



# Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4

## Science Vale Cycle Network – Project Proposal

### Didcot – Ladygrove Link

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#### Overview of project:

The Ladygrove Link will provide a modern, direct, off-road, active travel route from the new Didcot North East development and new leisure centre to the strategic Cow Lane Tunnel.

The link will go through the Didcot North East development and use existing shared use paths through the Ladygrove to form a spine route.

The Link has the potential to rival car journey times into the town centre, Didcot Parkway and beyond.

The Didcot North East development is, for most people, too far to walk regularly to get to the town centre, secondary schools, Didcot Parkway etc. This link provides a credible transport alternative.

#### Project Detail:

From Cow Lane Tunnel, the route uses the existing, well used and popular Ladygrove cycle / pedestrian path network. Parts of the route may need to be upgraded or in places, parallel footpaths built to cope with increased cycle traffic as Didcot North East develops.

In the Ladygrove the path only crosses two roads; Tyne Avenue and Blackwater Way. Currently at these crossing points road traffic has priority. They both have traffic calming that provide a level crossing surface for cyclists and pedestrians. New shared space Zebra crossings with cycle lanes would be built to change priority to cyclists and pedestrians. The cost of the crossings could be reduced by using the existing, level, crossing surface. This would not adversely affect traffic flow.

The Northern Distributor Road is a main crossing point of the route into Didcot North East. The Didcot North East development and future road plans means that this stretch of road will become very much busier. A surface level crossing would not be suitable for this road, even with speed limits. Surface level crossings such as a Toucan crossing would do very little to remove the barrier of the road and integrate Didcot North East into the rest of the town and leave the development isolated. A surface level crossing would also affect the traffic flow of the road which, in itself, could cause congestion.

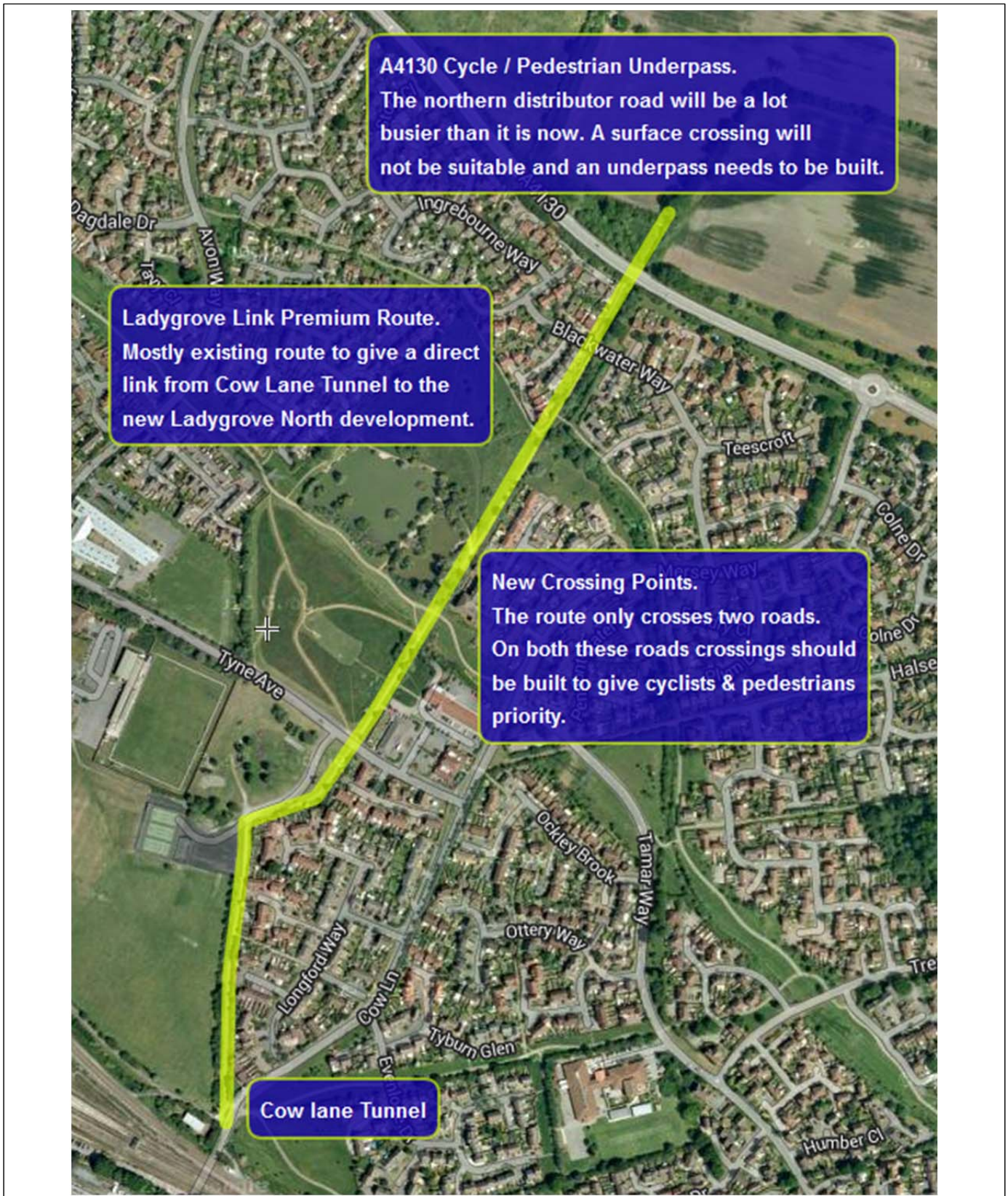
To cross the Northern Distributor Road an active travel underpass is proposed. This would keep traffic flowing and not impede the active travel route, ensuring the travel time is still comparable or better than using motor transport. The underpass should be carefully designed so that it is not intimidating to use i.e. it is well lit, spacious, with graffiti resistant walls and clear lines of view, possibly with CCTV.

