

FEEDBACK FROM THE PARISH COUNCILS SOUNDING BOARD

KEY THEMES



HOUSING

- Need higher quality
- Reduce high density
- Not enough parking
- Garages are too small

GREEN BUFFER

- Buffers to remain between town and AONB
- Green gaps to be maintained
- Parish wards to strengthen and protect their identity



TRANSPORT

- Better connectivity of cycling routes to surrounding parishes
- Improvements and integration of mix-modal routes throughout town centre
- Traffic modelling to be more transparent
- Didcot is becoming grid locked

INFRASTRUCTURE

- How will rail travel support the overall infrastructure plans for the garden town?
- Better maintenance to footpaths and bridleways
- More parking needed in town



Didcot Garden Town



Didcot Garden Town

Parish Council Sounding Board Feedback – 22 September 2020

| Themes | Parish Council Feedback | Follow Up - Supplementary Information |
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| Active Transport and Infrastructure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better connectivity needed of cycling routes to surrounding parishes to join the town up 2. Some cycle routes sited on the Science Vale Cycle Network (SVCN) have not been developed out (Route 8). 3. Some of cycle paths do not meet the Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards, with reference to the width. | <p>We would encourage all sounding boards members with interest in the SVCN project, to register to the Oxfordshire County Council bulletin here. The bulletin provides continuous updates on built improvements to the network.</p> <p>Alternatively, you can find the latest construction updates here.</p> |
| Transport and Infrastructure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the HIF1 routes tie in with the existing roads and cycle paths? 2. Better consultation about HIF1 designs and plans over the Appleford Sidings – Appleford was not consulted on flyover ideas which is in the parish 3. Didcot is already grid locked; how will this be mitigated when the long process of the HIF construction starts. | <p>The HIF transport infrastructure package was put out for consultation in March and April of this year.</p> <p>https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult/ti/DidcotAreaInfrastructureUpdate/consultationHome</p> <p>About 22,000 mailers were sent by regular post to homes in the area so Appleford Parish Council will have had the link to online consultation documents showing transport proposals.</p> <p>The consultation included a bridge over the rail sidings for the river crossing near Appleford. Since that time, OCC have incorporated some changes based on comments they received. They are scheduling individual meetings with all parish councils and were able to meet with Appleford this week (after the parish council sounding board meeting). The OCC transport team feels that whilst Appleford would have like to have the alignment for the river crossing further to the west, they understand the explanation for why the alignment was set where it is.</p> <p>Latest progress on the HIF1 transport projects will be provided at the next DGT Advisory Board on Friday 23 October – the meeting will be recorded and published on our websites.</p> |

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| | | Oxfordshire County Council will develop a traffic management plan as part of the planned transport improvements. Please contact them at: HIF1project@oxfordshire.gov.uk |
| Infrastructure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better maintenance to footpaths and bridleways is needed. 2. Footpaths from Didcot to the Milton Park entrance is unkept. | <p>All adopted roads, footpaths and cycle paths are the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council. The quickest way to submit your concerns is to use their online reporting web page https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ or email highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> |
| Public transport and infrastructure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is rail travel going to support the overall infrastructure? 2. Cycling and walking referenced a lot, but what about public transport. | <p>The Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan includes work to study public transport and the idea of having autonomous vehicles run along the Garden Line. These are longer term visions, but transport is very much at the heart of the plan. The Didcot Garden Town team is now working with a consortium to trial autonomous vehicles that link Didcot Parkway to Milton Park.</p> <p>Earlier this year at Milton Park, one of three key employment sites in the Didcot Garden Town area, launched a new app called Mi-Link. The Mi-Link platform gives its users a full range of transport mode information including walking, cycle hire, e-bikes and all public transport details, as well as advising on traffic congestion. Over the coming months, the app will be expanded to include details of autonomous electric vehicles, which will provide public transport services around the park in 2021. This will offer even more opportunity for people to complete their journeys from door-to-door without the need of their private vehicle. You can find more information at www.miltonpark.co.uk/mi-link.</p> <p>The e-bike data from Milton Park shows that their bikes have continued to be very popular despite the recent COVID-19 outbreak, and many key workers, who have been reluctant to use public transport, have really appreciated the free bike service between Didcot Parkway and the business park. There is evidence that these bikes have been used to travel as far as Oxford.</p> <p>One example of an effort to accelerate active travel is Oxfordshire County Council's work to quickly add cycling provision as part of the COVID recovery action plan. Please visit the county council's website at https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/emergency-active-travel-fund/active-travel</p> <p>These projects require the support of the public to be successfully implemented.</p> |

