Question from TDC:

"Impact upon Abingdon

There have been several representations made (and there is likely to be more from Members/TC's/PC's etc) about the impacts on Abingdon town centre, as a result of the HIF1 schemes and this is something I will have to address in my response. Obviously the Paramics Model stops just to the west of the existing Culham River Crossing and no further junction capacity modelling has been done for any of the junctions in the centre of Abingdon. I know that the County approach is very much looking towards decide and provide and therefore, would not expect larger capacity to be provided in this area, but for people to look towards the cycle infrastructure that is being provided as part of the scheme, however, for the purposes of transparency it would be helpful if you were to provide some clarification/justification about why no assessment has been done here, given that there are existing queues back along the A415 into Abingdon. Members may want to understand if the queues will remain/change as a result of the HIF1 schemes/if there is a net increase of vehicles travelling north along the A415 to Abingdon."

HIF1 Project Team Response:

Changes in flow to/from Abingdon

Any increase into/out of Abingdon is due to the growth in housing and employment in Didcot and surrounding areas, not due to HIF. The traffic impact on Abingdon from those housing and employment sites will be scrutinised by OCC TDC through the Transport Assessment in the planning application for each site. If mitigation is deemed necessary, which could include sustainable travel infrastructure and/or services, then TDC would secure this from each housing site. HIF1 is part of wider strategy to mitigate the impact of growth across a wide area which can only be delivered incrementally as funding becomes available, either through government grants or developer funding.

Walking and Cycling

The Scheme both directly delivers and indirectly enables a significant number of new and/or improved walking and cycling routes in the area. The provision of additional and improved NMU routes and crossing points will help to reduce the existing severance caused by the Great Western Mainline and River Thames. Connections to public rights of way will be provided, and safe access to and from new bus stops. This will help to engender modal shift away from the private motor car, particularly for commuting purposes for employment and education, but also for important access to amenities such as retail and healthcare, and for leisure trips. As explained below under 'Housing Sites', development sites in the area will be required to deliver additional NMU links which will connect with the HIF NMU infrastructure, in turn linking Didcot (and surrounding areas) to Abingdon with high quality NMU routes.

Public Transport

The HIF1 project relieves queueing at Sutton Bridge and Culham Cut, which in turn improves the journey time reliability for public transport using this route to/from Abingdon e.g. bus route 33. This makes using public transport to/from Abingdon more attractive, reducing the number of people choosing to drive into Abingdon. HIF1 also provides a new route for public transport to link areas of employment with existing and new homes improving bus services and journey time reliability to increase passenger numbers.

AQMA

Abingdon is subject to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which uses traffic signals to control the centre to prevent excessive emissions. The signals hold vehicles outside the centre of town to enable it to operate without gridlock. This, in part, creates queuing on the peripheral approaches to Abingdon, for example the A415 from Culham. Until the vehicle fleet change away from petrol/diesel vehicles is sufficient to not require the AQMA, there is little than can be done to remove the vehicle queuing on the approaches to Abingdon Town Centre.

https://www.laqmportal.co.uk/aqma_maps//511_AQMA%20Abingdon.JPG

A34 Lodge Hill

The A34 Lodge Hill scheme at North Abingdon will enable rerouting of trips in Abingdon, particularly those with an origin in North Abingdon wishing to head south on A34, and those from the A34 with a destination in North Abingdon. This rerouting of trips and subsequent relieving of traffic could enable OCC to investigate options for the road system in the town in the future, once the AQMA falls away due to fleet change.

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/roadworks/future-transport-projects/a34-lodge-hill-interchange

