

The 'Red Dragon' Project

Bala Lake Railway Extension

THE BALA LAKE
RAILWAY TRUST

A red steam locomotive pulling a train of maroon and cream-colored passenger coaches along a track that runs alongside a blue lake. The background is a lush green forest under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

**Preserving our past to enrich
our future**

Our prospectus for heritage-led growth.

Preserving our past to enrich our future; an introduction to the 'Red Dragon' project.

Julian Birley BEM, Chairman of the Bala Lake Railway Trust

Mae Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid wedi bod yn rhan annwyl o dreftadaeth ein rhanbarth ers amser maith – symbol parhaol o ysbryd cymunedol, gwydnwch a balchder. Ers degawdau, mae wedi dod â llawenydd iymwelwyr, wedi cefnogi busnesau lleol, ac wedi cysylltu cenedlaethau trwy ei rhythm ysgafn ar hyd glannau Llyn Tegid. Heddiw, rydym yn sefyll mewn cyfnod hollbwysig yn ei stori.

Mae'r prospectws hwn yn nodi ein gweledigaeth i ymestyn y rheilffordd i galon tref Bala – prosiect trawsnewidiol a fydd yn darparu buddion cymdeithasol ac economaidd parhaol. Yn fwy na dim ond gosod trac, mae hyn yn ymwneud â gosod sylfeini ar gyfer dyfodol cryfach a mwybywiog. Bydd yr estyniad yn dod â'r rheilffordd o fewn pellter cerdded i siopau, caffis ac atyniadau diwylliannol y Bala, gan hybu nifer yr ymwelwyr, creu swyddi, ac anadlu bywyd newydd i'n stryd fawr.

Mae'r prosiect hwn wedi'i foddelu ar Ddatblygiadau Rheilffordd Treftadaeth llwyddiannus eraill, felly rydym yn gwybod y bydd yn dod â'r manteision hyn.

Ond yr hyn sy'n gwneud y prosiect hwn yn wirioneddol arbennig yw'r ffordd y mae wedi'i lunio gan bobl Bala. Mae gwirfoddolwyr, trigolion a busnesau lleol wedi dod ynghyd ag angerdd a phwrpas, gan ddangos yr hyn y gellir ei gyflawni pan fydd cymuned yn arwain ei hadfywiad eihun. Mae eu hymrwymiad eisoes wedi cyflawni cynnydd rhyfeddol; nawr, gyda'r buddsoddiad cywir, gallwn gwblhau'r daith.

Rydym yn eich gwahodd i ymuno â ni i wireddu'r weledigaeth hon. Nid prosiect trafnidiaeth yn unig yw Estyniad Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid – mae'n gatalydd ar gyfer adnewyddiad gwledig, yn ddathliad odreftadaeth, ac yn dyst i'r hyn y gall cymunedau ei gyflawni pan roddir y cyfle iddynt.

Gyda'n gilydd, gadewch i ni ddod â'r rheilffordd adref i'r Bala.

The Bala Lake Railway has long been a cherished part of our region's heritage—an enduring symbol of community spirit, resilience, and pride. For decades, it has brought joy to visitors, supported local businesses, and connected generations through its gentle rhythm along the shores of Llyn Tegid. Today, we stand at a pivotal moment in its story.

This prospectus sets out our vision to extend the railway into the heart of Bala town—a transformative project that will deliver lasting social and economic benefits. More than just laying track, this is about laying foundations for a stronger, more vibrant future. The extension will bring the railway within walking distance of Bala's shops, cafés, and cultural attractions, boosting footfall, creating jobs, and breathing new life into our high street.

This project is modelled on other successful Heritage Railway Developments, so we know it will bring these benefits.

What makes this project truly special is the way it has been shaped by the people of Bala. Volunteers, residents, and local businesses have come together with passion and purpose, demonstrating what can be achieved when a community leads its own regeneration. Their commitment has already delivered remarkable progress; now, with the right investment, we can complete the journey.

