

**DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE,
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION**

26 FEBRUARY 2026

**Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) - Clifton
Hampden Bypass construction contract**

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Highways to award the Stage Two NEC4 Engineering and Construction Contract for the HIF1 Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme to John Graham Construction Limited under the Crown Commercial Service Construction Works and Associated Services Framework RM6088, Lot 4.1 (England and Wales) subject to:**
- (i) agreement of the target cost (within the released budget),**
 - (ii) agreement of the programme for the works and**
 - (iii) finalising the contract terms.**

Executive Summary

1. This report seeks a delegation to the Director of Environment & Highways to award and enter into the Stage 2 main construction contract for the Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme, one of three major infrastructure projects within the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) programme.
2. The Clifton Hampden Bypass forms a critical component of the wider HIF1 package designed to improve connectivity between Didcot and Culham, relieve congestion, and support the delivery of over 12,655 new homes and significant employment growth across the Science Vale.
3. The Full Business Case (FBC) for the Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme has been approved.
4. The Stage Two construction contract is an NEC4 Engineering and Construction Contract (ECC) Option C, and will be funded primarily through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant, supplemented by approved Council capital allocations, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and S106 contributions.

Background

5. The Clifton Hampden Bypass is a single carriageway bypass for Clifton Hampden, between Culham Science Centre and B4015 just north of Clifton Hampden Village (1.8km including link roads). It includes a new relief road northwest of the village between the A415 at Culham Science Centre and the B4015 Oxford Road north of Clifton Hampden, a new roundabout at the western end near Culham Science Centre and Culham Rail Station, and other access junctions along the Bypass. Walking and cycling facilities segregated from the carriageway are also proposed.
6. The scheme forms part of the wider HIF1 Access to Didcot Garden Town Programme, which also includes:
 - Didcot to Culham River Crossing
 - Didcot Science Bridge
7. Planning permission for Clifton Hampden Bypass and associated infrastructure was granted by the Secretary of State in December 2024 following a conjoined Planning and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Inquiry. The CPO was confirmed by the Department for Transport on 30 June 2025, with publication on 31 July 2025.
8. The project is fully funded under the revised Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) with Homes England, approved by Cabinet in July 2024, which secures total programme funding of £332.538 million and a £79.6 million Homes England funder contingency.
9. The contractor's estimated cost to complete construction is circa £38m, with the target cost still to be agreed.

Key Issues

10. The approval of this construction contract is essential to maintain programme momentum and ensure expenditure of the Homes England grant within the agreed timeframe of March 2028.
11. Delay in contract award would risk non-delivery of key milestones, loss of confidence from funders, and potential withdrawal of grant funding.
12. The scheme directly supports the housing delivery target of 12,655 set out in the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Local Plans and is a fundamental enabler of the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan and Science Vale Transport Strategy.
13. The scheme also supports employment growth along the length of the scheme with the proposed expansion of Culham Science Centre. There are also commercial sites proposed on the old Didcot power station site and to the south of the A4130 Road close to the Milton Interchange.

Procurement Strategy

14. The Procurement Strategy recommended that:

- Detailed design and construction should be procured via the Crown Commercial Services framework (CCS) with a mini competition.
- The contract should be in two stages (detailed design & construction) using a Professional Services Contract (PSC) Option A for detailed design and an Engineering Construction Contract (ECC) using Option C for construction, with the option of using Engineering Construction Short Contracts (ECSC) for any enabling works.

15. A competitive tender under the Crown Commercial Service Construction Works and Associated Services Framework RM6088, Lot 4.1 was undertaken whereby three separate contracts are awarded to John Graham Construction Limited. Stage One contracts were awarded for detailed design and early contractor involvement (a Professional Service Contract) and site investigation and enabling works (an Engineering and Construction Short Contract). The Stage Two contract for the main construction works is to be awarded pending agreement on the construction programme and a target cost for the works.

Financial Implications

16. The approved Clifton Hampden Bypass Full Business Case releases budget, largely funded by HIF grant, to cover the costs up to the end of Stage 3 (construction) and includes suitable contingency and inflation allowances.

17. The released budget covers the cost of the proposed contract to deliver the construction of the scheme.

Comments checked by: Rob Finlayson, Strategic Finance Business Partner
(rob.finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Legal Implications

18. The Council is acting in its capacity as the highway authority for Oxfordshire under the Highways Act 1980 in respect of the delivery of the Clifton Hampden Bypass scheme.

19. A mini-competition under the Crown Commercial Service Construction Works and Associated Services Framework RM6088, Lot 4.1 was undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. A single tendering exercise provided for a two-stage process whereby three separate contracts are awarded to one contractor. The successful contractor was John Graham Construction Limited. Stage One contracts were awarded for detailed design and early contractor involvement (a Professional Service Contract) and site investigation and enabling works (an Engineering and Construction Short Contract). The Stage Two contract for the main construction works is to be awarded pending agreement on the construction programme and a target cost for the works.

Comments checked by: Jayne Pringle, Principal Solicitor (Contracts)
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Insurance requirements

25. The main NEC4 contract insurances have all been confirmed through Oxfordshire County Council insurance team and are acceptable to the contractor.

Staff Implications

26. No additional staff resources are required as a result of this decision. The scheme will continue to be managed within the existing HIF1 Project Team under the leadership of the Programme Lead.

Sustainability Implications

27. The scheme supports the Council's Climate Action Framework by promoting modal shift through high-quality active travel provision and reducing congestion within Didcot. The design includes biodiversity enhancements and carbon reduction measures. There are no implications related to the previously completed CIA and EQIA as a result of this decision. Both documents are noted as background documents.

Social Value

28. Under this contract the contractor shall be required to provide Social Value, while this may change during the construction process it will include some of the following:

- Creating Local employment opportunities
- Minimising the carbon impact of the construction process
- Support local communities through various initiatives

Current Programme

29. The projects programme overview is as below:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| • Receipt of Planning Approval: | December 2024 |
| • Main Contractor into Contract: | February 2026 |
| • Land Acquisition: | February 2026 |
| • Enabling Works: | September 2025 – March 2026 |
| • Main Construction: | April 2026 – December 2027 |
| • Infrastructure Start on Site: | April 2026 |
| • Homes England: End of funding period: | March 2028 |

Risk Management

30. The current total risk allowance for the CHB scheme is £4.2 million (11.4% of total stage 3 costs), incorporating, optimism bias, and QCRA outputs. Key risks include inflationary pressures, statutory undertaker delays, and compliance with funder milestones. These are managed through monthly risk reviews and reporting to the HIF1 Programme Board.

Consultations

31. Extensive public consultation was undertaken in 2018 and 2020, supported by exhibitions and online engagement. Stakeholder engagement has continued throughout planning and inquiry stages, with regular liaison with local members, parish councils, statutory consultees, and developers. No further consultation is planned.
32. Recent public information events were held in October 2025 in six different locations to inform the public in advance of enabling and construction works. The public will continue to be informed of progress with the scheme via a regular e-newsletter and website updates.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Background papers:

- Cabinet Report 16 July 2024 – Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1): Amendments to the Grant Determination Agreement
- Climate Impact Assessment (originally included within Reg 25 planning submission dated 26 October 2022)
- Equalities Impact Assessment (originally included within Appendix 13 of the Statement of Case for the conjoined Planning and Orders Inquiry dated November 2023)

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February 2026