradients of the bridge approaches will exacerbate noise and traffic pollution due to change in gears and engine speeds. Given the distance, and a 50 mph. limit, vehicles are likely to accelerate on the approach to the bridge from both directions, causing additional noise.

3.3 PREVAILING WIND DIRECTION

The prevailing wind direction from the south west will carry airborne particles from engine emissions and tyre wear from the elevated road, down and across the closest gardens and houses along Main Road in Appleford.

3.4 BRIDGE DESIGN AND NOISE

The interaction of the bridge structure with the train shunting activities in the sidings will exacerbate the train noise transmission in the direction of Appleford. The hard surfaces of the underside of the road bridge may produce a canyon effect, reflecting the sound beyond the open ends of the bridge. Houses along Main Road in Appleford overlook Appleford Sidings. They will be subject to both the traffic noise from above the bridge and the train noise from below it. The noise from current train movements at the sidings is already a serious problem for the closest houses on Main Road.

3.5 CONSTRUCTION COSTS (BRIDGE)

Appleford is aware that a road bridge over the sidings will be a major cost item. It is quite possible that the required length of the bridge will exceed that required for the

12

Thames river crossing. Similar road bridge projects have costs in the region of £15M-£25M. The extended length of embankments to serve the bridge will add considerably more to the costs. These costs are not inevitable. There are alternative positions for the road that do not require embankments and a bridge to be constructed over Appleford Sidings.

3.6 LAND BETWEEN APPLEFORD AND SUTTON COURTENAY – MT VISION

Appleford notes that the mid-term vision for the land between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford, owned by FCC indicates a change of use. A master plan indicates that the current mineral extraction and landfill is to be replaced by housing, business parks and landscaped reclamation. It is probable that remaining industrial activities will diminish or expire and not be renewed, in line with this vision. The future industrial purpose of Appleford sidings for the medium term is questionable. It would be unwise to incur considerable costs and disbenefits of a road bridge over railway sidings that may be redundant in the medium term.

3.7 ROAD BRIDGE - CONCLUSION

Appleford considers that it will not be possible to resolve the difficulties of taking a road over Appleford sidings whilst protecting Appleford from visual intrusion, traffic noise, light pollution, and harmful particulates.

Appleford requires that this section of the road be re-positioned at ground level. While this will require some revised design, it will have the immediate benefits in terms of cost savings and reduction of worst effects of noise, and pollution health risks for residents.

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

4 ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT

Immediately proper to Christmas, APC has had positive and constructive meetings with FCC Environment and Hanson, including provision of site maps which we have studied. A meeting with RWE Technology is being arranged.

While there are technical challenges any change to the road alignment (as there are across the whole the site), there are alternatives that need to be fully examined in detail. From the information available to us, APC believe there are feasible options that avoid the need for a bridge and raised embankment.

Elimination of the need to construct a bridge will result in capital savings in the order of £20m - £25m. The cost of this bridge will have increased materially due to the planning approval granted for an additional rail line at the sidings (wider bridge span due to curvature of the line). This would not have been apparent when OCC Cabinet approved the plans in July 2020. In the short /medium term the owners of the lands (FCC Environment) wish to convert from existing use to housing or industrial buildings.

Appleford formally request OCC to commission a consulting and technical review with all relevant stakeholders to establish the best alternative modification while keeping faith with the existing Scheme C routing approved by Cabinet.

APC propose an alternative route and local vision outlined in Fig 6 for consideration. There may be variations or other alignments that will achieve the same objectives.

This proposed route (or possible variations) has advantages and removes the negative impact and worst features of an elevated road and bridge for Appleford village.

The benefits of our proposed amendments are:

I. With modest adjustment the road can be at ground level with obvious benefits
   a. No need for flyover bridge over private railway sidings and trailing raised embankment is not required
   b. Reduces the impact on residents (noise and pollution)
   c. Significant cost saving and lower carbon footprint.

II. Retains best possible road link between Appleford and Sutton Courtenay with access at Roundabout.

III. Provision of safe local inter-connecting cycle routes (north, south east and west) providing access to local amenities (Millennium Common, wetlands, open spaces, and rail network).