We invite you to join us in realising this vision. The Bala Lake Railway Extension is not just a transport project—it's a catalyst for rural renewal, a celebration of heritage, and a testament to what communities can achieve when given the opportunity.

Together, let's bring the railway home to Bala.

Contents

1. About us	4	Placemaking and community	22
2. Bala Lake Railway	5	Connectivity and access	23
Bala Lake Railway	5	Year-round benefits	24
Community impact	6	5. Delivery	25
Bala in context	7	Delivery Plan	25
Existing challenges	8	Funding requirements	26
3. The 'Red Dragon' Project	10	6. Summary	27
Project vision	10	A final word from our chairman	27
Project proposals	11		
Project phasing	12		
Future opportunities	13		
Community support	14		
4. Investment Case	15		
The 'Red Dragon' Project's impact	15		
Strategic Fit	17		
Case for change	18		
Economic opportunity	19		
Heritage Railway: a proven investment	20		
Case studies	21		

1 About us

The Bala Lake Railway (Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid) is a scenic narrow-gauge heritage railway running along the southern shore of the lake, a destination for around 34,000 visitors each year.

The Bala Lake Railway Trust was set up to advance education and learning and to promote public benefit through the preservation, restoration, maintenance and exhibition of steam railway locomotives and other railway artefacts. It provides facilities for the safe-keeping and exhibition of them and the provision of information and education about the history of such locomotives and other railway artefacts directly associated with the slate industry of North Wales, and particularly those regions of Dinorwic and Penrhyn and those around the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog.

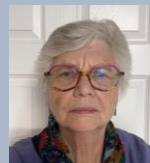
In this context we work closely with the Bala Lake Railway, the railway operating company, to achieve our charitable objectives.



Bala Lake Railway Trustees



Julian Birley
BEM
Chairman



Christina Kennedy
Finance and
Governance



Roger Hine
Administration



Toby Watkins
Grant Fundraising

2 Bala Lake Railway

[About us](#)

[Bala Lake Railway](#)

[Red Dragon Project](#)

[Investment Case](#)

[Delivery](#)

[Summary](#)

Bala Lake Railway

Bringing the BLR back to Bala will have a transformational impact on the town.

Bala Lake Railway

An introduction

The Bala Lake Railway (Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid) is a scenic narrow-gauge heritage railway running along the southern shore of the lake. Along a 4.5-mile (7.2 km) route, the railway offers a charming one-hour return journey through the Snowdonia National Park, with stunning views of Arenig Fawr, Aran Benllyn, and Aran Fawddwy.

The line begins at Llanuwchllyn and currently terminates at Pen-y-Bont, a mile from Bala town. Intermediate stops include Glan Llyn Halt, Llangower—where visitors can access the lake shore—and the now-closed Bryn Hynod Halt. The railway is home to the largest collection of historic narrow-gauge quarry locomotives built for the North Wales slate industry.

Each year, the railway welcomes thousands of visitors, serving as both a tourist attraction and a cultural landmark. However, its distance from Bala town centre means its full economic impact is not realised.



2 Bala Lake Railway



Community impact

Jobs: The railway employs **4FTE staff and 16 seasonal staff** in our café and shop. These are often local, **young people** entering the world of work for the very first time.

Volunteers: in 2024, our volunteers completed **1,214 shifts**; amounting to **10,000 hours** of support – a total contribution of **£200,000** of their time.

Skills: We offer **training opportunities for young and old**; from **undergraduates** wanting first-hand experience of engineering, **work experience students**, and **experienced design engineers** of all ages **giving back to the community**.

2 Bala Lake Railway

Bala in context

Bala is an historic market town located in the east of Gwynedd, near to the administrative boundaries of Denbighshire and Conwy. Bala is part of the Snowdonia National Park and the landscape surrounding the town and the famous lake is designated as an historic Landscape. The town is situated on the north end of the lake, the largest natural lake in Wales, and benefits from a stunning landscape and visual character with view of the Penllyn landscape, and the Aran, Arenig, and Berwyn ranges.

