

Active Travel England response

Securing transport interventions

The transport interventions set out in the Transport Assessment and Transport Assessment Addendum will be secured either via the S106 or via conditions, the former would be used for cash contributions, and the latter would be used for direct delivery. Each transport intervention will have an occupation-based trigger, which aligns with the phasing proposed in the TA and TAA.

Improved access to Baldock station

- £5m has been ringfenced for works to the station which could include lifts, new entrance from BA1 and upgrades to the pedestrian underpass.
- The applicant (U&C) are fully committed to the improvements and are in communication with Network Rail, who are undertaking a U&C funded feasibility study.
- Network Rail are reluctant to participate in any more detailed discussion or commitment prior to planning being granted, but we have engaged with all the relevant players and the assets team are fully aware.
- We would envisage that the £5m would be a cash contribution to NR, paid at a set occupation trigger, once Network Rail has confirmed the scope of works. This will follow from the feasibility study.
- It is anticipated that there will be conditions requiring the completion of the feasibility study and, if technically viable, payment to Network Rail to undertake the works.

Multi-modal bridge

The 850-unit trigger reflects the point identified through the agreed transport modelling at which the multi-modal bridge becomes necessary to maintain acceptable highway performance, support sustainable travel, and unlock the next phase of development. The threshold has been tested through the Transport Assessment and was provisionally accepted by HCC, NHDC and National Highways during the planning process.

Beyond that point, the site requires a second strategic connection across the railway to:

- distribute trips more effectively,
- reduce reliance on the North Road/Station Road corridor,
- address pressure at Whitehorse Road,
- enable the wider transport strategy and eventual level crossing rationalisation.

Active travel underpass

The trigger for the active travel underpass is based on a number of factors.

- Other routes – early active travel infrastructure is being provided in the form of upgrades to the North Road corridor. This will provide early residents a safe route from the site into Baldock town centre.
- Residential build out – it is not expected that there will be any houses adjacent to the underpass until part way through the build out of BA1. Opening the active travel underpass at an earlier point would mean the route would lack active surveillance potentially contributing to anti-social behaviour.
- Alignment with bridge – in order to build the bridge and the underpass a closure of the railway would be required. Given both pieces of infrastructure are due at the same time, this enables the a single closure of the railway to allow the construction of the bridge and underpass rather than two closure periods.

Bygrave Road

Bygrave Road will initially remain open to serve the first phase of development, with no more than 310 dwellings relying on the existing arrangement. Once the new internal road network and strategic access connections are in place, vehicular movements on Bygrave Road will be progressively reduced through a staged closure process. A detailed delivery strategy is proposed to be secured through the Design Code and planning conditions, ensuring appropriate arrangements are made for existing Bygrave Road residents and Bygrave Village. Ultimately, Bygrave Road will be transformed from a traffic route into the Bygrave Green Link, providing a strategic walking, and cycling corridor integrated with green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements.

Monitor and Manage framework

The monitor and manage framework will be agreed as part of the S106 negotiations. The current intention is as follows:

- A defined and capped level of additional transport contribution/mitigation
- A review of Travel Plan (TP) performance from X occupations until Y point in time at annual (or other frequency) of Transport Working Group meetings to identify whether any monitor and manage measures (MMMs) are needed, or whether any existing TP requirements need to be amended, including timing or scope of existing measures.
- MMMs would include, subject to the cap, requests for contributions towards, or direct delivery of, one or more of a defined list of 6 known interventions OR additional soft / behavioural measures beyond what's secured in the site-wide travel plan
- Agreement on the preferred approach to be reached through the TWG and communicated through service of a M&M notice. Obligations to deliver against the requirements of those notices to flow.