

ES15.2



Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Local Development Plan

Hearing Session 15: Transport

Thursday 5 July 2012

Examination 2012

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Submission

Examination Statement Reference No:	ES15.2
Submission date:	15th June 2012

SESSION 15 TRANSPORT

Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council in order to help facilitate appropriate discussion at the Transport Hearing Session. The Paper provides a response to the questions set by the Planning Inspector (Mr Vincent Maher).

Where the Council does not intend to provide any additional written evidence the Inspector's attention is directed to the relevant part of the Evidence Base, which in the view of the Council addresses the matters raised. The paper will not repeat evidence previously

Policy Number	Proposal	Completion / Start Date	Funding Pledged	Delivery Agent
		can be delivered within the existing highway		
T1.7	Bedwellty Pits, Tredegar to County Boundary	Money allocated for scheme development 2010-2012	WG & Convergence	CCCBC
T1.8	Hilltop to Ebbw Vale to Manmoel	Upgrade of existing route on highway		BGCBC
T1.9	Brynmawr to Blaenavon	Completed		BGCBC
T1.10	Extension of Ebbw Fach Trail from Abertillery to Aberbeeg and completion of missing section through Blaina	Completed		BGCBC
T1.11	Link to Cwmtillery Lakes	Upgrade of existing route on highway		BGCBC
T1.12	Aberbeeg to Royal Oak	Aberbeeg to Llanhileth Completed Llanhileth to Royal Oak 2011/2012 feasibility study 2012/2013 further feasibility study	RTP & Convergence	BGCBC
T1.13	Royal Oak to Swffryd	Implementation 2012/2013	RTP and Convergence funding (Crumlin to Pontypool)	BGCBC
T2.1	Extension of rail link from Parkway to Ebbw Vale Town	Commitment to appraise the feasibility of a new rail station in Ebbw Vale between 2012-2015	Ongoing funding commitment by WG	WG
T2.2	Provision of new station and public transport interchange at Ebbw Vale	Commitment to appraise the feasibility of a new rail station in Ebbw Vale between 2012-2015	Ongoing funding commitment by WG	WG
T2.3	Provision of new station at Cwm	Feasibility study completed	Unlikely to be funded by 2021	Sewta
T2.4	Extension of rail link to Abertillery	Feasibility study completed. Forms part of SEWTA Rail Strategy Proposal developed to the status of network rails grip stage 3 (selection of	No commitment from WG at this stage	Sewta

Policy Number	Proposal	Completion / Start Date	Funding Pledged	Delivery Agent
		options).		
T2.5	Provision of new station and Park and Ride at Abertillery	Feasibility study completed. Forms part of SEWTA Rail Strategy Proposal developed to the status of network rails grip stage 3 (selection of options).	No commitment from WG at this stage	Sewta
T2.6	Rail freight provision at Marine Colliery	Dependent on development of Policy M4.3	Private Sector	Private Sector
T4.1	Bus Priority Scheme along the Brynmawr to Newport Bus Corridor	Identified in the RTP bus strategy as a corridor for improvement	RTP	BGCBC
T4.2	Bus Interchange improvement at Brynmawr	Acquired and demolished building in 2011/12; funding for enhancement 2012/2013	RTP Funding pledged	BGCBC
T4.3	Bus Interchange improvement at Ebbw Vale	Development work currently being undertaken for implementation in 2014	WG & Convergence Funding pledged	BGCBC
T5.1	Construction of a Peripheral Distributor Road through 'The Works'	Development work currently being undertaken for implementation in 2014	WG Funding pledged	BGCBC
T5.2	Online improvements between the Peripheral Distributor Road and the A465	Libanus Rd – under construction. Mountain Rd / Rhyd Blew phase 1 under construction. Phase 2 (A4046/A4047 junction) - development work currently being undertaken for implementation in 2014. Cemetery Road - development work currently being undertaken for implementation in 2014.	RTP / WG funding pledged	BGCBC
T6.1	Dualling of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road (Tredegar to Brynmawr)	Due to commence on site Nov 2012 for completion 2014	WG funding confirmed	WG
T6.2	Online improvements to the A4046 south of Cwm	Online upgrade of existing highway route	No funding pledged at present	BGCBC
T6.3	Online improvements to the A4048	Online upgrade of existing highway route	No funding pledged at	BGCBC

Policy Number	Proposal	Completion / Start Date	Funding Pledged	Delivery Agent
			present	
T6.4	Online improvements to the A467 south of Abertillery	Online upgrade of existing highway route	No funding pledged at present	BGCBC

The transport projects which are critical to the delivery of the spatial strategy and other targets in the Plan are:

T1 Cycle Routes

The following cycle routes have already been completed: T1.1, T1.3, T1.9, T1.10 and T1.13. In addition T1.2, T1.4, T1.12 and T1.13 have funding committed and are likely to be completed soon.

This leaves T1.5, T1.6, T1.7 T1.8 and T1.11 to be developed over the remainder of the Plan period. With the exception of T1.7, the schemes are on the existing highway and only require signposting and minor improvements and should therefore not be deleted from the Plan on grounds of funding not being available.

Funding to implement T1.7 (joint scheme with Caerphilly CBC) was available in 2010-2013 but due to route alignment issues the scheme could not be completed. However, the development work has produced a comprehensive study of possible route alignments and it is considered that the one currently identified in the Plan (**SD01**) is the only feasible option. A bid for further implementation monies via European structural funding is currently being developed for this important core route link between Caerphilly County Borough and Blaenau Gwent.