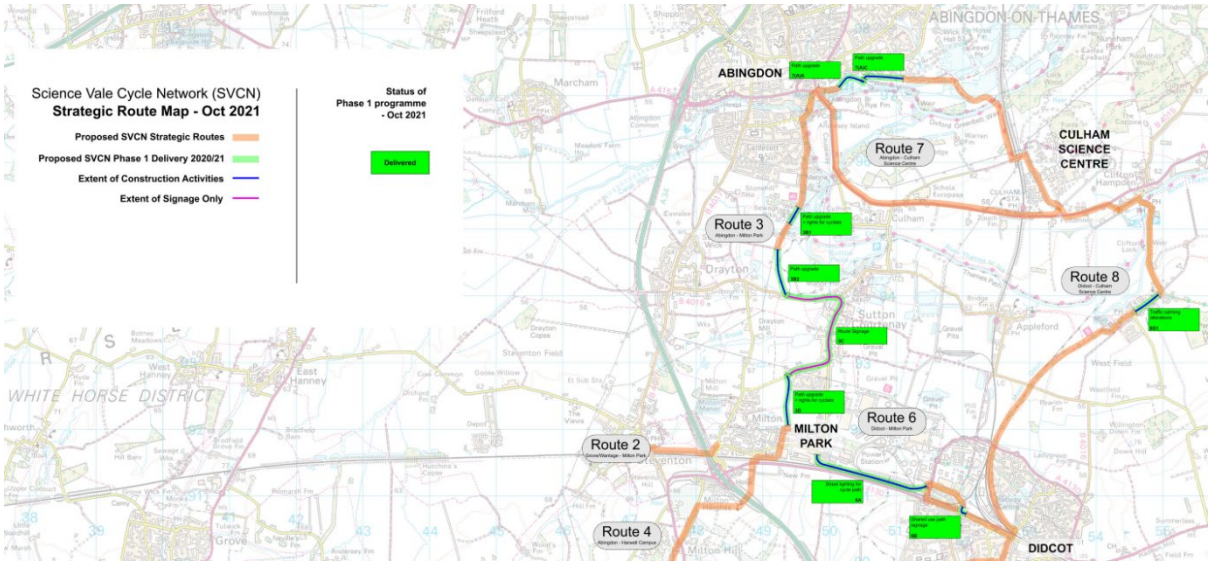
https://a34lodgehill.exhibition.app/

LCWIP

OCC is currently creating a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Abingdon alongside key stakeholders, which will identify the infrastructure improvements required in the town, which may include reprioritisation of road space.

SVATN

OCC has recently completed improvements to cycle routes in / near Abingdon through the Science Vale Cycle Network programme. A new study, Science Vale Active Travel Network (SVATN) will soon begin to further this, with the route between Abingdon and Culham (between HIF1 and Abingdon – called route 7 in the SVCN map below) being one of the routes to be studied.
https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/roadworks/major-current-roadworks/science-vale-cycle-network



LTCP

OCC is currently working on updating the county's transport strategy in a new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP). This will include a strategy covering Abingdon.
https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/LTCP

Housing Sites

The housing sites allocated in/around Abingdon as part of Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 are currently building out, and in different stages of delivering their offsite mitigation measures,

including pedestrian and cycle routes. These sites are also obligated to pay towards improvements to bus services in Abingdon.

The Dalton Barracks housing site, allocated in Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2, will also have to deliver sustainable transport improvements in Abingdon including pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, and improved/new bus services.

The land adjacent to Culham housing site, allocated in South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan, will have to assess its impact on Abingdon and mitigate as appropriate. This will include sustainable transport improvements in/around Abingdon including pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, and improved/new bus services. The local plan policy states for that site:

"All necessary infrastructure, referring to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include […] provision for excellent sustainable transport facilities including, but not limited to […] provision of a new cycle bridge and associated connectivity and paths across the River Thames to connect appropriately with Abingdon on Thames to the north of the site."

vi) **all necessary infrastructure, referring to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is likely to include:**
   a. **new junctions onto the A415 and significant contributions towards the Clifton Hampden Bypass, the Didcot to Culham River Crossing, and upgrading the A4074/B4015 junction at Golden Balls;**
   b. **provision for excellent sustainable transport facilities including, but not limited to, new and improvements to existing cycle and footpaths including contributions towards a 'Cycle Premium Route' that is proposed between Didcot and Culham; provision of a new cycle bridge and associated connectivity and paths across the River Thames to connect appropriately with Abingdon on Thames to the north of the site; bus improvements including provision of a scheduled bus service, with a minimum of two buses per hour between Berinsfield, Culham and Abingdon, with options to extend or vary services to locations such as Cowley, Chalgrove and Didcot;**

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 Infrastructure Delivery Plan April 2020 update states:

CUL23	Transport	Culham-Abingdon cycle bridge	OCC / Developer	Direct Delivery	£6,580,000	Cost estimate identified by OCC from Science Vale cycle route feasibility work 2018.
CUL25	Transport	Bus service provision	OCC / Operators	Developer Contributions	£3,880,000	Cost identified by OCC based on pump priming three buses on a service Science Vale – Oxford Eastern Arc; one bus on service Abingdon – Culham – Berinsfield; and £1m to improve connections to the railway station (these possible services and the £720,000 per bus are subject to change).

https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/South-PSD27-Infrastructure-Delivery-Plan-April-2020-update.pdf