Discussions with the developers of Didcot North East should start at an early stage of planning to ensure that the route continues into the development. The underpass should be built at a very early stage of the development.

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List of potential sub-projects:

(Deliverability is an estimate of how easy / costly a sub-project is. Examples are; is there an existing right of way / landowner issues? Does it require significant design work? Does it need to wait for future development? Is it a case of re-surfacing / re-allocation of space?)

Sub-project Title	Modify two existing crossing points in the Ladygrove to shared use Zebra crossings.
Scope	Existing level surfaces, minimal work needed for conversion.
Deliverability	No known issues, could be carried out at any time

Sub-project Title	Upgrade route through Ladygrove to increase capacity of cyclists and pedestrians.
Scope	Widen whole path in some places. In other places build a parallel footpath.
Deliverability	No known issues, could be carried out at any time.

Sub-project Title	Northern Distributor Active Travel Underpass
Scope	New tunnel under road.
Deliverability	Needs to be carried out very early in Didcot North East development so that new residents are given the travel choice from the start. Needs developer co-operation due to land ownership. Will need to be funded. Will cause disruption on road during construction. May be issues with proximity of a stream at the proposed site of the underpass.

Sub-project Title	Extension into Didcot North East
Scope	Route needs to run through Didcot North East and connections to the route need to be made in the development.
Deliverability	Needs co-operation of the developer and for them to build the route and connections. Need to guide developer to what is required. Will need to be built at an early stage so that new residents are given the travel choice from the start.



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Assessment of project against the five requirements for good cycle infrastructure:

Requirement	Information about how the requirement has been met.
Cohesion	The route would be continuous from the end of Didcot North East through to Cow Lane Tunnel. The route should be signed as part of a Science Vale Cycle Network and be easily identified as such.
Directness	The route is a very direct straight route to Didcot Parkway and Didcot Town Centre.
Safety	The route only crosses two roads on the Ladygrove and will run under the Northern Distributor Road. The route is very safe and will feel safe.
Comfort	The existing part of the route is already a good level surface and clear of any obstructions. There may need to be widen the path in places.
Attractiveness	The route is off road throughout, running at the edge of Ladygrove Park and lakes. It is suitable for all cyclists and will ensure all new residents in Didcot North East have active travel as a real option.



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Does the project meet the goals of LTP4?

Goal	Goal Met?	Information about how the goal has or has not been met.
To support jobs, housing growth and economic vitality.	Yes	This project directly supports housing growth at Didcot North East. It ensures that that residents have a real transport alternative to employment sites, Didcot Parkway and town centre. Offering this alternative could reduce congestion on Didcot’s roads, especially at key junctions such as Marsh Lane Bridge and the Power Station & Manor Bridge Roundabouts.
To support the transition to a low Carbon future	Yes	Active travel is very much a low Carbon transport option. Cycling this route could match the time taken by car to do the same journey and could attract people away from cars.
To support social inclusion and equality of opportunity.	Yes	Active travel is socially inclusive. The cost of cycling or walking is very low and available to everybody, regardless of age, disability or income.
To protect and where possible enhance Oxfordshire’s environment.	Yes	There would be no adverse effects on the environment with this project. The project would reduce the impact of air pollution due to the large housing growth by reducing the need to drive everywhere.
To improve public health, safety and individual wellbeing.	Yes	Active travel is a very important tool in improving public health. This project encourages active travel. The project is off-road, practically removing any road safety concerns and runs through green corridors in the Ladygrove, improving the feeling of wellbeing.



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Does the project address the key issues in the Science Vale Area Action Plan?

Issue	Issues Met?	Information about how the issues have or have not been addressed.
Ensure new neighbourhoods integrate with existing communities.	Yes	<p>This project directly links from the centre of Didcot right through into Didcot North East.</p> <p>The use of the route provides a human scale link between the Ladygrove and Didcot North East, encouraging integration.</p> <p>The use of an underpass provides a permanent physical link and would increase the feeling of being part of Didcot. This project would also be an important link for the rest of Didcot to access the new sports centre and any other community facilities on the site.</p>
Help Didcot to reach its potential as centre of Science vale.	Yes	<p>The project improves transport links. Active travel routes do have a beneficial effect on the built environment i.e. when visitors see people walking and cycling it projects a positive view of the town. Traffic queues have the opposite effect.</p>
Support facilities to attract and develop knowledge economy growth.	Yes	<p>Many 'high tech' start-up companies are looking at areas that provide good cycle infrastructure to locate to, and towns and cities are attracting businesses by offering good cycle infrastructure.</p>
Achieve growth without compromising the character of the area.	Yes	<p>This project would enhance the character of Didcot North East and the town by offering the type of infrastructure people are now expecting.</p>
Ensure timely delivery of infrastructure.	Yes	<p>This project should be implemented before main works get underway on Didcot North East, so that new residents have an alternative from the start and don't get a 'car habit'.</p>
Encourage skills in the local workforce to meet the demands of the knowledge economy.	No	