
Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Review (WCHAR) Stakeholder Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

The consultation is currently live and will close on 30th April 2020.

About you

- What is your name? Kevin Wilkinson
- Which organisation do you represent? Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group
- Would you like to get updates about the project via email? Yes – chair@harbug.org.uk

Questions

Please review the proposals here: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcotupdate then answer the questions below:

1. Do you think the types of improvements proposed in the scheme would encourage people to walk more often?

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes, but

If no, why not? And what would encourage people? Please type your answer in the box:

People will walk along the route for short distances to get to places but walking alongside a main road is unpleasant and pedestrians will want to get away from the road as soon as possible.

2. Do you think the types of improvements proposed on the scheme would encourage people to cycle more often?

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes, but

If no, why not? And what would encourage people? Please type your answer in the box:

If the cycle paths are built as shown in the consultation plans, then this would encourage more cycling, providing there are direct and convenient connections to existing and new Didcot housing developments. The new cycle paths are good 'trunk' routes but will only result in increased cycling use if cyclists can easily join and leave them onto other 'local' cycling infrastructure.

The cycle paths need to be integrated into the Science Vale Cycling Network. The new schemes could form a new SVCN route from Culham Science Centre through to the Harwell Campus via Harwell village and the Winnaway. The route would also connect Milton Park meaning the route (Hooke Way) would connect all three main business parks in the Science Vale.

3. Would you support walking and cycling improvements, even when this could mean less space for other road traffic?

Please answer yes, no, or don't know in the box:

Yes

4. Do you support the walking and cycling facilities proposed in each scheme?

○ [Scheme A - A4130 Widening](#)

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes

Please explain your answer in the box:

It is good to see that safe crossing points have been included on the roundabouts and wide segregated cycle paths are planned.
Can you confirm that there is cycle priority on the raised parallel crossings shown on the access roads?

○ [Scheme B - Science Bridge](#)

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes

Please explain your answer in the box:

Good for connecting West Didcot with Milton Park, Culham Science Centre and the Power Station site. There is also the opportunity to create a new route from Culham Science Centre to the Harwell Campus via Valley Park and Harwell Village.

○ [Scheme C – Didcot to Culham River Crossing](#)

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes

Please explain your answer in the box:

Good segregated cycle path along the whole route although concerns about how to access the route from existing Didcot especially Ladygrove and the new Didcot North East development.

○ [Scheme D - Clifton Hampden Bypass](#)

Please answer yes or no in the box:

Yes

Please explain your answer in the box:

Will make cycling to Culham Science Centre easier from Didcot and, in parts, from Abingdon.

5. How do you think we can further improve provision for people who wish to walk, cycle or ride a horse as part of each scheme?

○ [Scheme A - A4130 Widening](#)

Ensure that Valley Park and other developments along the A4130 have cycle path networks that connect to the new A4130 paths and beyond. We want to avoid another Great Western Park design where cycle paths end at the development boundary with no onward connections.

On the Backhill Lane Tunnel Roundabout, optimise the SCOOT software, controlling the Toucan crossings, for cyclists, e.g. reduce waiting times when traffic flow is low. Minimise the delay between the waiting times on each half of the staggered crossing so that once the lights are green on one half the second half will change soon after allowing minimum time to cross the whole dual carriageway. Maybe the crossing sets either side of the roundabout have different timing priorities e.g. on the western side, crossing south to north has a minimum delay and on the eastern side, crossing north to south has minimum time delay.

Can the Toucan crossing at the Valley Park signalised junction be changed to a raised parallel crossing to provide better continuity for cyclists?

Would the POD lane be better positioned next to the main carriageway so that, in future, carriageway space can be easily be re-allocated to accommodate more autonomous vehicles without changing the cycle lanes.

