

Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan update summary

20 March 2025

Status	Delivery Plan Objective	Ref	Project name	Lead	Intended outputs	Project description	Outcomes	Progress 2024-25 Qs 3-4
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	1-4	Science Bridge A4130 improvements Clifton Hampden Bypass Culham Thames crossing	OCC	Fully constructed infrastructure	Four linked Highways Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) schemes north of Didcot.	Improved connectivity, active travel, unlocking new homes and jobs delivery.	Following planning approval in December by the Secretary of State, detailed design is now underway and construction is expected to start in early 2026.
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	5	Didcot Central Corridor Placemaking Strategy and Options Appraisal	OCC	Approved placemaking strategy and options appraisal	Input to a Placemaking Strategy for the Cultural Spine (Jubilee roundabout & Broadway), Gateway Spine (Station Rd.) and Foxhall Road, including consultation with stakeholders on capital projects options.	Transport model evidence based recommendations for highways changes in Didcot to increase active travel and improve traffic flow, increase active travel.	The draft Stage 1 Options Appraisal Report is currently with internal officers for review and feedback. Appointed consultants AtkinsRealis circulated this on behalf of OCC ahead of final revisions being made and shared with wider stakeholders.
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	6	Northern Perimeter Road (NPR3)	OCC	Fully constructed highways infrastructure	Contribution to the design and implementation of the A4130 Didcot northern perimeter road extension and transfer of £6.2m external funding to OCC.	Increased active travel and improved traffic flow around the east of Didcot.	A funding agreement has been finalised and is ready for signing for £6.2m government funding that will be transferred to OCC in two tranches to support implementation. Preliminary designs are complete and engagement events are to be held on 6 and 13 March prior to submitting a planning application in late 2025.
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	7	Didcot Gateway - masterplan	Homes Engl.	Outline planning approval and published council-led masterplan	Input to masterplanning for the key Didcot Gateway site to ensure embedding of Didcot Garden Town principles.	Context setting for a mixed use scheme of homes, offices and public open space on multiple sites and enhanced arrival at Didcot Parkway.	Planning application P22/S0491/O for the wider Gateway site is under consideration following consultation and further work is in hand to reflect planning requirements.
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	8	Didcot Gateway - council offices	SAV	Fully constructed infrastructure	Input to the design and implementation of this key Gateway development for the councils to ensure embedding of Didcot Garden Town principles.	Delivery of a highly sustainable, district council headquarters, including lettable office space, landscaped amenity areas and a public plaza.	The Planning Committee is expected in April to determine planning application P23/S2621/FUL for the council offices, a BREEAM Excellent building with commercial occupation on the upper two floors to create a local office market. Meanwhile, procurement documentation is being prepared for a tender process during 2025.
On track	INFRASTRUCTURE and the BUILT ENVIRONMENT	9	Wayfinding	DGT	Strategy and implementation	Preparation of a wayfinding strategy by consultants on behalf of the district councils to identify locations for and specify a wayfinding scheme across Didcot and delivery of the scheme on the ground.	Enhanced, inclusive access to Didcot's spaces and destinations, support for active travel and greater connectivity between neighbourhoods and with Science Vale.	External contractor Landmark met with officers onsite in February 2025 and have started work on detailed design, manufacture, installation of the scheme with some minor decommissioning of redundant signage. Completion of installation is due late 2025.
Complete	ACTIVE TRAVEL and INNOVATION	10	Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	OCC	Strategy	Identified, local level cycling and walking infrastructure improvements, aiming to provide for all abilities across Didcot and the surrounding villages.	To develop and adopt an LCWIP for Didcot Garden Town to identify cycling and walking improvements required at the local level.	This is a completed project, which continues to feed into other projects such as implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
Complete	ACTIVE TRAVEL and INNOVATION	11	Science Vale Active Travel Network	OCC	Fully constructed infrastructure	Active travel improved across Science Vale to connect employment zones to town centres including Didcot.	To plan, develop and construct active travel routes across the Science Vale, connecting three main employment zones to town centres including Didcot.	This is a completed project, which continues to feed into other projects such as implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
Complete	ACTIVE TRAVEL and INNOVATION	12	MultiCAV Autonomous vehicle trials	MEPC	Community improvements	Greater understanding of the practical and technical implications in Didcot of autonomous bus service trials in Didcot that might in future deliver the DGT Delivery Plan's vision for science and innovation.	Work with a consortium led by UK transport operator FirstGroup to plan and support an autonomous vehicle service travelling to and from Didcot Parkway to Milton Park.	This is a completed study.
Delayed	ACTIVE TRAVEL and INNOVATION	13	Didcot Area Travel Plan	SAV	Strategy	Input to a strategy being developed as part of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), overarching transport and travel options for towns in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.	A strategy to deliver a net-zero transport system, private cars, cycling, freight, bus and rail that protects the environment.	OCC will provide an update to the March Advisory Board meeting on this project, which has been renamed 'Science Vale Area Travel Plan'.
Business as usual	HIGH QUALITY HOUSING and PLACEMAKING	14	DGT development principles in development	DGT	Detailed design	Commenting on major planning applications, working with planners, developers, infrastructure providers and health and wellbeing stakeholders.	DGT principles embedded in planning decisions	In Quarter 3 the Garden Town team commented on unresolved landscape and active travel issues in an amended Quora application for the NE Didcot Neighbourhood Centre and objected to a proposal for over 200 new homes off Sires Hill, east of NE Didcot, in open countryside close to the National Landscape (formerly AONB).
Business as usual	HIGH QUALITY HOUSING and PLACEMAKING	15	DGT principles in planning policy	DGT	Policy	Coordinating with the Planning Policy team and Neighbourhood Planning teams.	DGT principles embedded in emerging planning policy.	The Didcot Garden Town team commented on the Joint Local Plan Reg 19 consultation, supporting the main Garden Communities Policies, which the team had input to, but noting some inconsistencies in maps and titles. The Policy team will take these comments into account when preparing their 'proposed modifications' for the Examiner.