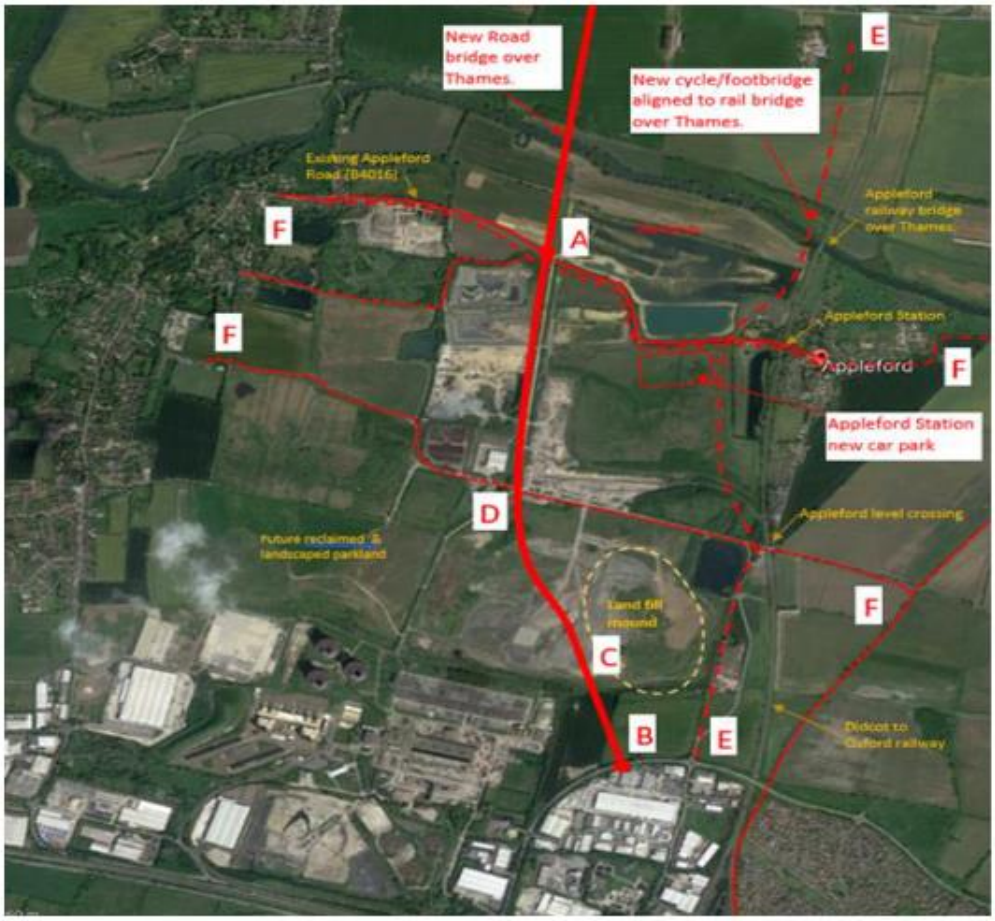
14

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

IV. Roundabout with priority for new road to Culham. Remainder of existing Ladygrove northern distributor road used as housing estate access.

Figure 6 Alternative Route for Section C Didcot to Culham River Crossing



A- Intersection with Appleford Rd (B4016) as roundabout. With Pedestrian and cycle signal controlled crossing.	**B-** New roundabout with through priority for new road to Culham. Remainder of existing Ladygrove northern distributor road used as housing estate access.	**C-** Road alignment uses landfill mound, to shield the North Ladygrove housing development from the road.
D- New road kept at or below existing site levels, to pass around the west end of Appleford sidings. Traffic light controlled foot/cycle crossing.	**E-** New Cycleway/Footpath. Didcot to Culham, landscaped and with direct access to adjacent housing, Appleford & Culham Rail stations, open spaces & wetlands.	**F-** Existing footpaths upgraded with cycleways to interconnect Didcot, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford & new housing

15

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

5 APPENDICES

5.1 APPENDIX 1 - STATEMENT FROM APPLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Maps provided by OCC for Road-Rail River Crossing are unclear and misleading

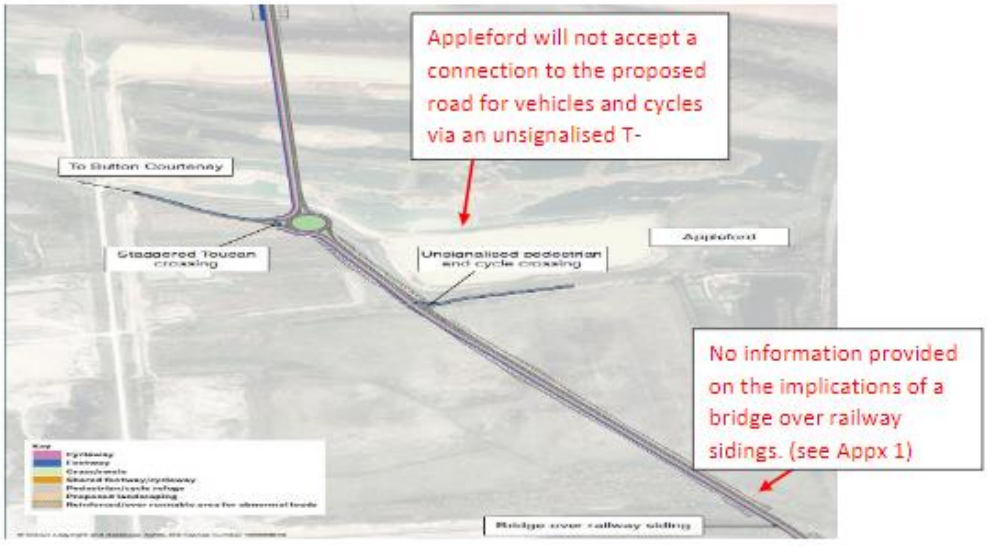
Following our initial meeting with OCC on 24th September and having increasingly shared the consultation printouts with fellow residents. it is important to register our concerns and dissatisfaction with the information and documentation (including maps) provided for Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing presented for consultation.

Three points of concern:

- Page 9[6] of the consultation materials has the road running central across the map, with the South end of Appleford main road visible top right. To those with a keen eye, you can see the embankments leading up to the 'gap' where the sidings crossing/ bridge will be, but there is no label or explicit mention of the "bridge over the railway sidings", nor illustration (e.g. no artist impression).

- Page 10[7] of the consultation materials appears to show the same 'gap' in embankments as page 9, now labelled "bridge over the railway sidings". A detail APC and many others - had missed until our meeting with OCC in September.

