



Active
Travel
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Your Ref: 25/02571/OP
Our Ref: ATE/25/01572/OUT
Date: 25 June 2026

Active Travel England Planning Response Detailed Response to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: North Hertfordshire District Council

Application Ref: 25/02571/OP

Site Address: BA1(Land East Of North Rd And North Of Railway Line); BA10(Land Between Railway Line And Royston Rd); BA3 (Land West Of A505); BA2 (Land South Of Clothall Rd); Walls Field; Urban Open Land West Of A505, And Land West Of North Rd, Baldock

Description of development: Growing Baldock Development Site: Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for means of highway access into the development from the A505/Royston Road, North Road and Clothall Road for: up to 3,200 homes, up to 16ha of employment, waste and leisure infrastructure, a mixed use local centre, up to 1 secondary school, up to 2 x primary schools, up to 1 SEND school, health hub, green infrastructure (including parks, formal sports provision, play, habitat areas, informal open space and structural planting), internal street network, access junctions and railway crossing, public transport infrastructure, pedestrian/cycle network (including PRow diversions, active travel routes, mobility hubs and crossing of the railway), utilities and drainage infrastructure (including diversions of existing and provision of new infrastructure, pumping stations, sustainable drainage, primary substations, rising main/strategic sewer and renewable energy infrastructure), ground remodelling/earthworks and any necessary demolitions.

Notice is hereby given that Active Travel England's formal recommendation is as follows:

- a. **Deferral:** ATE is not currently in a position to support this application and requests further assessment, evidence, revisions and/or dialogue as set out in this response.

1.0 Background

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning application. This consultation response follows ATE's previous responses dated 14 November 2025 and 15 April 2026, both of which issued deferral positions.

It is understood that, further to information submitted in February 2026 under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations

2017, a further package of information has been submitted to address all remaining outstanding matters not resolved by that earlier submission. Of relevance to ATE are the following documents:

- Environmental Statement Addendum Volume 1: Text — Chapter 4: Transport; and
- Environmental Statement Addendum Volume 2: Figures and Appendices — Chapter 4: Transport, Appendix 4.1: Transport Assessment Addendum (TAA), dated 12 May 2026.

ATE has reviewed both documents. Whilst ATE notes the progress made and provides commentary on the information submitted below, it is not considered that the individual matters raised in ATE's initial response of 14 November 2025 have been reviewed and addressed. ATE therefore maintains its position of deferral.

2.0 Areas of Concern

Environmental Statement Addendum Volume 1: Text — Chapter 4: Transport

ATE notes that the ES Addendum Transport Chapter states that "no changes have been made to the scale, land use, access strategy or extent of the Proposed Development that affect transport, and no new transport infrastructure is introduced" and that "the conclusions on the significance of transport effects reported in Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement therefore remain valid and unchanged." The chapter is accordingly limited in scope and does not engage with the active travel design and policy concerns raised in ATE's previous responses.

BA2 — Clothall Way Roundabout Crossing Facilities (Table 4.1)

ATE notes the applicant's position in Table 4.1 in respect of crossing facilities at the Clothall Way roundabout, which confirms that the precise form of crossing facilities will be developed and agreed with the Highway Authority at detailed design stage. ATE is content with this approach in principle, on the understanding that the case for zebra or controlled crossings on appropriate arms of the roundabout, as set out in ATE's November 2025 response, will be given full consideration at that stage.

Bygrave Road Corridor (Table 4.1)

ATE notes the applicant's response regarding the Bygrave Road corridor. ATE's outstanding concerns in relation to this matter are addressed below in the context of the TAA.

Transport Assessment Addendum (Appendix 4.1)

ATE understands that the TAA has been prepared primarily to validate the local junction modelling reported in the original Transport Assessment using Hertfordshire County Council's COMET strategic transport model, in response to requests from National Highways and North Hertfordshire Council.

Whilst the TAA's primary focus is highway capacity, it contains material of direct relevance to ATE's remit. ATE's observations are set out below.

2.1 Phasing Plan — Trigger Points for Active Travel Infrastructure

ATE notes the Phasing Plan (Appendix D of the TAA) which now provides formal trigger points and occupation thresholds for active travel infrastructure.

ATE notes the Phasing Plan itself states that "the phasing is based on buildability and dependencies rather than requirements for delivering mode shift."