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On track	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE and LEISURE	16	Green infrastructure strategy	DGT	approved placemaking strategy and options appraisal	Preparation of a Didcot Green Infrastructure Strategy by a consultant with recommendations for improvement projects. And implementation of short, medium and long-term projects.	Green infrastructure schemes identified. Improved public realm multifunctionality, open space access strengthened for health and wellbeing benefits and a phasing plan for biodiversity net gain, nature recovery, connected green/blue infrastructure, landscape art and climate resilience.	Landscape architects Groundwork London have been appointed, subject to contract completion, to design and specify four green infrastructure projects. By late 2026 tender documents for each of the four projects to be delivered on the ground are expected to be ready to be published.
On Track	COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES	17	Environment and sustainability activation	DGT	Community activation (programme of projects planned and implemented)	Working with local partners to deliver a series of projects connected with the environment and sustainability.	Community projects carried out such as community gardens, tree planting, and the Didcot Nature Charter project, proposed by the Residents Sounding Board.	Supported by the Garden Town, 22 eco-related organisations displayed at the well-attended Didcot Eco Fair on Saturday 2 November at Cornerstone Arts Centre. Also supported by the Garden Town, on 5 December representatives from seven local organisations, including Age UK, Restore and Didcot Foodbank received Energy Champion training from the Low Carbon Hub. Officers are monitoring how the new Energy Champions spread the training out into the community.
Delayed	COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES	18	Meanwhile uses	DGT	Community activation	Input to planning and delivering temporary or semi-permanent meanwhile uses in collaboration with partners and the community.	Temporary or semi-permanent meanwhile uses of commercial space and public realm. Improved sense of community well-being.	A meanwhile project planned for summer 2025 will involve community engagement and wall based art at the Cow Lane underpass.
On track	COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES	19	Didcot Public Art and Culture	DGT	Strategy and community activation	Didcot focused Public Art Plan to identify art placements that will revitalise areas. Building on Didcot's Cultural Spine by delivering projects and events to increase Didcot's cultural offer and promote Didcot as a destination.	Didcot focused Public art placements identified and areas revitalised. Projects and events delivered to build on Didcot's cultural offer and promote Didcot as a destination.	The Didcot Public Art Plan was approved in November by South and Vale Independent Cabinet Member decisions. The DGT team is leading on art projects at Cornerstone, Ladygrove, Mowbray Fields and the Cow Lane underpass.
On track	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE and LEISURE	20	Didcot Leisure & Recreation Strategy	SAV	Strategy	Input to a Didcot leisure and recreation strategy that builds on the recent district-wide strategy.	A detailed review of Didcot's leisure needs, with recommendations for current and future leisure need, allowing for identified housing growth.	The recent district level Leisure Facilities Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategies approved by both Cabinets in November provide a high level of detail. Officers have extracted relevant data from each document to create Didcot focused extracts, which it is hoped will inform future development opportunities.
On track	COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES	21	Active Communities & Healthy Didcot	SAV	Community activation (programme of activities implemented)	Working with the Active Communities team and local Steering Group to help plan and implement a programme of activities and with local organisations to develop the Healthy Didcot community insight project and initiate a programme of actions to mitigate identified health issues.	A programme of activities and recreational provision for all abilities, Didcot focused health data profiles, improved health and an understanding of community views on health needs.	A first draft of the community-led Data Insight Report for Didcot is being reviewed by the community-led Healthy Didcot Steering Group, supported by the Didcot Garden Town team. This report will feed into the steering group's proposed action plan. UKSPF funded bike repair stations have been installed at Didcot Wave Leisure Centre and GWP District Community Centre, with another to be installed near Cornerstone.
Paused	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	22	Didcot Town Centre and Retail Study	SAV	Strategy	Prepare a study, building on the district-wide Town Centre and Retail Study, to identify possible interventions for Didcot.	Identified interventions to improve the town's viability and vitality, including realistic, achievable short and long-term actions.	In the next financial year, officers will work with the Economic Development team, who, once the Didcot Central Corridor project is finalised, will initiate a Didcot focused study that builds on the Joint Local Plan 2041 district-wide study.
On track	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	23	Apprenticeships, skills and training	OxLEP	Community improvements	Working with partners to build local business networks, influence programmes and identify opportunities for skills training and apprenticeships.	Greater understanding of and access to local opportunities for skills training and apprenticeships.	10-14 February 2025 was National Apprenticeship Week and a short paper on Didcot apprenticeship highlights is available.
Paused	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	24	Digital inclusion and co-working	SAV	Community improvements	Working with partners to improve Didcot's digital inclusion and identify co-working options, in accordance with OCC's 2022 Digital Inclusion Strategy and Charter.	Improved digital inclusion in Didcot via digital hubs, public Wi-Fi and other interventions.	The team is working in partnership with the Economic Development team to ensure digital inclusion is addressed through the Didcot Town Centre and Retail Study in the next financial year.
Complete	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	25	Local Development Orders (LDOs)	SAV	Policy (adopted Local Development Orders)	Input to the councils' Strategic Partnerships and Planning teams work on Local Development Orders (LDOs).	Improved economic investment and job opportunities.	In October Vale of White Horse District Council resolved to adopt the D-Tech LDO (P17/V2490/LDO) subject to a S106 legal agreement. This decision closes project 25 on the Didcot Garden Town Programme. Officers will transfer the budget previously allocated to this project to other projects on the Programme.
Delayed	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	26	Milton Bio-Science Centre	SAV	Fully constructed infrastructure	Transfer of £7m external funding to Milton Park for delivery of bio-science centre, as approved by the Milton Park Local Development Order (LDO).	State of the art bio-science centre at Milton Park to increase economic investment and job opportunities in Didcot.	Appointment of a design and build contractor for the Bio Science Centre was considered imminent but has been delayed. Completion of the project will trigger payment of the balance from the DGT £7m.

