

Didcot Gateway: Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this site being developed?

Land to the south of Didcot Parkway train station is identified in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan as a site where there is an opportunity for redevelopment. It is identified in the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan as a site with an indicative capacity for 300 new homes.

The proposals will provide an attractive and high-quality gateway into Didcot, bringing about transformation of an underutilised site to create a more vibrant entrance into Didcot.

Development will provide much needed housing in one of the least affordable areas of the country for home ownership and renting. The development will also help to create a clearer link to the town centre and improved walking and cycling routes.

How do these proposals relate to other planning applications on the Didcot Gateway site?

In 2015, development proposals for up to 300 homes, a 70-bed hotel, a gym, retail uses, commercial office floorspace, a replacement nursery school and a decked car park of up to three levels and supporting infrastructure were submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council (planning application reference P15/S2159/O). The application was approved by Members of South Oxfordshire's Planning Committee on 10th February 2016.

Due to fragmented land ownership within the site, a Section 106 Legal Agreement was not completed, and planning permission was not formally granted. The application was withdrawn in June 2020.

Homes England is now working to bring forward the redevelopment of the site. This new proposal relates to land owned by Homes England and South Oxfordshire District Council only, to ensure that the development is deliverable and issues surrounding land ownership experienced in the past can be overcome.

The proposals will deliver the first phases of regeneration at Didcot Gateway and support further improvements in the Gateway area.

The proposals allow for land parcels in different ownership to be developed independently whilst set within a comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure delivery framework.

Who is involved in the development?

The proposals relate to land owned by Homes England and South Oxfordshire District Council.

South Oxfordshire District Council will also act as the planning authority to determine the outcome of the application and has robust internal procedures to make sure the application is handled objectively to avoid any conflict of interest.

When is the site likely to be developed?

An outline planning application is due to be submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council this summer. At that stage, there will be an opportunity to submit comments on the application to the Council.

Following the granting of outline planning permission for the site, which is anticipated later this year, detailed proposals for the site will be submitted for approval. Development is then expected to start during 2021.

The first new homes are expected to be occupied by residents during 2022 or 2023.

How many new homes will be built?

The proposals are for up to 265 new homes. The exact number of homes will be confirmed through detailed planning applications.

Up to 40% of new homes will be affordable, consistent with adopted and emerging planning policy in South Oxfordshire.

What is being done to address traffic issues?

The proposals will deliver a low car dependency development, with new residents able to access Didcot Town Centre and the surrounding area on foot, by bike or using public transport. As such new residents will not need to own a car to get about locally. As a result, the proposals will not have any significant impact on traffic.

Development will also seek to facilitate improvements to public transport, potentially including a new westbound bus layby on Station Road.

In addition, parking for commuters will be provided in Foxhall Car Park to the north of the train station. This will mean that fewer commuters are travelling on Station Road to access car parking.

Will the existing car parking be replaced?

The existing pay and display car parking opposite the train station will no longer be provided. Parking for commuters is already provided in Foxhall Car Park to the north of the train station. This, and the limited pay and display parking proposed as part of the development, will mitigate the loss of existing pay and display car parking south of Station Road.

Will open space be provided for new homes?

Private outdoor space is proposed for all new homes with a mix of garden terraces, balconies and roof terraces proposed.

New communal gardens are also proposed adjacent to apartment buildings which will include seating, lighting and raised planters to provide opportunities for food growing for residents.

How can I find out more about the proposals?

You can contact us directly by emailing planning@bartonwillmore.co.uk. You can also leave comments in the feedback form or send them by post to: Barton Willmore, The Blade, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BE.

Representatives from the project team will respond to specific questions and provide further information when requested, where possible before the end of the feedback period.

How can I find out more about Didcot Garden Town?

The Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan was published in October 2017. It's available on South Oxfordshire District Council's website at <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/business/support-business/supporting-our-town-centres/didcot/didcot-garden-town-0>

You can also subscribe to the Didcot Garden Town newsletter at the link above to receive updates on the exciting projects planned for the town.