

Growing Baldock

Helping you get around



Introduction



Locations for Growing Baldock set out in North Hertfordshire Local Plan

Baldock needs to grow sustainably to provide homes and jobs for current and future generations. The areas shown on the left have been allocated for new homes and facilities in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2022), and the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan (2021), which set out strong expectations for how that growth should happen.

In 2023, we launched the Baldock Conversation so people could help shape the plans as they developed. Since then, we've been reviewing your feedback, agreeing an approach to the important issue of secondary education provision and feeding all of this into the Growing Baldock Strategic Masterplan — which was recently approved by North Herts Council.

A key part of our work has been designing a sustainable travel network that will be put in place alongside the delivery of the new homes and facilities.

The development will have an emphasis on reducing the need to travel, prioritising people over cars, and putting greater emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport. A mix of new and improved routes will connect to key destinations such as the town centre, benefitting existing and new communities.

Some of the traffic that currently travels through, but doesn't stop in Baldock, will be redirected, enabling improvements to be delivered for pedestrians and cyclists.

Most places in Baldock are within a 15-minute walk or bike ride. However, many people have told us that they don't always think travelling this way is safe or convenient. Bus services connect Baldock to places like Letchworth and Hitchin, but they don't always run at the times that people want to travel. As a result, sustainable travel choices are limited and people rely on their cars.

We want to use Baldock's growth as an opportunity to provide a real choice of travel options, helping people to travel safely and sustainably.

Our three point plan includes:

- Reduce the number of cars, vans and lorries that use Baldock as a shortcut — leaving more space in the street for people using the town, accommodating growth and allowing the delivery of prioritised walking, wheeling, cycling and bus connections.
- Give people a real choice to walk or cycle — making it safer and quicker to get to key locations — with half of all new trips being by walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport.
- Protect the character of nearby villages — improving access through new and upgraded paths, greenways and bus connections.



Proposed transport improvements



Our three-point plan

To make this plan possible and deliver better travel choice for a growing Baldock, the Outline Planning Application will include a package of interventions.

The plans include:

- Improving access and accessibility to Baldock Railway Station.
- Segregated cycle routes along Station Road, North Road and Royston Road.
- A new active travel underpass to cross the railway line near Clothall Common.
- A bridge crossing the railway to improve access to the growth areas and Bygrave village.
- Improvements to public rights of way and creating routes through new open space.
- Increased bus service frequency and new routes serving the new homes and employment area.

In addition, we've been working closely with transport authorities and local communities to refine a series of detailed improvements. This booklet provides further information about some of these interventions.

If you have any questions or suggestions related to our plans, please speak to a member of the team here today or get in touch with us through the website or via email. Contact details are on the back cover.

The BA1 Access Road and Bygrave Road

- Vehicle access to the northern development area (BA1), will be made by a new road connecting North Road (between Baldock and A1M junction 10) and Royston Road (at the junction with the A505).
- This new road will include a bridge to cross the railway line. Our transport modelling suggests that this will be needed by around 6–8 years after the first homes are built.
- The road will provide two routes for people travelling from Bygrave to Baldock: enabling a connection to the north and west of the town, or to the east.

This road would replace Bygrave Road as the primary access from Bygrave and become the main route running through the BA1 development area. It would enable the existing Bygrave Road to be retained for local access to properties while delivering a walking, wheeling and cycling greenway. In combination with our proposed improvements on North Road, this would create a safe route between Bygrave, the new homes, the railway station and Baldock town centre.

This option meets the Neighbourhood Plan policy that requires any new development to 'improve pedestrian and cycle access between Bygrave and Baldock, through a new footpath and cycleway using the route of Bygrave Road/Ashwell Road'.



The yellow line shows the proposed new access road. The white line is the existing Bygrave Road

Whitehorse Street Junction

The Whitehorse Street junction has wide roads and narrow footways. By reducing the number of cars, vans and lorries that are using Baldock as a shortcut we will have more space to widen footways, creating direct pedestrian crossings and safer roads. This will make it easier to access the town centre from the railway station and new homes by walking and cycling.

