

Policy & Programmes

HEAD OF SERVICE: Tim Oruye



By email:
DCCproject@oxfordshire.gov.uk

CONTACT OFFICER: [REDACTED]

planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk

Tel: 01235 422422

Textphone: 18001 01235 422422

Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon,
OXON, OX14 3JE

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Dear Oxfordshire County Council,

Thank you for inviting responses on the Didcot Central Corridor project. South Oxfordshire 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 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 set supported by the South Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the 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 South Oxfordshire Corporate Plan. For example, 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 **Action on the Climate Emergency**. The scheme also supports the **Improved economic and community well-being** policy as the scheme will help address congestion, which has an economic impact on business, and will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to Didcot, through improved air quality, better active travel infrastructure and better journey times.

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

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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 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, several 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 address line]

South Oxfordshire District Council

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