

Policy & Programmes

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Dear Oxfordshire County Council,

Thank you for inviting responses on the Didcot Central Corridor project. Vale of White Horse District Council welcomes consultation on this document and the development of placemaking, wayfinding and improvements to travel management within Didcot. The preparation of this document (Didcot Central Corridor Project) is included in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan (2022), project number 5 (page 1). The requirement to make improvements to the Didcot Central (Transport) Corridor is also identified in the current Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy.

The purpose of the project is to 'develop a placemaking strategy and prepare an Options Appraisal Report (OAR) for three main routes within Didcot known collectively as Didcot Central Corridor (DCC). These include the Cultural Spine (Broadway), Gateway Spine (Station Road), B4493 Foxhall Road and Jubilee Way roundabout.'

Delivery of the proposals set out in the project will contribute to a number of objectives in the Vale of White Horse Corporate Plan. For example, by reducing congestion and promoting modal shift in how people travel (through better walking and cycling provision), gives clear benefits in terms of reducing carbon emissions, promoting 'zero carbon travel' and improving air quality in the area, in accordance with our Corporate Plan policy, **Tackling the Climate Emergency**. The scheme also supports the objective **Building Healthy Communities** as it will contribute to making peoples' lives healthier by encouraging the switch to more active travel and helping to address congestion. It will also improve the quality of life for residents in and visitors to Didcot, through improved air quality and through improved place making it will also help enhance Didcot's sense of place.

Our Council attaches a response to the consultation questionnaire, some further general comments are set out below.

Mapping, Presentation, and Interpretation in the consultation document

We consider that there are a number of presentation issues with the consultation materials that could make it difficult for residents to understand the proposals. For example, some items are missing in the keys for maps and there are issues with the layout of some information presented in the consultation materials. We have identified these in our response to the consultation questions to assist with processing the consultation responses, as we consider it may affect how residents respond to the proposals.

Didcot Placemaking Strategy (Atkins – November 2022)

Further detail could be added to this document. The strategy does not consider the Vale of White Horse Local Plan and associated policies, while the area considered for the Didcot Central Corridor is said to extend to the proposed bridge Science Bridge on the A4130, which falls in Vale of White Horse, as do some key employment and housing areas in Didcot. The list of planned transport schemes should include for completeness: Southern Didcot Spine Road (which is partly delivered) and Milton Heights Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge.

In the Didcot Placemaking Strategy the 'Transport Infrastructure plan' on page 43 does not explain what is intended by the white dashed lines. Additionally, a number of maps in the document do not have map keys to clearly set out what is being shown. This is particularly problematic for images on pages 51-55 which show stars that the reader at this point does not know represent wayfinding and 'features' to support navigation and placemaking.

We agree that wayfinding provision across the project area could be increased, with signage on Broadway pointing along Haydon Road for access to the train station for example.

Wayfinding will be of particular value for this project, as well as measures to improve placemaking and green spaces. However there needs to be a mechanism in place (funding / volunteers / community involvement) to ensure measures put in place are maintained to a high standard after the initial investment.

I trust that these comments are helpful and look forward to seeing this project progress to the next stage,

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

[Redacted title]

Vale of White Horse District Council