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| <p>Housing</p> | <p>1. Need high quality housing to be delivered, with more parking options.</p> | <p>Didcot Garden Town is a consultee for planning applications within the garden town boundary and will submit a response once an application has been filed.</p> <p>There are several council policies which officers use to support embedding garden town principles in new development, which includes design quality. These policies support development application reviews. Links to a few of these documents are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan • Principles are being incorporated in the Local Plans of both South and Vale • Design Guidelines are approved for both South and Vale • Climate emergency work being done supports policy work, including development of the corporate policy for South and Vale <p>We implement the above policies during planning application reviews in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Didcot Garden Town is a consultee and reviews most major development applications located within the boundary. • The South and Vale Planning team carefully assess planning applications for quality, using all relevant policy documents. In many cases officers engage in extensive negotiations with developers to push for quality outcomes. • Officers liaise with other stakeholders and agencies to ensure their comments and best practice design is implemented wherever possible. • Sustainability issues and the reliance on motorised vehicles, and the scope to use other modes of transport, is assessed in connection with all major development. |
| <p>Parking</p> | <p>1. There's limited parking in the town centre.</p> | <p>There is an active project to study the feasibility of Civil Parking Enforcement, which would help with enforcing parking violations locally. We are working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and a decision is expected in Autumn 2020. This work is an important part of the parking strategy for Didcot Garden Town, which we will continue to develop, once the CPE position becomes clearer.</p> |

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| <p>Open space and green infrastructure</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Buffers to remain between town and AONB. This much be protected. 2. Green gaps to be maintained. | <p>The Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan includes strategies to maintain green gaps. Please see Figure 8.8 – Proposed Landscape Plan on page 239 of the document.</p> |
| <p>Meanwhile spaces and pop-up use. Retail</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gateway site, possibly as a meanwhile garden. 2. Shops in the Broadway, more boutique, café culture. 3. Orchard Centre is expensive. 4. Can meanwhile uses be expanded to the broader area of influence? 5. Could PCs share a pop-up space within Didcot for community connection? | <p>We are currently working with our Public Arts Development Officer to develop a creative plan to identify areas where public improvements could be implemented. The new spaces could potentially be in the form of public art and structures but also an opportunity to create a temporary pop-up uses and events. Once a draft plan is developed, we will ensure to liaise with our parish and town council partners.</p> |

Didcot Garden Town

Minutes

Didcot Garden Town (DGT) Parish Council Sounding Board

Tuesday 22 September, 5:30–7pm, Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Parish and Town Councils

Didcot Town Council – Cllr Denise Macdonald
Sutton Courtenay Parish Council– Cllr Simon Lazare
Harwell Parish Council – Cllr Martin Rickets
Milton Parish Council – Cllr Mark Smith
Long Wittenham Parish Council– Cllr Gordon Rogers
Appleford Parish Council – Cllr Victoria Shepard
East Hagbourne Parish Council – Cllr Paul Dixon
Chilton Parish Council – Cllr Robert Girling
Blewbury Parish Council – Cllr Lydia Inglis

Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board Members

Cllr Ian Hudspeth
Cllr Sue Cooper
Cllr Judy Roberts
Cllr Rita Atkinson
Cllr David Rouane

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White District Councils - Internal Staff

Marybeth Harasz – Garden Communities Manager
Nicky Wyer – Didcot Garden Town Project Officer
Katie Embling – Development Projects Officer
Zoe Elford - Consultation and Community Engagement Team Leader

Didcot Town Council - Internal Staff

Guy Langton – Planning and Environment Officer
Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk

Key Discussion Summary

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| 1. | Welcome |
| 2. | Orientation Presentation – Status update on DGT NW to circulate slides following sounding board |

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| 3. | Breakout Session 1 – Insight and Concerns |
| | <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SVCN route 8 not finished. Needs to be upgraded and maintained as a proper cycleway, with reference to the Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards. • Cycling routes and connectivity distorted especially through to town. Need greater connection to surrounding parishes. • Insufficient bus services including Chilton X32 under threat. • Traffic modelling to be more transparent. • Connectivity across the railway line. • How is rail travel going to support the overall infrastructure? • Upkeep of footpaths and bridleways. <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for high quality housing • Reduce high density • Not enough parking and garages which are too small <p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little parking in the town. • Didcot is becoming grid locked – what will happen when HIF1 is being built out to help manage the network? <p>Green Buffer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffers to remain between town and AONB • Green gaps to be maintained • PC's to maintain their identity <p>Specific Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radcot Green development in Sutton Courtney/Appleford concern – NW confirmed not included in the housing figures. • Flyover for Appleford Sidings – Consultation questioned. MbH to follow up with OCC |
| 4. | Breakout Session 2 – Pop Up Uses and Meanwhile Spaces |
| | <p>Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway site, possibly as a meanwhile garden. • Shops in the Broadway, more boutique, café culture. • Orchard Centre is expensive. • Can meanwhile uses be expanded to the broader area of influence? • Could PCs share a pop-up space within Didcot for community connection? |
| 5. | AOB |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion raised that Parish Councils could have a pre-meeting with Rita Atkinson the Parish Representative for the DGT Advisory Board. • PCs within the area of influence may need a separate meeting. |