

Didcot Garden Town HIF1
RWE Objection Response

This note has been prepared in response to the comments received from Stantec on behalf of RWE Generation UK in relation to the HIF1 planning application (ref: R3.0138/21).

Stantec extracts are shown in italics and the applicants' responses are provided in coloured text underneath each of the main comments.

Stantec Comment

In our view, for the baseline assessment to be robust it is critical that the 2011 surveys should be incorporated into the Paramics model in order to accurately reflect the baseline operational performance of local junctions around Didcot A Power Station. Without consideration to these, the results of the base junction capacity assessments are an underrepresentation of the current operation of the road network around the site, and therefore inappropriate for the purpose of carrying a net impact assessment. We therefore request that an updated assessment is carried out using the 2011 survey data, which can be made available to OCC upon request.

Applicant Response

The 2020 model baseline flows / assessments set out the context of how the local highway network is currently performing in terms of capacity and the need for intervention. A net impact assessment on the 2020 flows has not been undertaken. It can be concluded any changes to the 2020 models would not alter the conclusion set out in the submitted Transport Assessment as set out below:

8.2.6 The traffic modelling indicates that without the HIF1 Scheme in place the traffic associated with the Local Plan housing and employment growth would result in congestion throughout the network in and around Didcot by 2034. The Scheme improves overall conditions for existing users of the transport network and helps to accommodate committed local plan growth in a sustainable way as part of an overall balanced transport strategy.

8.2.7 In conclusion, the proposed Scheme will significantly improve the accessibility to the walking, cycling and the bus network, as well improve the journey quality, times and reliability for these users along the Scheme extent. The analysis undertaken as part of this TA does not indicate any significant adverse effects on the highway, walking, cycling, horse-riding or public transport networks as a result of the proposed development.

Stantec Comment

Although it is accepted that the improved A4130/New Thames River Crossing/ Collet roundabout (SCH7) has spare capacity to accommodate rerouting traffic, no evidence is presented in the TA to suggest that the Hawksworth Road/ Collet junction can accommodate this traffic. Without testing this, it is not possible to understand whether traffic would route this way or would carry on using the SCH6 and potentially impact traffic along the SBLR and the former Didcot A Power site (or possible future Didcot Data Campus) access.

Applicant Response

A sensitivity test has been undertaken for the Collett/Hawksworth Road priority junction, to determine the impact of traffic taking the alternative route to the A4130/New Thames River Crossing/Collett roundabout (SCH7) via Hawksworth Road to avoid delays at the A4130/Science Bridge junction (SCH6)

It has been assumed that all vehicles shown in the 2034 model making the right turn at the A4130/Science Bridge junction would use the alternative route via Hawksworth Road. This equates to 226 pcus in the AM peak and 174 pcus in the PM peak. These trips were then added as left turn movements from Hawksworth Road to Collett (North). Junction performance was assessed using the Junctions 9 software. The results of the sensitivity test are presented below.

Table 1: Operation of Collett/Hawksworth Road Priority Junction – 2034 Traffic Flows

Movement	Without Diverted Traffic				With Diverted Traffic			
	AM Peak		PM Peak		AM Peak		PM Peak	
	Max RFC	Queue (veh)	Max RFC	Queue (veh)	Max RFC	Queue (veh)	Max RFC	Queue (veh)
Hawksworth Road to Collett (N)	0.16	0.2	0.32	0.5	0.51	1.1	0.58	1.4
Hawksworth Road to Collett (S)	0.08	0.1	0.03	0.0	0.09	0.1	0.03	0.0
Collett (N) to Collett (S)/Hawksworth Rd	0.17	0.2	0.07	0.1	0.17	0.2	0.07	0.1

The results indicate that the junction has sufficient capacity to accommodate all of the traffic assumed to divert via Hawksworth Road to the A4130/New Thames River Crossing/Collett roundabout. The Junctions 9 output is attached.

Furthermore, as stated in paragraph 1.1.1 of the submitted Transport Assessment:

... The Scheme does not aim to provide unlimited highway capacity for cars, or to remove all congestion; it forms part of a balanced transport strategy which also provides high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure, helping to engender modal shift to more sustainable modes.

Stantec Comment

The effects of a priority junction at SCH3 instead of roundabout on the SBLR junctions have not been tested.

Applicant Response

A priority junction at SCH3 would retain the mainline flow on the existing A4130 which would be more attractive to drivers, reducing the rerouting benefits of the

Scheme that remove trips through Didcot. Therefore, this type of junction has not been included as part of the HIF1 applicant.

Stantec Comment

It is accepted that a residential development at Didcot A site would assume too many general traffic movements in the area. A sensitivity test should be carried to understand the capacity/operational benefits of testing Amazon and Cloud HQ data centres, which have now been permitted and are under construction.

Applicant Response

The 400 homes previously proposed at the former Didcot A site have been reallocated to other local allocated strategic housing sites therefore the associated vehicle trips would still be on the local highway network. Furthermore, the Transport Assessment for the consented Didcot Data Centre (P21/S0274/FUL) concludes that the site is predicted to generate 14 and 6 two-way vehicle movements in the morning and evening peak hours. Give the above the suggested sensitivity test is deemed not necessary or required to determine the highway impacts of the HIF1 application.

Stantec Comment

Additionally, there are a number of concerns with regard to issues raised in the RSA Stage 1 that could have an impact on the operation and safety users of the former Didcot A Power Site, if left unresolved:

- *The change of speed limit to the east of the TOUCAN crossing should be implemented at least at the desirable minimum sight stopping distance (SSD) for the lower speed limit from the crossing, in line with the RSA.*
- *Side road junctions along the SBLR:*
- *Give way line should be moved back to the bottom of the raised entry treatment ramp and visibility splays checked.*
- *Junction warning signs with sub-plates bearing the legend "give way to cyclists" should be provided.*
- *Warning signs should be located closer to the parallel crossings*
- *Upright signs should be provided for the segregated cycleway/ footways along SBLR.*
- *Street lighting should be provided to the west of the Old A4130 junction, only at the junction and approaches.*

We would appreciate confirmation that the above will be addressed as part of the detailed design stage

Applicant Response

This will be considered at the detailed design stage.