- On Page 10 the road illustration has been shifted from a central position to the righthand side of the map. Thus, page 10 continues to show significant land to the West of the proposed road but is neatly delimited by the railway line to the East, effectively erasing the whole of Appleford village/ main road and local residents; those most affected by the new road.



[6] 9__Scheme_C__Didcot_to_Culham_River_Crossing (1).pdf
[7] 10__Scheme_C__Didcot_to_Culham_River_Crossing (1).pdf

16

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

5.2 APPENDIX 2 - VILLAGE CIRCULAR OUTLINING ORIGINAL VILLAGE OBJECTIVES

Appleford-on-Thames

A resident's response to the
Didcot and Surrounding Area
Infrastructure Improvements Update

30th April 2020

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update.

In light of central Government insistence to develop more than 3,500 new homes on Green Belt land (which may or may not still be relevant in light of Coronavirus), it is incumbent on central government to ensure adequate consultation of local residents in shaping infrastructure improvements in order to maintain faith in our country's democratic process, notwithstanding the cancellation of the public exhibitions planned as part of this consultation, and the continued social and economic disruption we are all facing.

Local riverside villages have long offered pleasant, quiet rural living. With the proposal for 'infrastructure improvement' there should be more focus on improving existing public transport (rail and bus network), cycle and footpaths. It should be seen as essential to ensure the continued well-being and ethos of the local area and it's inhabitants, rather than supporting noisy, suburban sprawl.

In light of this, I have consulted with a cross-section of Appleford-on-Thames residents to propose some improvements to the current plans, focusing specifically on Section C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing. These proposals require additional consultation with local landowners, villagers, planners and key decision makers. We hope that there will be future opportunities for more detailed discussion of these design proposals before anything further is agreed, or indeed acted upon.

Appleford-on-Thames is generally supportive of the road running West of the village, subject to our requested amendments which aim to restore and enhance driving, public transport, cycling and walking connectivity in the whole of the local area, and between the Southern Thames-side villages of Sutton Courtenay, Appleford-on-Thames and Long Wittenham. It is very important to ensure that the beauty and valuable biodiversity of the river and its surroundings is preserved, for the enjoyment of all, whether by boat, on land, or in the air. The villages should not become a cut-through for traffic: new roads should be designed to encourage safer, perhaps more efficient travel, supplementary to existing ones. Noise reduction measures should be world-leading, and provide a show case for rural road development across flat valuable wetland, proximate to local villages. Mitigating the noise, visual and traffic impact will be critical in preserving the environment for locals, and the surrounding environment. Data to support this is welcomed. Additional village concerns include safe movement within, in and out of the village, and to the station.

With many thanks for your time and consideration,

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17

APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES

POSITION PAPER

We believe that all local infrastructure improvements should:		We therefore ask that:
1. **Preserve the beauty and biodiversity of the river(side) for all,** particularly river(side) users between Culham Lock and Clifton Hampden Lock		1. The position of the river crossing is **shifted West** of the current proposal to take advantage of a **natural bend** in the river so that it would be better **shielded** from view to all river users, whether approaching from Culham, or Clifton Hampden Lock (see annotated consultation picture/ google maps)
2. **Minimise impact to the local environment,** particularly the designated Wetland to the West of the Railway Bridge		2. **Extend** the **new road** to **circumnavigate** the unstable gravel pits/ wetland habitat (see attached document: "Sutton Courtenay Quarry Site Biodiversity Action Plan": a) Use **existing roads** through this land to support the development of the new road, and improve connections to it, by car, bicycle and on foot. b) **(Re-)Establish footpaths** to transform this area into a recreational reserve, whilst maintaining protected areas for biodiversity (photos and sound recordings from this area available)
3. **Maintain, and improve local village connectivity and safety,** specifically considering **public/ school transport** (trains, buses), **cycle, foot** and driving options, preferably in this order	  	3. **Shift** the proposed new road **roundabout West** to the junction of the existing Haul Road, such that residents from Sutton Courtenay and Appleford-on-Thames can still drive to and from without having to connect on and off the new road across the new cycle and foot paths. The Haul Road could be used to support the new road design, and the roundabout would support safe transport of quarry vehicles… Appleford junctions appear unsafe as is a) **Improve historic local cycle and foot paths,** particularly those connecting Appleford-on-Thames, Sutton Courtenay, Long Wittenham and the new road (Didcot to Culham). It is not clear how the currently designated Sustans, Route 5 cycle route will continue in these plans. b) Improved, safe cycle and foot access to Appleford village, **safe Appleford Station access,** and a station car park could improve rail demand and network service,&vice versa
4. **Reduce traffic** through Appleford-on-Thames, Clifton Hampden, Culham, Long Wittenham, Milton Park… increasing safety for villagers		4. Traffic modelling is shared, as requested at the end of the previous consultation. Drivers from NE Didcot, Long Wittenham, and other local villages, could inappropriately use Appleford-on-Thames as a **cut-through** to the new road and river crossing. To deter this, steps must be taken to avoid such traffic. Options may include: a) As above, shift the proposed new roundabout West toward the existing Haul Road b) Improve traffic calming measures through Appleford-on-Thames, such as single passing/ give-way points (e.g. Long Wittenham), speed bumps, cameras c) Reduce Appleford-on-Thames **speed limit** to **20mph** d) Traffic lights at Appleford-on-Thames Railway Bridge, c.f. Culham and C.H. e) Develop a fly-over to the new road at the Southern end of the village, at the existing railway crossing f) Provide pedestrian crossing(s) over Main Road
5. **Minimise visual, noise and traffic impact** to all local residents (Culham, Clifton Hampden, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford-on-Thames, Didcot…)		5. Given the raised nature of the road, across flat, rural wetland, and in close proximity to Appleford-on-Thames, **best-in-class noise & visual impact reduction** could provide a world class leading practice example. Please publish **noise** and **visual impact assessment,** particularly natural, and man-made barriers that will be used to **limit noise** and **visual impact** along both new, and existing stretches of impacted road.