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On track	COMMUNICATIONS and LEGACY	27	Identity, legacy and stewardship	DGT	Community activation	Working with local organisations to plan and implement events, community days and healthy activities for the annual 6-week Didcot Garden Party programmes. Helping to foster a legacy plan that involves local adults, children and organisations in managing future, healthier life style, place making and sense of community ownership.	A legacy plan and programme of activities to ensure Didcot's garden town principles contribute to placemaking and are sustained in the long-term. The UKSPF funding has to be spent before the end of March so any balance will be recycled to another suitable project.	The last planned and funded Garden Party took place successfully over the 2024 summer holiday. There were nine performances and activities at Cornerstone, three community days and 20 sports activities. A working group, including Didcot Town Council, Cornerstone Arts Centre and Sustainable Didcot has been set up to take the Garden Party legacy forward and achieve long-term continuity via local people and organisations.
	Related DGT project	19b	UKSPF funded public realm improvements at Cornerstone	DGT	Fully constructed infrastructure	A UKSPF funded project to instal outside Cornerstone, recycled hardwood seating and reclaimed steel planters with bee friendly planting and bug hotels that overlaps with green infrastructure and public art implementation.	To improve biodiversity and visitor footfall.	Reclaimed hardwood seating and recycled steel planters have been ordered and will be installed before the end of March. Local volunteers will be helping the team plant up a selection of bee-friendly plants and 'bug hotels' are being ordered to place on Cornerstone's external walls.
	Related project led by others		Cornerstone Development Action Plan	SAV	Community improvements	At its meeting on 22 February 2024, the Council resolved to approve the Cornerstone Action Plan to optimise operation of the in-house delivery model before any consideration is given to alternative operating models; and to acknowledge that the current implementation costs outlined within the action plan, expected to be incurred over the lifetime of the action plan.	To integrate Cornerstone into Didcot Garden Town work for better community engagement and oversight.	Officers are working with the Community Arts team on several public realm projects for the area outside Cornerstone, including trees and shrubs, art works and UKSPF funded planters.
	Related project led by others		116-120 Broadway development	SAV		On 18 April 2024 South Cabinet noted that £335,470 DGT capital may be required for developing community spaces on the ground floors of the council's development at 116, 118 & 120 Broadway.		A decision is due on planning application P25/S0376/D for demolition of the single storey units 114 and 116 Broadway and, subject to approval, demolition will take place late spring. Planning permission will also be sought for the architect's design proposals.