Where mode shift has been integrated into the trip generation assumptions underpinning the vision-led Transport Assessment, the infrastructure enabling that mode shift must be available to residents at a sufficiently early stage. ATE requests that this relationship between infrastructure delivery timing and the vision-led methodology be addressed in any further submissions.

ATE's specific observations on individual phasing triggers are set out below.

Ref 1.10 — Pedestrian access to Baldock Station from A507 North Road

ATE notes that this intervention is described in the Phasing Plan as "subject to Network Rail negotiations; U&C to advise," with no occupation threshold or trigger point assigned. Access to Baldock Station is an important element of the development's sustainability case. ATE requests further information on the status of discussions with Network Rail, the anticipated programme for securing this connection, and what mechanism would be available to the LPA to ensure delivery if negotiations are protracted.

Ref 1.12 — Multi-modal bridge

ATE raised design concerns regarding the multi-modal bridge in its November 2025 response, including the approach to shared-use provision and the overall width and segregation arrangements. The Phasing Plan assigns a trigger of completion before 850 units are occupied on BA1. ATE requests confirmation of the rationale for this threshold, and whether it has been informed by phasing and active travel demand or solely by highway capacity considerations. ATE also reiterates its request for clarification on the design of the bridge, including the total width available to pedestrians and cyclists, and how the approach to shared use will be meet LTN 1/20 requirements.

Ref 1.18 — Active travel underpass linking BA1 to B656 Royston Road

ATE welcomes the inclusion of a formal trigger point for this connection, which was identified as a key piece of infrastructure in ATE's November 2025 response. The trigger of completion before 850 units are occupied on BA1 is noted. ATE requests confirmation of the rationale for this threshold and asks that the applicant confirm that land ownership and access arrangements necessary to secure delivery of the underpass are in place or being progressed.

Ref 1.14 — Bygrave Road conversion to walking and cycling greenway

The Phasing Plan assigns a trigger of completion before 1,125 units are occupied on BA1. Given that the total quantum for BA1 is 2,750 dwellings, a significant population will already be in place. Bygrave Road will serve as both a development access route and a corridor expected to accommodate walking and cycling, without the benefit of the greenway treatment. ATE requests why an earlier trigger is not achievable or demonstrate how the active travel quality of Bygrave Road or other routes will be maintained/delivered for residents prior to the greenway conversion being delivered.

ATE also notes that "local access" on the converted Bygrave Road greenway remains undefined in terms of permitted vehicle types and volumes. This should be resolved before determination. ATE reiterates its earlier request for clarity on which land uses will continue to require vehicular access via Bygrave Road.

Ref 10.4 — Remainder of B656 Royston Road segregated cycle route

The Phasing Plan assigns a trigger of completion before 2,370 units are occupied on BA1. As above, ATE requests the applicant provide justification for why earlier delivery of this off-site cycle route is not possible. Residents in early phases of the development will lack a continuous segregated cycling connection to the A505 corridor for a potentially lengthy period.

2.2 Norton Road / Norton Way — Proposed Active Travel Improvements (Appendix C)

ATE has reviewed the proposals for Norton Road set out in Appendix C of the TAA, which include traffic calming measures, speed cushions, raised tables, improved crossing infrastructure, and an improved 3-metre shared walking and cycling route connecting residential areas to Knights Templar School. ATE welcomes these proposals in principle.

ATE notes however that this shared route is proposed at 3 metres in width. Given the volumes of pedestrian and cycling demand expected from a development of this scale, particularly in relation to school trips, ATE requests that the applicant confirm that a 3-metre shared facility is considered sufficient for the anticipated demand and is compliant with LTN 1/20 guidance. Where volumes suggest a wider or segregated provision would be more appropriate, this should be demonstrated.

Moreover, there appears to be issues with pavement parking along this route. the applicant should consider how this might be dealt with as part of the monitor and management approach.

2.3 Monitor and Manage Framework — Phasing of Interventions

ATE notes that the TAA places a number of routes within a Monitor and Manage framework rather than securing committed mitigation through the Phasing Plan. Whilst ATE accepts the Monitor and Manage approach, it is not clear if occupation thresholds or development phase triggers apply to these interventions.

3.0 Next Steps

It is requested that these recommendations are provided to the LPA case officer and forwarded to the agent and applicant. ATE would be content to hold a meeting with the LPA to discuss matters raised and review further submitted information to help address the above identified deficiencies, with a view to providing a further response and recommended wording for planning conditions and obligations.