Figure 4 Example of Issues raised by Appleford during the consultation exercise, April 2020.

18

Appendix K OCC's response to Appleford-on-Thames Position Paper

Oxfordshire County Council's Response to Appleford Parish Council's Position Paper (dated 7th January 2021)

Contents

1.0 - Executive Summary

1.1 - Appleford Parish Council (APC) has requested the alignment for the Didcot to Culham River Crossing, part of the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund Scheme (HIF1) be moved further west from the village, as set out in the APC Position Paper 7th January 2021. APC supports the proposed HIF1 road and river crossing but would like the bridge over the rail sidings to be reviewed.

1.2 - After numerous and extensive periods of consultation with the local community and stakeholders, Cabinet resolved to approve the HIF1 preferred alignments on 21st July 2020. No representations were made at the Cabinet meeting.

1.3 - Officers have reviewed various options in response to the APC Position Paper and for reasons of land-use, topography, transport planning, environmental and cost constraints, the current and approved alignment, with mitigation, still offers the best option for the new road and bridges between Didcot and Culham.

1

1.4 – Additionally, APC do not agree with Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) proposed junction type onto the new road from Appleford. OCC maintains that the junction is the most suitable layout.

2.0 - Introduction

2.1 - The scheme has been informed by a detailed and multi-stage optioneering exercise. This includes the production of an Options Assessment Report to identify the appropriate interventions and subsequent public consultation, engineering, traffic modelling, and impact assessment work to identify the preferred alignments. Feasibility design further refined the preferred alignment, including moving it further west from Appleford Village, where possible, in part as a result of residents' requests in the November 2018 consultation.

2.2 - APC proposes multiple alignments, the principles of which are not new to OCC as similar queries were raised by Appleford Residents in the November 2018 consultation (locating the alignment to the west to utilise Corridor Road, and comments regarding a bridge over the railway sidings). OCC investigated the alignments at that time and found them to be unfeasible. Following the APC Position Paper dated 7th January 2021, OCC has re-engaged with landowners; RWE npower (power station), FCC (landfill and recycling), Hanson (aggregates, rail siding). OCC has again found the APC alignments unfeasible. OCC has also considered other options put forward verbally by APC and found them to be unfeasible.

3.0 - Policy Context

3.1 - OCC's Local Transport Plan: Connecting Oxfordshire 2015-2031 (LTP4) was agreed by Full Council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year. The adopted LTP4 includes the HIF1 schemes as specific proposals in policies SV2.6, SV2.13, and SV2.16 within the Science Vale Transport Strategy.

3.2 - Land for the scheme is safeguarded in the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2, and South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2035.

3.3 – OCC's Cabinet resolved to approve the preferred alignments on 21st July 2020.

4.0 - Consultation and Engagement

4.1 - The principle of a new road alignment along the railway to the west of Appleford has been subject to extensive consultation over the past 4 to 5 years.

4.2 - Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – adopted December 2016

Consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination. Included the alignment as a safeguarding policy.

4.3 - Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 – adopted October 2019

Consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination. Included the alignment as a safeguarding policy, alignment amended at northern end.

4.4 - South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2034 as submitted for consultation January 2019

Consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination. Included the alignment as a safeguarding policy, alignment amended again at the northern end.

4.5 - South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2035 as adopted December 2020

Consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination. Included the alignment as a safeguarding policy, alignment amended further again at northern end, as a result of OCC moving it further west from Appleford village, where possible.

4.6 - November 2018 Consultation

OCC held a consultation and public exhibitions in November 2018 to describe the need for these schemes, explain other options that were considered, and to show early indicative plans of the schemes. Feedback from this consultation has helped to inform scheme design.

The exhibition boards showed the preferred alignment to the west of the railway near Appleford. Additionally, the exhibitions boards showed five alignments under consideration, including the bridge over the sidings with a table explaining why the preferred option was to the west of the railway line.

OCC did not receive a response from APC but did from Appleford residents. The comments focused on moving the alignment west to utilise Corridor Road, and the rail sidings bridge.

4.7 - March 2020 Consultation

In order to further inform the feasibility design, OCC undertook an extensive non-statutory consultation between 20th March and 30th April 2020.

As a result of Government restrictions on social distancing in response to COVID-19, it was unfortunately not possible to hold the five public exhibitions that were scheduled for the last two weeks of March 2020. OCC went above and beyond the usual steps taken in a non-statutory public consultation to ensure full coverage:

- Extended the consultation – the usual period would be 4 weeks whereas this consultation was extended to 6 weeks;
- Sent letters to over 22,000 residences in the area (including all residences in Appleford known to the Post Office);
- Used an innovative virtual exhibition room with live chat function (OCC being one of the first councils to use this particular platform);
- Included phone numbers on all correspondence for people to call;
- Directly contacted landowners with whom contact had already been made;

- Newspaper adverts in print (published each week during the consultation period);
- Newspaper adverts online (throughout the consultation period);
- Radio adverts (throughout the consultation period);
- OCC Facebook (17,800 people 'like' the OCC Facebook page);
- OCC Twitter (42,000 followers);
- OCC website; and
- Sent printed versions of the materials to those who requested them due to lack of internet access.