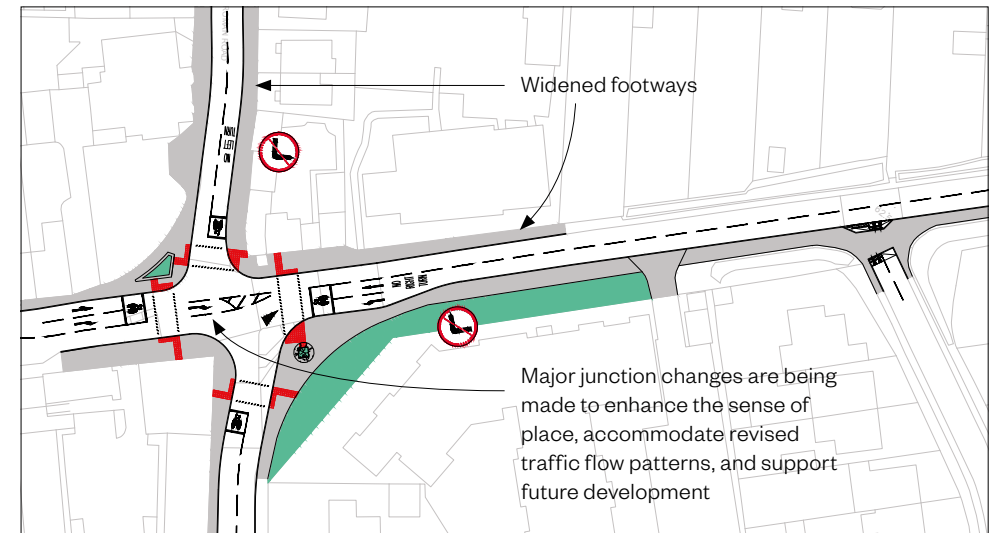
There may also be restrictions on some turns, once the new access road is completed. Options we are considering include:

- Ban the left turn from Station Road to Royston Road, and the opposite movement from Royston Road to Station Road, as vehicles will be able to use the new BA1 access road. This will reduce the amount of traffic on Royston Road and Station Road, allowing the junction to operate more efficiently. This would only come into effect once the BA1 access road is complete.

- Restrict the left turn into Station Road from Whitehorse Street to discourage drivers from Letchworth and Hitchin travelling through Baldock to access the A1(M) north. This measure would not be delivered in the early stages, but could be introduced if deemed necessary to further reduce lorry traffic, following monitoring and agreement with the County Council as highways authority.

The nature and timing of these interventions will be set out in our planning framework through Section 106 (S.106) obligations and a Transport Strategy. Money will be allocated to these interventions as well as for reviewing and responding to associated challenges that arise.

Monitoring and regular transport reviews may mean that no restrictions on turns are necessary, but it is important that funding and options are secured if they are needed.



Proposed Whitehorse Street Junction improvements

Icknield Way and Football Close

The junction by the Station, with four roads joining Station Road, including Icknield Way and Football Close, is difficult to pass through and cross, particularly when walking or cycling.

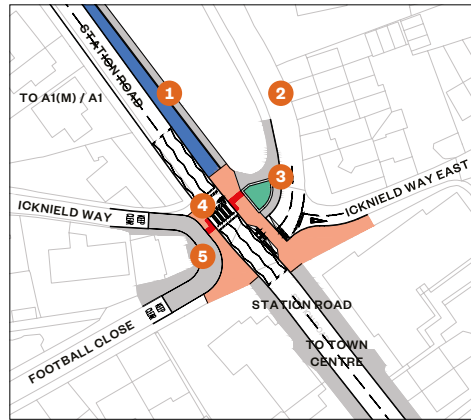
On Icknield Way itself, you have told us about the existing issues of rat-running traffic, including large vehicles unsuited to the road. A lot of traffic uses Norton Road as a way of getting to the B656, avoiding North Road and parallel routes in Letchworth.

This junction, along with Icknield Way and Norton Road, is key to making walking and cycling in Baldock safer. As the main route to Knights Templar School and the town centre from the north, reducing traffic is essential. Better station access will also benefit both current and future residents.

To achieve this, our preferred option is to close Icknield Way (from Station Road), Football Close (from Station Road) and Norton Road (north) to through traffic.

We will work with residents and Hertfordshire County Council to determine how best to achieve this, as well as investigating options to keep Icknield Way open for access only. This would reduce rat-running vehicles from Letchworth Road to Station Road via Icknield Way and Football Close, and from Norton Road to Icknield Way and Letchworth Road. It will also allow us to connect the proposed cycle route on Station Road to Icknield Way and improve the crossing on Station Road.

The final form of these interventions, and their timing, will be set out in our planning framework (through S106 obligations and a Transport Strategy), with money allocated to the interventions, and a mechanism to review how the transport approaches are working and respond to any challenges that arise.



Proposed Icknield Way and Football Close improvements

- 1 Proposed cycle track
- 2 Railway Station access
- 3 Proposed 'Rain Garden' to improve drainage
- 4 Proposed parallel Zebra Crossing for cyclists and pedestrians
- 5 Proposed emergency access

One-way shuttle working under the railway bridge

The existing footways at Station Road railway bridge are narrow and there is no space for a high-quality cycle route.