Bala benefits from good road connectivity to other key settlements including Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Porthmadog, Bangor and Caernarfon. Further afield the A494 connects to onwards destinations via the A470, including Chester and Wrexham.

The lake is a significant leisure and tourism asset and attracts thousands of visitors every year.

Despite its many strengths Bala suffers from a lack of affordable housing for local people, and a shortage of high paying and full-time jobs. Access to opportunity is hindered by its geographical distance from major settlements, and a poor public transport network that offers neither the frequency, service times, or reliability that people need.

To Betws-y-Coed and
Ynys Mon

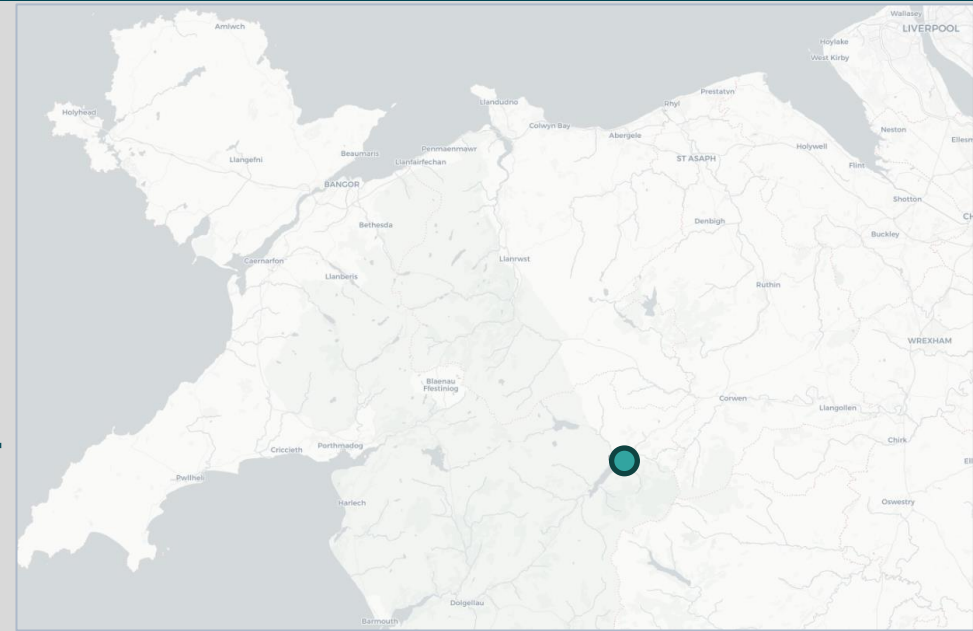


Population of 2,000

72.5% speaking Welsh as a first language

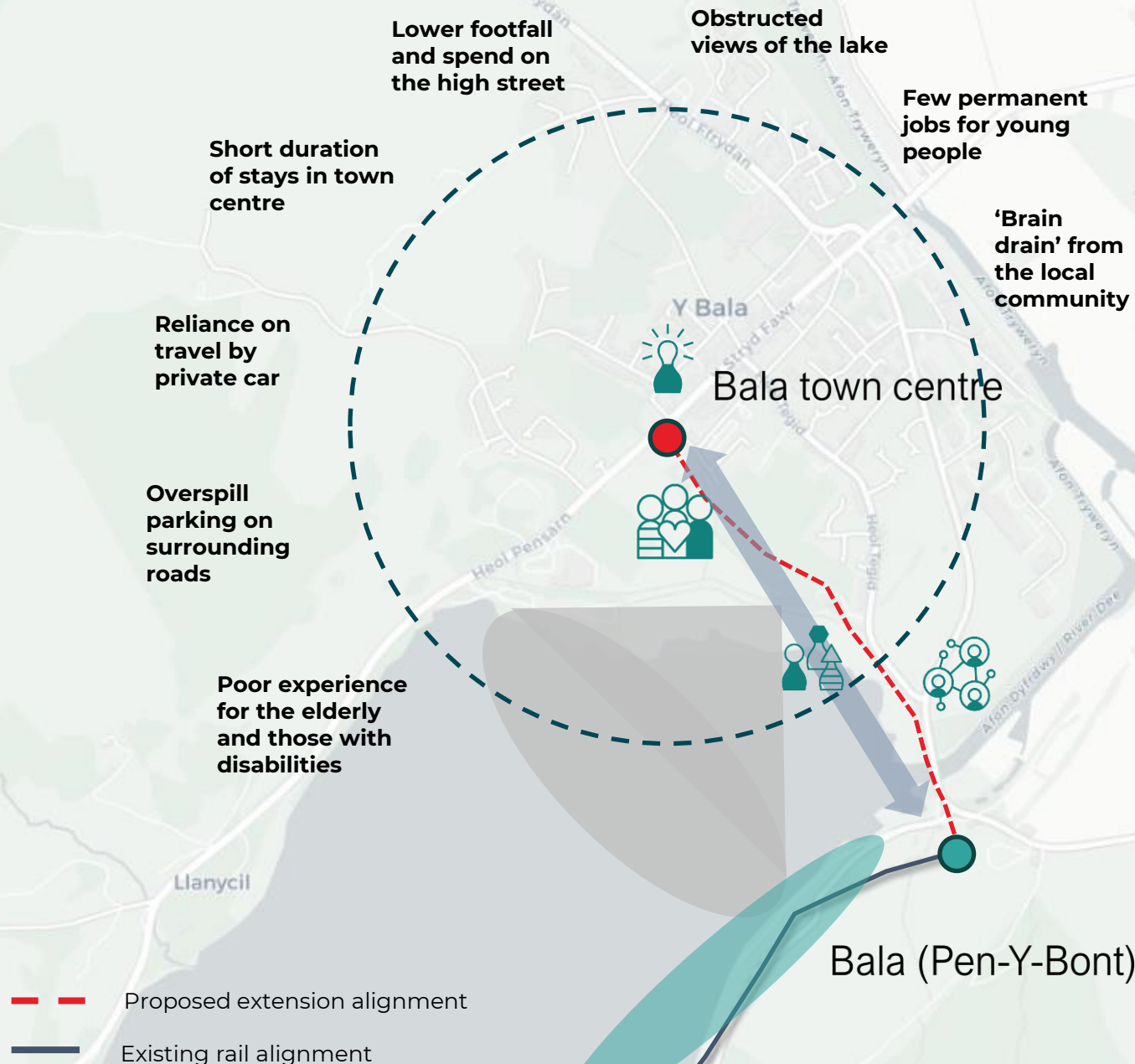
Within Eryri National Park

Major water sports destination and base for rock climbing, hiking and cycling in the region.



Existing challenges

The potential of the town is held back by the distance of the rail line to the town centre.



There are several challenges and opportunities that the extension seeks to address:



Missed economic opportunity

evidence from other rail extensions provided undeniable economic benefits for the rail operator, recipient location and its patrons and visitors. The extension would coincide precisely with delivering economic benefits currently lost to all three potential beneficiaries. Enhancing the link to the town will induce significant additional community / business benefits.



Access despite the presence of Pen-y-bont terminus the reality is that the train currently runs to an effective 'no-man's land'. There are no amenities (apart from a shelter) at Pen-y-bont as it stops short of the town making access to the town challenging on foot. The desire to park at Pen-y-bont results in major parking problems.



Placemaking There are natural barriers along the eastern apron of the lake which prevent full and uninhibited views of the lake. These natural barriers are also 'protected' and are therefore difficult to remove.