The March 2020 consultation showed how the preferred alignment had changed since the November 2018 consultation. The alignment had been pushed to the west where possible, in part due to previous consultation responses from Appleford residents and showing the sidings bridge structure and embankment with a label "Bridge over railway siding".

APC responded to the consultation as did residents. These comments focused on moving the alignment west to utilise Corridor Road, comments regarding the rail sidings bridge, and comments regarding the junction type from Appleford Village onto the new road.

4.8 - April 2020 EIA Scoping

EIA Scoping was submitted in April 2020 and determined that EIA was required in June 2020. The road alignment was shown in plans in the EIA Scoping, as shown below. A response was not received from APC to the EIA Scoping.

4.9 - Ongoing Parish Liaison Meetings

HIF1 officers have met with APC three times to discuss the scheme and explain the rationale behind the alignment. Officers are meeting all affected parish councils and will continue to do so throughout the project.

5.0 - APC "2.4 Intersection of B4016 with New Road (T Junction)"

5.1 - APC does not agree with the proposed junction type to/from the village of Appleford on the new road. Officers have advised that a balance must be found to enable Appleford residents to access the new road, without inviting significant numbers of drivers from other areas to travel through the village. Any junction type that gives more priority to the Appleford arm would make it more attractive for drivers from North East Didcot (~1,800 dwellings), Ladygrove East (~640 new dwellings) and existing Ladygrove residents to travel through Appleford Village.

5.2 - The proposed priority ghost island right turn junction has been designed in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'CD 123 Geometric design of at-grade priority and signal-controlled junctions revision 2'. The proposed junction therefore has been designed to current design standards in both horizontal and vertical alignments and is frequently used in road design. Many examples can be seen across the country.

5.3 - Traffic modelling results from an industry standard microsimulation model of the local area network (Paramics) and localised junction modelling (PICADY) will be presented in the Transport Assessment (TA) which will be submitted as part of the suite of documents in the HIF1 planning application. Furthermore, the proposed roundabout, signalised Toucan crossing, and bus stops to the north of the junction will help create gaps at the Appleford junction for vehicles to undertake all manoeuvres safely.

5.4 - Compliant DMRB GG 119 Road Safety Audits (RSA) will be undertaken on the scheme at each of the following stages:

Stage 1 - Completion of preliminary design;
Stage 2 - Completion of detailed design;
Stage 3 - Completion of construction; and
Stage 4 - Post opening monitoring.

In accordance with GG 119 RSA decision logs will also be kept for Stage 1 to 3.

6.0 - APC "2.5 Footpath Cycleway Connecting Appleford & Sutton Courtenay"

6.1 - A key design parameter of the HIF1 scheme is to promote modal shift towards walking, cycling, and public transport. Across the scheme extent, high-quality walking and cycling facilities providing accessible connections to Non-Motorised Users (NMUs) are proposed. In most instances, the current NMU provision is non-existent or of very poor quality, including the connection between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford.

6.2 - OCC is currently liaising with Sustrans and Network Rail regarding improved access to Appleford Station for NMUs. If implemented this will further improve the connection between Appleford, Sutton Courtenay, and the Millennium Green. OCC is currently promoting a shared use path along the existing B4016 to Appleford from the new priority ghost island right turn junction (including crossing points).

6.3 - The HIF1 proposal provides connections to the existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) network, and crossings of new roads where appropriate. The scheme also includes a direct pedestrian connection to the Thames Path from the northern side of the river crossing bridge. Appleford residents do not currently have an easy and direct link to this, but by using the new scheme will be able to directly access the Thames Path, linking to Culham and further afield.

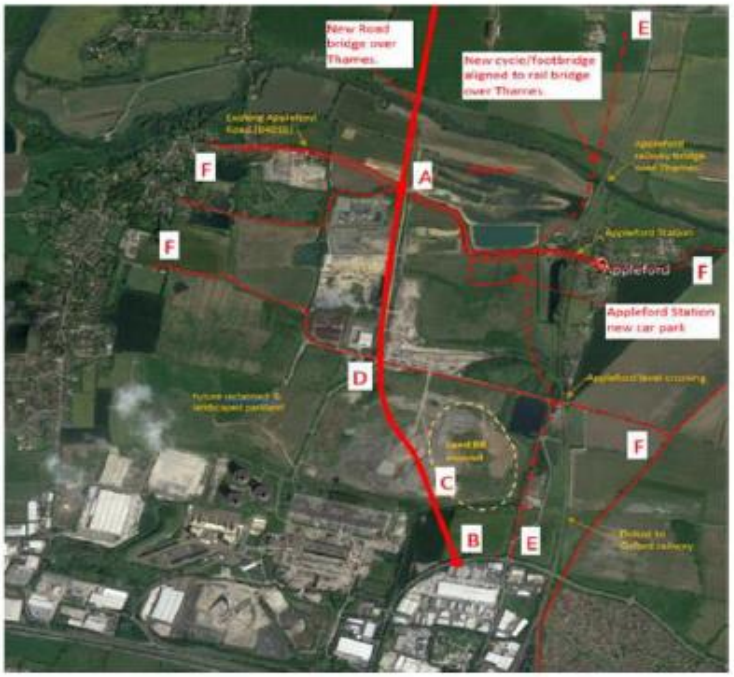
7.0 - APC "3. Bridge over Appleford Sidings" and "4. Alternative Alignment"

