

Harwell Parish Council

Science Vale Movement & Place Plan – Final Consultation

Harwell Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the final Science Vale Movement & Place Plan. This consultation meets the criteria for formal engagement under the Consultation Engagement Policy, as it directly affects Harwell's transport network, movement patterns, safety, walking and cycling opportunities, and community environment.

1. Position

Harwell Parish Council supports the ambition and direction of the Movement & Place Plan, subject to clarifications on delivery, prioritisation, accountability, and funding. The vision is strong, but the plan must demonstrate how the proposed outcomes will be delivered in practice.

2. Comparison with Harwell's Previous Submission

In the pre-consultation response, the Council welcomed the ambition but requested clearer linkage from vision to delivery. The revised plan shows progress, but several key expectations remain outstanding.

Summary of Harwell's previous requests and current status:

- Clear delivery pathway (ambition → projects → funding → timeline) – Partially addressed.
- Recognition of rural context and unavoidable car dependency – Acknowledged in narrative, not in delivery priorities.
- Safe active travel route Harwell Village ↔ Harwell Campus ↔ Didcot – Identified on maps, not scheduled.
- A417 corridor congestion and safety – Mentioned, but no interventions defined.

3. Comments on Final Plan Documents

The Maps, Summary Plan, and Delivery Plan documents are clearer than the earlier version. However, the Delivery Plan remains at a high level, lacking sequencing, funding certainty, or commitments on when specific schemes will be delivered.

4. Harwell's Community Priorities (unchanged)

Harwell Parish Council reaffirms the following priorities, all of which align to the Movement & Place objectives:

- A safe, continuous cycle and pedestrian route Harwell Village ↔ Harwell Campus ↔ Didcot.
- A safe, direct foot and cycle path along the A417 from the edge of Harwell village to the A34, addressing a long-standing gap in active-travel connectivity and improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Congestion, speed, and safety interventions on the A417 corridor.
- Reliable, practical public transport including evenings and weekends.
- Recognition that some residents will always require vehicle access.
- Protection of Harwell's historic and rural character.

5. Requests Prior to Adoption

To improve accountability and deliverability, Harwell Parish Council requests:

- i. A delivery schedule showing lead authority, funding route, and timing.
- ii. Transparent prioritisation criteria across the Science Vale parishes.
- iii. Ongoing engagement with parish councils during design stages, not only public consultation events. Harwell requests that future engagement includes direct workshops or working sessions with parishes affected by the Delivery Plan sequencing.

6. Conclusion

Harwell Parish Council supports the vision. Deliverability and continued engagement will determine whether the plan achieves its intended benefits for residents and communities.