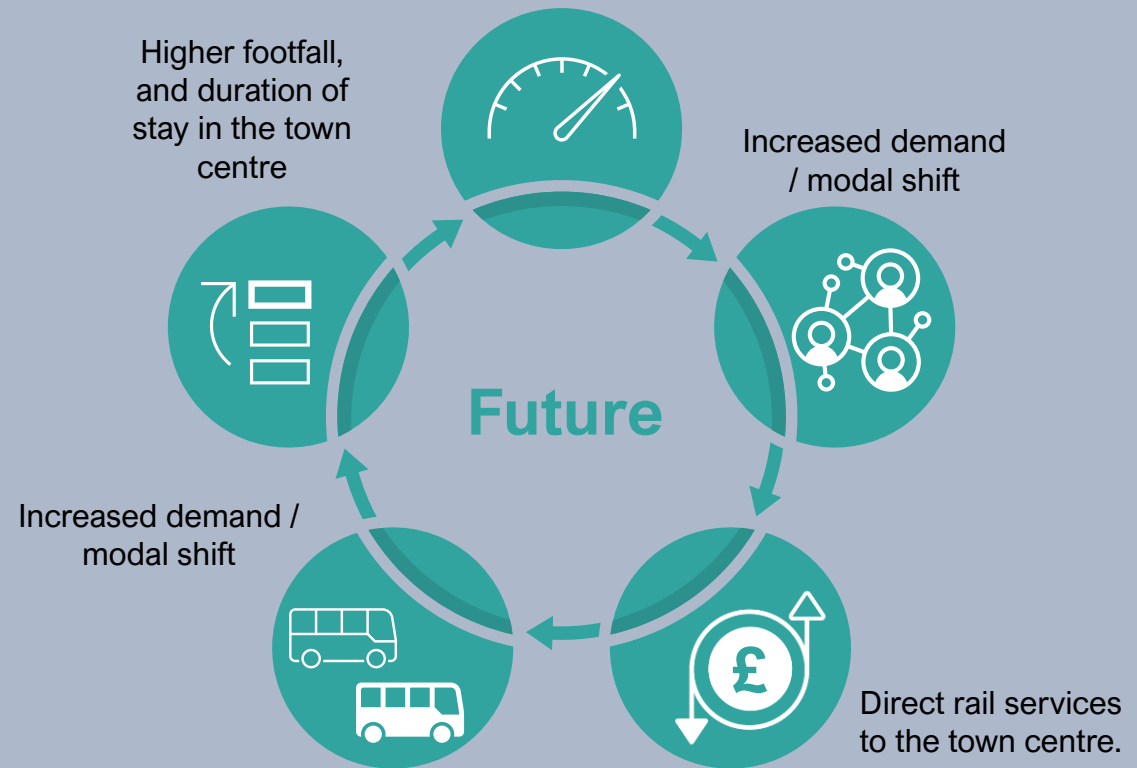
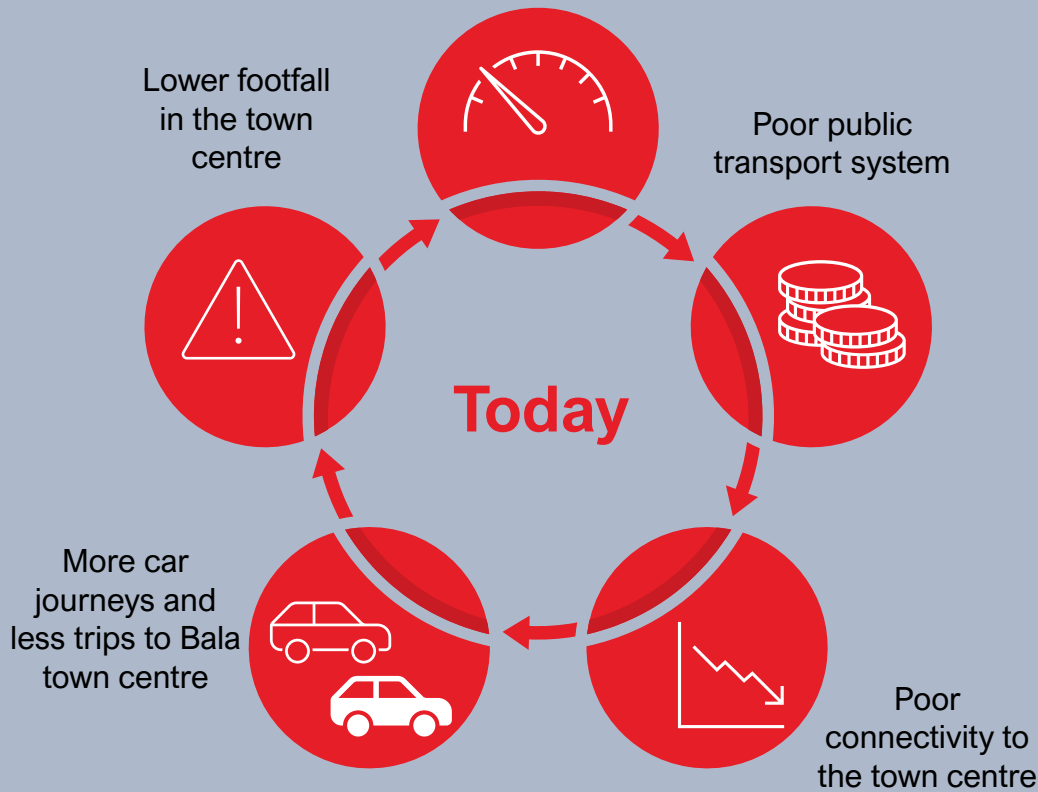
Seasonality the current focus on lakeside activities means that the visitor season tends to focus on the summer periods.