7.1 - APC do not agree with the proposed road alignment and bridge over the rail sidings and have proposed multiple alternative alignments. Some residents of Appleford approached OCC officers at the November 2018 consultation to ask whether the road could be pushed west to utilise the existing RWE 'Corridor Road', and to go around the west of the FCC landfill. Although technical challenges were immediately apparent to highways officers, they liaised with relevant landowners

(RWE npower, FCC, Hanson) to understand the feasibility of this route. The suggested alternative routes were deemed unfeasible (as detailed later in this section) and so the new preferred alignment was identified, which pushed the road further from Appleford, where possible.

7.2 - Following the 7th January 2021 APC Position Paper, which included a drawing of the road through the centre of the operational landfill site (below), OCC has re-engaged with the landowners to understand if their positions have changed:

Figure 6 Alternative Route for Section C Didcot to Culham River Crossing



7.2.1 - RWE – Power Station – response 1st February 2021

RWE explained to OCC that they will not allow a new road along Corridor Road "*because of the existence of critical infrastructure along Corridor Road, required for the operation of Didcot Power Station,"* but state they have no objection to a road in land adjacent to it. This is not possible, as to the east is Hanson which is intensifying operations by constructing two additional rail sidings, and to the west is FCC's recycling centre and composting operation.

7.2.2 - FCC – Landfill – response 22nd January 2021

FCC explained to OCC that the APC alignment cuts through their future landfill areas of this strategic site, which would sterilise some areas and require the site to cease operation prematurely. They also explained how some of the areas are permitted to

be ~40 metres deep engineered landfill, which poses significant challenges to road building.

7.2.3 - Hanson – Minerals Operation – response 15th January 2021

Hanson explained to OCC that they are intensifying their site operations onto their sidings land, east of Corridor Road. They have multiple accesses for HGVs on both Corridor Road and Portway and confirm they are all required for the safe operation of their site. In the interests of highway safety and capacity, it would not be appropriate to provide Hanson with multiple accesses from the new road.

7.3 - OCC officers explained to APC the difficulty of building a road over a recently filled landfill cell which is circa 20 metres above ground level, and the difficulties of building a new road on the Corridor Road with the high voltage overhead pylons, RWE infrastructure, and Hanson access arrangements. OCC has a duty, as the promoting authority, to ensure that we choose the best route to fulfil the scheme objectives. The County must only take land that is absolutely necessary for the delivery of the scheme and must use any powers of compulsory purchase only as a matter of last resort.

7.4 - APC amended their suggested alignment on 21st January 2021 to avoid the centre of the landfill site:

7

7.5 - The new APC alignments remain unfeasible for the following reasons:

- Route through challenging topography formed of historic landfill. Would incur additional cost to extract old landfill (cost of extraction and landfill tax), and to import additional material to make solid ground;
- Routes through sections of land reserved by FCC for future landfill, sterilising part of the site (site has permission to operate until year 2030);
- Environmental challenges of extracting old landfill;
- Routes longitudinally over a mainline gas pipe;
- Longer alignment incurs additional cost;
- Longer alignment reduces attractiveness of new road to drivers from North East Didcot etc – Appleford Village likely to experience increase in traffic;
- Longer route less direct and attractive for walking and cycling, reducing the modal shift benefits the OCC preferred alignment offers. APC has suggested that this can be resolved by constructing a second route for pedestrians and cyclists only, more similar to OCC's preferred alignment. This would require additional land and funds, additional bridges over Hanson Rail Sidings and the River Thames etc. It also would not benefit from natural surveillance security, which may result in it not being used in darker winter months due to personal safety concerns;
- It would be unlikely to meet Design Manual for Roads and Bridges standards without a low speed limit due to the number and tight radii of curves – the road would not serve the function of its intended purpose;

8

- At the southern end, the routes cut through an emerging Local Development Order employment site;
- At the southern end, the routes cut through a third-party field;
- In the centre, the routes travel through the FCC Recycling Centre and FCC Composting areas;
- In the centre, the routes cross the RWE water cooling pipes and fibre optic cables, creating additional challenges and costs;
- The Environment Agency requires OCC to model the impact of the river crossing structure on flooding in future years with an additional allowance for climate change. This is resulting in flooding upstream from the river crossing bridge, for which mitigation is being sought. Moving the alignment west at the river would push the modelled flood area further upstream, closer to properties in Culham and Sutton Courtenay;
- Near the river, the road would have to cross RWE's water pipes and fibre optic cables again;
- The bridge structure would be nearer the high voltage overhead power cables, creating construction challenges; and
- Road alignment located closer to other properties off the Appleford Road in the neighbouring Parish.

7.6 – On 8th February 2021 APC submitted an updated drawing to OCC showing a new proposed alignment west of the lake:

7.6.1 – OCC has liaised with FFC regarding the new APC proposed alignment; it poses a significant number of challenges:

- Cuts through recent landfill cells 9 and 10 to the south-west of the lake;
- Ground settlement is likely to occur in that location for circa 10 years, therefore it is likely a road would need to be built as a structure using piles through the landfill, or the waste would need to be excavated, incurring additional financial and environmental costs;
- If a piled solution was required, OCC would be liable for a warranty regarding leakage of a pierced landfill liner;
- Gas is likely to be emitted from these landfill cells for circa 15 years;
- If a road was built through a modern landfill OCC may have to take on the Environmental Permit and associated conditions with that landfill, due to the complexities of liabilities between OCC and FCC;
- The bridge structure over the rail sidings would likely be longer as it is crossing the sidings at a wider point;
- The bridge structure travels very close to the FCC gantry crane for loading/unloading trains; and

- Presence of protected species.

