

**County Hall  
New Road  
Oxford  
OX1 1NE**

**Councillor Ian Hudspeth  
Leader**

**31<sup>st</sup> July 2019**

Councillor Emily Smith  
Leader  
Vale of White Horse District Council

By email

Dear Emily

### **South Oxfordshire Local Plan Progress**

As you will be aware South Oxfordshire District Council are currently considering a variety of options for its Local Plan. In order to better understand the consequences and risks associated with future actions they very sensibly delayed making a final decision at their July Council meeting. I appreciate their wish to consider all the options available to the council and have instructed my officers to work collaboratively with SODC to ensure both Councils' interests are protected and to ensure we get the best result for Oxfordshire residents. I also extend this offer to you and the Vale of White Horse District Council, and will make myself readily available to support you in understanding the potential impact to your council from a highway's authority perspective.

You will recall how winning the HIF bid for the Didcot Garden Town was a major success for all council's involved. We have only been successful in progressing one other HIF bid submission for the County, the A40 Smart Corridor, and are awaiting a decision on that from government. The Didcot Garden Town HIF is for £218m towards a total of £234m to deliver: A4130 widening from the Milton Interchange; linking with a new Science Bridge over the A4130 and railway line linking to the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road A4130; a new Didcot to Culham river crossing between the A4130 and A415; and a Clifton Hampden Bypass from the A415.

These local improvements for Didcot will enable better travel options for those travelling across the local network including by public transport, cycling and walking. Southern Oxfordshire is suffering from a lack of investment in infrastructure and these improvements have been identified as being necessary for some years – for example they were identified as necessary for the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 and also feature in our Local Transport Plan. However, the awarding of the bid by government was based not only on the development already committed, but also on some proposed allocations as set out in SODC's submitted Local Plan.

The geographical area that will be affected by negative transport impacts from the failure to deliver essential highway infrastructure is wide and spans your District borders. The potential number of housing land supply sites that may be lost, should HIF infrastructure not be delivered, could be significant and is likely to impact on the VoWH first.

As we are both aware good planning with the appropriate infrastructure will enable us collectively to deliver thriving communities. To do this, sound Local Plans need to be in place. Myself and my officers will continue to work with your Council to find a suitable way forward, to get the best possible outcome for our residents.

Yours sincerely



Ian Hudspeth  
Leader

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