T2 Rail Network and Station Improvements

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Cardiff and one train to Newport every hour. The assessment work undertaken on this line is very positive and Blaenau Gwent considers that funding for the further development of the proposal is likely to be identified within the plan period. The SEWTRA board meeting of the 16th December 2011 (Item 7) identifies the implementation of this line as 2019-2024, a copy of which is attached at appendix 1.

Policy T2.6 is critical to the development of the delivery of the Preferred Area for quarrying at Land South East of Cwm, Ebbw Vale (M4.3) but is not critical to the strategy.

Policy T3 Safeguarding of Disused Railway Infrastructure

Policy T3 is a protection policy and does not require funding.

T4 Improvements to Bus Services

Funding is already in place for the improvements to the Bus interchanges at Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale (T4.2 and T4.3).

The bus priority scheme identified in policy T4.1 is key to objective 4 which aims to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport. It also assists in improving connectivity, as identified in policy SP6 criterion 1. Whilst no specific funding is confirmed at present, it is identified as a key priority corridor in Sewta's Regional Bus Strategy and is likely to be funded in the Plan period.

T5 New Roads to Facilitate Development

The Peripheral Distributor Road (Policy T5.1) is critical to the proper functioning of 'The Works' Site (Policy MU2) and to proposals to improve Ebbw Vale Town Centre (AA1.1 and AA1.2) which rely on the downgrading of the road. Thus it is critical to the strategy of the Plan in terms of SP1(b) promoting Ebbw Vale as the principal hub for Blaenau Gwent, and SP1(c) delivering the strategic sustainable flagship scheme at 'The Works'. As identified in the table above there is funding pledged to deliver this scheme.

On line improvement works between the Peripheral Distributor Road and the A465 (Policy T5.2) is critical to the proper functioning of the road network, the delivery of 'The Works' (Policy MU2) and proposals for Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor (Policy MU1). Again the road is critical to the strategy of the Plan in terms of (Policy SP1(b)) promoting Ebbw Vale as the principal hub for Blaenau Gwent, and (Policy SP1(c)) delivering the strategic sustainable flagship scheme at 'The Works' and Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor. As identified in the table above there is funding pledged to deliver this scheme.

T6 Regeneration Led Highway Improvements

Dualling of the Heads of the Valleys Road (Policy T6.1) is critical to the regeneration and growth strategy of the Plan it not only provides improved connectivity (Policy SP6 criteria 1(a) and (b)) but is seen as a catalyst to

generate new and sustained economic activity and investment. This road is key to supporting housing and economic growth as well as providing a critical cycle connection. As identified in the table above there is funding pledged to deliver this scheme.

On line improvements to the A4046, A4048 and A467 (Policies T6.2, T6.3 and T6.4) are important to improving connectivity with other key settlements in the South East Wales Region and between the hubs (Policy SP61(a) and 1(b)). Funding will be found for improvements where appropriate.

Regional Transport Plan funding is sought from WG on a year on year basis so it is very difficult to programme future funding delivery. Identification of schemes within the LDP assists in supporting grant bids, therefore, wherever possible, schemes should be retained within the Plan.

The Council has been successful to date in bidding for European Structural Funds to deliver schemes within the Borough. The Council will continue to have access to European funding from 2014-2020 and the Inspector is asked to take this into consideration.

The Inspector's attention is drawn to **ED.3** the Council's response to previous questions on Transport.

2. Does the Plan give sufficient emphasis to the desire/ need to promote sustainable forms of transport including cycling?

Policy SP6 sets out how the Council and others will work together to create a sustainable transport network.

It is accepted that more emphasis could be placed on the desire to promote sustainable forms of transport within Policy SP6. It is suggested to the Inspector that Policy SP6 could be improved through reference in criterion 1 to bus, **cycle** and road links.

An additional criterion could also be added to Policy SP6 to reflect the plans objective to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport.

Policy DM1, criterion 3b, seeks to ensure that new access roads within developments are designed to an appropriate standard that prioritises the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport before the private car.

It is suggested that this Policy could be improved.

3. How will Policy SP6 be implemented?

Policy SP6 will be implemented through assessing applications against policies and the implementation of transport allocations identified within the

Plan. Chapter 9 of the Plan identifies the phasing, funding and who is responsible for the delivery of these allocations (**SD01**, pages 126-130).

Criterion 1 seeks to increase connectivity, this will be achieved through the implementation of Policies (T1), (T2), (T4), (T5), and (T6).

Criterion 2 identifies that the transport schemes identified will be required to protect the built and natural environment and local communities. This will be achieved through assessing new transport schemes against policies (DM1), (DM2g), (DM3), (DM4), (DM12), (DM14), (DM15), (DM16), (DM17) and (DM18).

Criterion 3 seeks to promote Ebbw Vale as a regional public transport hub. This will be implemented through the delivery of proposals (T1), (T2.1), (T2.2) and (T4.3).

Criterion 4 identifies that the Plan facilitates an integrated cycle and pedestrian route connecting settlements with employment areas and town centres. This will be implemented through Policies (DM1), (DM4) and the delivery of cycle routes (T1.1- T1.13).

Criterion 5 identifies that the Plan will facilitate the transportation of freight on the core network whilst encouraging the use of rail this will be implemented through Policies (DM1), (DM19), (DM21) and the delivery of proposal (T2.6).

Criterion 6 seeks to secure appropriate provision for people with special access and mobility requirements. This will be implemented through Policy (DM1.3.c).

4. In the absence of an adopted Supplyw the us DM) % 0 [cyDM) % 0