7.6.2 - Given the highlighted technical challenges alongside delivery timescales and budgets this option has not be pursued.

8.0 - Other Routes

8.1 - APC accept the challenges associated with building a road over or very near an operational landfill site, and therefore informed OCC officers that they would also support any other changes to the route that reduce the impact on the village.

8.2 - FCC Lake

8.2.1 - APC asked if the bridge structure could be moved west by 100-200 metres by building the road through the rectangular lake. Given its size and depth, and the volume of water in the lake, a road across it would either need to be a viaduct type structure or require filling in some or all of the lake. Both options would not only increase cost, but also pose additional challenges:

- Environmental harm of filling in an aquatic habitat and requirements for additional biodiversity off-setting;
- A significant volume of fill material would be required to be imported to fill the lake. There is very little 'cutting' of material across the scheme, so the aggregate would be transported by road or rail, incurring further financial and environmental cost;
- The rail sidings bridge span and height would likely increase due to the new crossing location;
- Additional tree felling would be required;
- Presence of protected species;
- The rectangular lake is part of FCC's drainage strategy for the older landfill site '90 Acre Field'. Water travels through the balancing pond (north of the Portway), into the rectangular pond, before draining to Moor Ditch to the east under the railway, at a controlled rate through a culvert; and

- The rectangular lake is part of FCC's restoration masterplan, where it is enhanced by a specific planning condition *'To encourage the foraging and roosting of wading and overwintering birds such as lapwing, greenshank and sandpiper to ensure that the development does not result in a loss of biodiversity in accordance with Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan (1996) PE14 and NPPF paragraphs 9, 109 and 118.'*

8.2.2 - Given the highlighted technical challenges alongside delivery timescales and budgets this option has not be pursued.

8.3 - Level Crossing

8.3.1 - APC asked if it would be possible to remove the sidings structure and use a level crossing of the rail tracks instead.

8.3.2 - The rail sidings are under private ownership and are used by Hanson, FCC, and Forterra. Through ongoing liaison, OCC understands that throughout the day the freight trains are shunted back and forth along the rail sidings as wagons are loaded/unloaded. Trains will be sitting under the sidings structure for periods of the day, as and when required by the operations of the private companies. This would prevent the new road from serving its purpose, as it would be severed by stationary trains.

8.3.3 - Additionally, even in an event where trains are not stationary over the crossing, driver delay as a result of a level crossing would make the new road less attractive. This could result in drivers continuing to route via the existing river crossings and through villages, including Appleford. Furthermore, in 2010 Network Rail embarked on a level crossing risk reduction programme. The objective of the programme is to close and upgrade crossings across the network to improve safety.

8.3.4 - Given the highlighted challenges this option has not be pursued.

9.0 - Land and Compulsory Purchase Order

9.1 - OCC has a duty as the promoting authority to ensure that we choose the best route to fulfil the scheme objectives. The County must only take land that is absolutely necessary for the delivery of the scheme and must use any powers of compulsory purchase only as a matter of last resort. We must also try to avoid the operational land of statutory undertakers, who have additional statutory protections. The routes proposed by APC includes the significant constraint of using land owned by RWE nPower, which the company has identified that it would not be willing to sell as it is required for its operational undertaking. This is considered to be special category land and could prejudice the delivery of the scheme, which is not in the public interest.

10.0 - OCC Preferred Alignment

10.1 - OCC has undertaken extensive optioneering and consultation to arrive at the preferred alignment. The alignment will require a bridge in the location previously identified. A principal design parameter of the bridge is to keep it as low as possible, which helps to minimise any potential impacts on Appleford residents, whilst also reducing construction cost and programme.

10.2 - APC asked OCC specific questions about the railway sidings bridge, in relation to environmental impacts:

As determined by OCC Regulation 3 team in Spring 2020 the HIF1 proposals are deemed to require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA will contain (but not limited to) the following technical chapters:

- Biodiversity;
- Noise and vibration;
- Landscape and visual;
- Air Quality;
- Population and health;
- Transport (both operational and construction); and
- Cumulative effects.

10.3 - As the preliminary design evolves including horizontal and vertical alignments, impacts and any resulting mitigation required are being developed. The emerging and ongoing studies into noise, air quality, and visual impacts as a result of the HIF1 scheme are discussed in turn in the following sections.

10.4 - Noise

10.4.1 - During the January 2021 meeting, APC stated they feel the railway sidings structure will push noise into the village, especially as the private railway track is at an angle. They feel this will have a significant impact on properties to the south of the village. APC stressed they feel the current proposal would create the following sources of noise which may result in unacceptable noise levels:

- Trains on the railway track;
- Traffic on the road;
- Freight train and wagon wheel squeal due to bend that will be exacerbated due to the proposed railway siding structure; and
- Vibration and noise during construction and operation.

10.4.2 - At this meeting APC also asked what noise studies have been undertaken to date:

10.4.3 - Noise monitoring was undertaken for 7 days at No.1 Main Road, Appleford, OX14 4PG in September 2020. The equipment logs a detailed time history of sound level and provides audio snapshots, which assist in identifying various localised noise sources e.g. trains running on the track.

