

Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Public Examination

Matter 3 Agenda: New questions 8, 9 and 10

8. Do the Council have a firm commitment from Network Rail in relation to the timing and funding of the station upgrade/extension?

The fifth platform at Stevenage Station has £18.8m funding allocated in Network Rail's spending plan by 2020.

In relation to the station upgrade, there is no committed funding at the present time and it is not a requirement of Stevenage Borough Local Plan. The station upgrade is an aspiration and the plan makes appropriate provision for this aspiration to be realised.

For clarification, the update to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will prioritise the item 'Stevenage New Station (masterplan proposals)' as desirable rather than essential (TI1, page 98).

9. A delivery date for the Smart Motorway scheme between A1(M) Junctions 6 and 8 has now been provided by Highways England (2021). Is this in the latest IDP? Will this timescale adversely affect the deliverability of any of the allocated sites in this Plan?

This will be included in the updated IDP. The timescale does not have any adverse effect on the deliverability of any of the allocated sites in the plan.

10. In terms of the Integrated Transport Strategy recommended by the AECOM report, dated Dec 2016, is this what is set out in chapter 4 of the Vectos Technical Transport Paper, also dated December 2016?

Yes it is.

If so, I have the following questions about it:

i) Is it proposed to include a reference to this document or the strategy in the Plan? Will it be reviewed and updated periodically?

Yes it is proposed to include reference to the transport strategy in the Plan within Policy IT4. There are some other minor changes proposed to Policies IT4 and IT7 to ensure that they reflect the principles of the transport strategy. The envisaged revised policy is set out below:

Policy IT4: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

Planning permission will be granted where:

- a. Development would not have an adverse impact upon highway safety;
- b. Development reflects the principles of the Stevenage Transport Strategy;
- c. Schemes exceeding the relevant thresholds are accompanied by a satisfactory Transport Statement or Assessment, which demonstrates that ~~no significant adverse impacts will result or steps can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts to an acceptable level~~ the residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe; and
- d. ~~Residential~~ Developments exceeding the Transport Assessment threshold are accompanied by an acceptable (green) travel plan.

The Stevenage Borough Council strategy is to support and encourage increasing Mobility by sustainable and inclusive modes. It is to support a mode shift over time from car driver to more space efficient, socially inclusive and less polluting forms of Mobility, and not simply to supply extra road capacity for the benefit of car borne commuters in peak periods.

Stevenage is a Sustainable Travel Town and the Transport Strategy focuses on reducing the need to travel overall and increasing the proportion of journeys made by sustainable modes (on foot, by bicycle, by public transport, or via schemes such as cycle hire and car clubs). The initiatives include walking, cycling and shared mobility infrastructure and enhancements, together with behaviour schemes.

The Strategy expects a step change in uptake of sustainable modes. It also advises that it is likely that some highway capacity would need to be reallocated for use by pedestrians, cyclists and bus users.

A Transport Steering Group formed of Hertfordshire County Council, Stevenage Borough Council and invited stakeholders will monitor progress of the delivery of the Stevenage Transport Strategy.

8.21 Maintaining safe and effective access to homes, facilities, jobs and schools is essential to ensuring good quality of life and a prosperous economy. Development proposals will not be supported where ~~they will have an unacceptable adverse impact on the highway~~ the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

8.22 The County Council, as highway authority, support the use of Transport Statements and Transport Assessments to assess the impact of new development upon the wider network as well as being a means to ascertain internal infrastructure needs. Guidance sets out the thresholds at which these are presently required. Site-specific circumstances might result in an assessment or statement being requested for developments below these (N.B. table of Threshold for Transport Statements and Transport Assessments to remain unchanged).

~~8.23 Transport modelling has been carried out to inform the production of this plan. Developers are encouraged to make use of this model when preparing their development proposals.~~

8.24 Travel plans set out measures that will be adopted by developers or businesses to encourage residents or staff to use more sustainable modes of transport for their journeys. Initiatives can include but are not limited to car sharing, cycle storage, showers, dedicated bus services and home working, smart technology, cycle training, personalised travel planning and education and behavioural change measures.

Policy IT7: New and improved pedestrian and cycling facilities

Planning permission will be granted where proposals maintain, enhance, reasonably provide or reasonably contribute towards:

Routes

The following schemes are identified as priority new and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists:

- Retain the existing list of routes

Cycle Parking

The Stevenage Cycle Strategy identifies improvements to cycle parking provision available to the public in Stevenage in terms of gaps in provision at appropriate locations as well as the quality of existing cycle parking.

Wayfinding

The Stevenage Cycle Strategy identifies improvements to wayfinding for pedestrians and cyclists in and around Stevenage, which includes signage and maps.

Paragraphs 8.39 to 8.44 remain unchanged.

8.45 The Stevenage Cycle Strategy will be regularly reviewed and updated over the plan period to ensure that it is up to date in terms of the infrastructure needs for active travel.

Appendix B

To title the appendix B Parking standards, rather than the current title 'Residential car parking standards'.

To insert a sub-title Residential parking standards

To include a column on the right of the car parking standards with existing residential cycle parking standards.

To insert a sub-title Non-Residential parking standards

To include the non-residential car and cycle parking standards for all other uses also.

ii) The document refers to numerous initiatives and strategies, but who will complete them and when? Is there a budget for the work? Is there a commitment to this anywhere?

Page 15 of the transport technical paper (ED127) sets out the active travel strategy. There is adequate budget for the work. The update to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan includes reallocation of funding of £3.5 million for the active travel strategy. The review of the cycle strategy will address all of the items set out at paragraph 4.12 of the Transport Technical Strategy. The timescale for the Stevenage cycle strategy review is whilst Stevenage Borough Council are awaiting receipt of the Inspector's report.

Stevenage Borough Council considers that the existing car and cycle parking standards are sufficiently flexible. Stevenage Borough Council will review whether these need updating.

iii) Public Transport Strategy - Proposed strategy – when is it expected that the station improvements will take place? Is funding in place for them?

The fifth platform at Stevenage rail station has funding and is expected to be delivered by 2020. The aspiration to upgrade Stevenage rail station is estimated for 2026.

Stevenage Borough Council is committed to new town centre bus stop provision and this is estimated to be delivered during 2019/2020. The LEP and Stevenage Borough Council have jointly committed to fund the bus stop provision.

iv) Car Parking Strategy - Proposed Strategy – if the Council expects developers to invest in the development and encouragement of car-pooling is a policy needed in the Plan to secure this?
This is included in paragraph 8.24, which refers to car sharing.

The council anticipates achieving car sharing / car-pooling through travel plans.