○ Scheme B - Science Bridge

Adding cycle and pedestrian access slips from the Science Bridge onto Milton Road would be a major improvement to the design, encouraging cycling and walking to Milton Park and the Milton Road side of the Power Station site. This would provide a considerable time advantage to cycling versus using the car, providing the 'nudge' to non-motorised transport championed by the County Council.

Ensure that developers of the Power Station site connect to the consultation cycle paths in a direct and convenient manner from cycle paths within the development. The Power Station site is an isolated site for transport, other than the car, so it is important to have good cycle and pedestrian links to avoid another car dependent development.

Can you confirm that there is cycle priority on the raised parallel crossings shown on the access roads?

Can you confirm that the Toucan crossing at Southmead Industrial Estate is the re-routed Sustrans route 5 and connects to the Sustrans path at the back of the power station.

Are the gradients up to the Science Bridge suitable for all cyclists? Does it meet gradients specified for cyclists in LTN2/08?

○ Scheme C – Didcot to Culham River Crossing

We are concerned about how to access the road and river crossing cycle paths from Didcot, as it is the other side of the Cherwell Valley railway line for many residents. The Northern Perimeter Road and Ladygrove Bridge only has a pedestrian path and the road is too busy and fast for most potential cyclists. The footbridge across the railway from Ladygrove to Southmead Industrial Estate now has an unusable cycle ramp, since it was re-built during electrification preparations.

Suggestions:

- Install a properly designed [Bike Wheeling Ramp](#) onto the footbridge to enable cycle access across the railway – Network Rail to pay? It is their poor specification for the bridge that has meant cycles have to be carried up and across.
- Access from Didcot North East – Construct a new shared use path from the Moor Ditch Path (Sustrans route 5) junction with B4016 to Appleford Crossing (Didcot North East development to pay?). From the crossing, include a ramp up to an unsignalized crossing on carriageway and down the other side. The ramp and crossing will also **keep the right of way from Appleford crossing to Sutton Courtenay open for cyclists, walkers and horse riders**, this has not been shown on the plans.

On the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road Roundabout - unsignalised pedestrian and cycle crossings at roundabouts are usually very poor crossings e.g., in Didcot, Foxhall Bridge Roundabout, Power Station Roundabout and Southmead Roundabout. Space is very limited, one cyclist only in the centre refuge, sometimes with cycles sticking out into the carriageway. Are there better designs that can be used?

Sutton Courtenay Roundabout – Is a staggered Toucan crossing needed? With the speed and the amount of traffic could a raised parallel crossing not be used instead? Similarly, on the A415 roundabout second exit to Culham expansion, could this crossing also be a raised parallel crossing?

○ [Scheme D - Clifton Hampden Bypass](#)

On the Culham Science Centre and Clifton Hampden roundabouts, and as mentioned previously, unsignalised pedestrian and cycle crossings on roundabouts are an unsatisfactory crossing design. The schemes will increase the traffic from Didcot to Abingdon on the A415, we think that the cycle route from Abingdon to Culham Science Centre should be upgraded and improved so that cycle commuters have a good alternative to using the main carriageway.

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

The cycling provision included in the consultation designs are a welcome improvement to what has been included in previous Oxfordshire road schemes. It is good to see that the County Council are now keen to support cycling as a transport alternative to cars.

We are conscious that whilst the Transport Planners have included good quality cycle infrastructure in the designs, other departments within the County Council do not have the same foresight. In addition, some developers also have outdated attitudes to transport issues, picturing cyclists (with few or no cars) in their marketing material but failing to follow up with good cycle infrastructure.

We urge the County Council to resist internal and developer pressure to 'water down' the proposals in the consultation and build the cycle paths, segregated with the specified path widths and safe crossing points that maintain the continuity and convenience of the routes.

With this project and other cycle route projects being built, we think that this is a good opportunity to introduce Science Vale Cycle Network route naming, as proposed in the attached document. This would highlight routes to new cyclists and help people navigate to main destinations.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your feedback is important to us and will be taken into account during the subsequent stages of scheme design.