10.4.4 - Following the validation process the baseline noise models will be incorporated into the future model scenarios i.e. with and without the scheme. These models are currently under development and will inform any mitigation e.g. acoustic barriers, low noise road surface etc.

10.4.5 - The proposed embankment for the railway sidings bridge will act to some degree as a noise bund between the housing and existing noise sources at Hanson and FCC. APC queried if the bridge structure would 'funnel' noise from Hanson towards the housing. AECOM acoustic consultants advise this is highly unlikely due to the distances involved.

10.4.6 - The scheme provides Hanson and FCC with a new access to the south west of the rectangular lake. This reduces the noise currently experienced by Appleford residents created by HGVs travelling around the east and north of the lake on a road surface in poor condition with speed humps.

10.5 - Air Quality

10.5.1 - Air quality monitoring for nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) has been undertaken at Appleford. AECOM monitored NO_2 during 2019/2020 using four diffusion tubes which provide a good overview of air quality in the Appleford area.

10.5.2 - The air quality modelling of the future situation with and without the scheme is currently in development. The models will provide details on nitrogen dioxide, exhaust emissions and non-exhaust (brake/tyre) emissions. The impacts of the scheme will be measured against the health-based air quality objectives.

10.6 - Landscape and Visual Impact

10.6.1 -The study area and subsequent views for the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be agreed with OCC, VoWHDC and SODC. Appleford village will be included in the broad visual receptor group and the area would be a part of the visual envelope. Any other route further west is likely to have a greater visual impact over a wider area especially if a route is proposed over the existing landfill area. The alignment in its current location benefits from an existing and mature tree line between the new structure and the mainline railway line (with an additional tree line on the Appleford side of the railway line).

11.0 - APC "3.6 Land between Appleford and Sutton Courtenay – MT Vision"

11.1 - FCC has prepared an emerging development vision for this land, called Radcot Green. They have submitted the proposal to the 'call for sites' for future Local Plans (the current adopted Local Plan covers up to 2031). This proposal has not been examined, has not been allocated, and therefore holds no planning weight.

11.2 - The waste licence on the site currently expires in 2030 (plus a 5-year restoration period) with the land being safeguarded in the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

11.3 - The Hanson aggregates rail depot is safeguarded in the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (September 2017) as policy M9. Hanson has stated they *"have no intention of vacating the site, which is an important strategic asset for Hanson for the supply of crushed rock and marine dredged aggregate from Hanson quarries and wharves located elsewhere in the Country. Our planning consent states that the rail sidings (and all other associated aggregate operations) must only be removed if the importation of aggregate ceases."* In fact, Hanson are investing in the site by building two additional rail sidings, for which they gained planning permission in October 2020.

11.4 - Given the above, that Radcot Green holds no planning weight, FCC waste operations are safeguarded in the relevant Local Plan, as are the Hanson rail sidings, OCC must assume that the land usage here will remain the same in the foreseeable future and must design the HIF1 scheme accordingly.

12.0 - Next Steps

12.1 - OCC is committed to continue to liaise and work collaboratively with APC and other parish councils throughout the HIF1 project life cycle before a planning application is submitted and through the various delivery stages. OCC officers will continue to liaise with APC and will share information as available.

12.2 - APC has requested an open dialogue meeting with OCC and key stakeholders to discuss the challenges of alternative alignments including, but not limited to:

- Sutton Courtney Parish Council;
- Culham Parish Council;
- FCC;
- Hanson; and
- RWE.

OCC is engaging with these stakeholders with the intention of hosting a discussion.

12.3 - Work is ongoing as part of the scheme design to ascertain if any mitigation is required, and if so in what form (e.g. acoustic screening, visual screening by planting etc).

13.0 - Summary

13.1 - Appleford Parish Council (APC) submitted a position paper to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) dated 7th January 2021, summarising their views on the proposed new highway scheme called Didcot to Culham River Crossing. The predominant matters are consultation, junction type, and road alignment.

13.1.1 - Consultation

APC criticises OCC's consultation regarding the scheme. OCC maintains that extensive consultation has been undertaken over many years, as explained in this report. In both the 2018 and 2020 scheme consultations, OCC received comments from Appleford residents regarding the location of the road and bridge in relation to the village. OCC has investigated options to address these concerns, and where feasible has moved the scheme further west, away from the village.

13.1.2 - Junction Type

APC does not agree with the proposed junction type to/from the village of Appleford on the new road. Officers have advised that a balance must be found to enable Appleford residents to access the new road, without inviting significant numbers of drivers from other areas to travel through the village. The proposed junction has been designed in accordance with modern standards, and many examples can be seen across the country. OCC is progressing with the current design.

13.1.3 - Road Alignment

APC does not agree with the proposed road alignment or bridge location and suggests alternative routes, including traversing a modern land fill site with on-going operations, or through a lake. Officers have reviewed various options in response to the APC Position Paper and for reasons of land-use, topography, transport planning, environmental and cost constraints, the current and approved alignment, with mitigation, still offers the best option for the new road and bridges between Didcot and Culham.

13.2 - OCC has reviewed the APC Position Paper, responded to the points raised by way of this report, and determined that the current scheme will be progressed including any appropriate mitigations. OCC will continue to engage with APC and other parish councils throughout the HIF1 project life cycle.3

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