The package of proposals for transport in Baldock will reduce through traffic on Station Road, meaning we can narrow the carriageway under the rail bridge for general traffic to one lane, controlled by signals with timings linked to junctions along Station Road and North Road. This would encourage fewer lorries and cars to use this as a through route, reducing bridge strikes, as well as providing more space for pedestrians and cyclists.

Putting a robust connection in place here will enable safer access to the station without using your car. Station Road is also used as a through route for lorries and cars trying to move between the A1(M) and A505. This means there are frequent bridge strikes and additional traffic along Station Road at peak times. The proposed shuttle working will discourage through traffic looking for a quick route through the town.

Improvements to Junction 9 of the A1(M)

As part of our plan to reduce the number of vehicles that are currently travelling through Baldock, we are also looking at ways to make it easier for cars to travel on routes that don't pass through the town centre.

We are looking at improvements that could be made to Junction 9 of the A1(M) where it meets the A505, from lane markings through to additional traffic signals and lanes.

Modelling is underway to determine the intervention required.



How will the transport interventions be delivered?

The final form and timing of these transport interventions will be set out through the agreed Transport Strategy and the S.106 Agreement, which is a legal agreement between Urban&Civic as the developer and the district and county councils (North Herts and Hertfordshire).

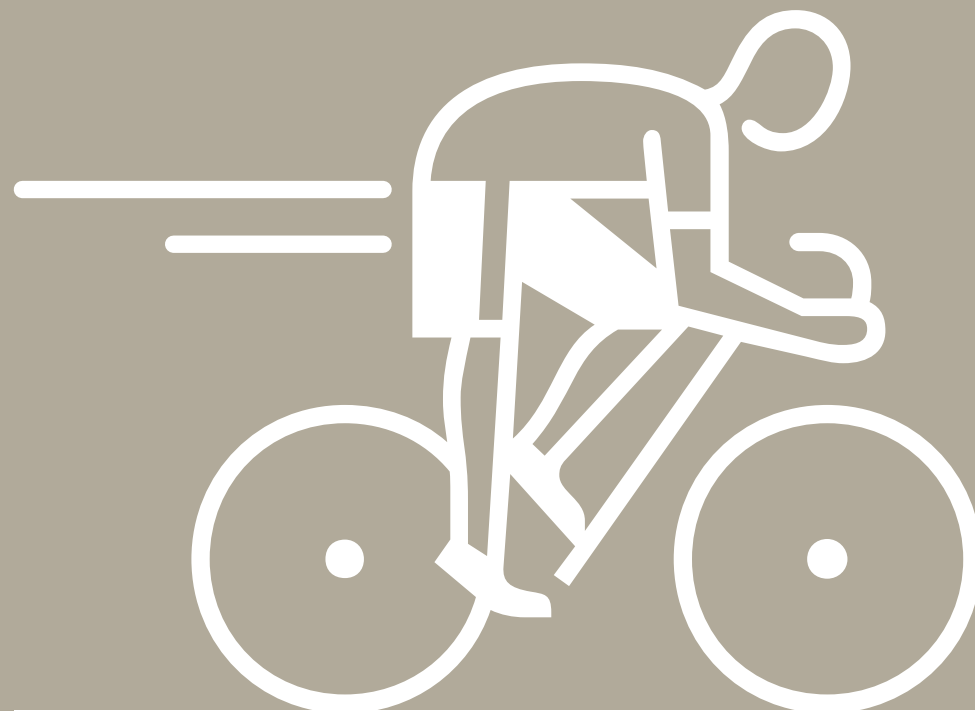
As part of this agreement, money will be allocated to deliver the interventions, and review and respond to changes over time. Many of these interventions will be given a trigger when they have to be in place (usually linked to the number of homes occupied in the new development). Others will be kept under review based on analysis of traffic movements and issues on an annual basis.

Growing Baldock — what happens next?

We will continue to discuss possible interventions with the highways teams at Hertfordshire County Council. The team will also continue to model and test the interventions.

The proposals will form part of our Outline Planning Application, which we will be submitting to North Herts Council for consideration later in 2025.

The final strategy and S.106 will be part of the planning framework, which we will submit to North Herts Council for consideration.



Stay in touch

You can follow progress and stay informed via the Growing Baldock website and social media channels:

W growingbaldock.co.uk

E growingbaldock@urbanandcivic.com

 Growing Baldock

Or through the North Herts Council's dedicated web page:

W north-herts.gov.uk/growing-baldock-masterplan



Growing Baldock



Urban&Civic