2 Bala Lake Railway

Entrenched patterns of limited opportunity, fragmented infrastructure, and poor connectivity perpetuate the status quo, reinforcing barriers to progress. **Investment in the extension will help break this cycle; addressing current challenges to support a 'virtuous cycle' of growth.**

Lack of high paying full-time jobs, 'brain-drain' from local communities

Greater spend and creation of full-time job opportunities



3 'Red Dragon' Project

Project vision

Bringing the BLR back to Bala will have a transformational impact on the town.

Vision

The Bala Lake Railway Extension is a bold vision to reconnect the town of Bala with its historic railway—bringing the line into the town centre for the first time in over half a century. This is more than a transport scheme; it is a community-led regeneration project that will deliver tangible benefits for local people, businesses, and visitors alike.

At its core, the extension seeks to create a seamless link between the existing heritage railway and Bala's potentially vibrant high street. The current terminus at Pen-y-Bont, is a mile from the town, with the railway stopping just short of Bala's edge. Our plan is to extend the line by approximately 1.2 kilometres, crossing the River Dee and terminating at a new station within the town centre.

This will transform the railway from a rural attraction into a dynamic gateway—welcoming visitors directly into Bala and encouraging exploration of its shops, eateries, and cultural landmarks.

The scheme includes:

- Construction of a new station in Bala town centre, designed to complement the town's character and heritage.
- Installation of track infrastructure, crossing the bridge over the River Dee
- Enhanced visitor facilities, signage, and accessibility improvements to ensure the railway serves all members of the community.
- Landscaping and environmental enhancements to preserve the beauty of the surrounding area.

The Bala Lake Railway Trust, supported by a dedicated team of volunteers and local stakeholders, has already secured land, developed engineering plans, and raised significant funds amounting to £1.75m through grassroots efforts.

The passion and perseverance of this community-led initiative is a testament to what can be achieved when local pride meets collective purpose.

The economic case is compelling. The extension will increase visitor numbers in the town, extend dwell time, and support local businesses through increased footfall. It will create new jobs both directly and indirectly, offer training opportunities, and strengthen Bala's position as a destination for heritage tourism. Crucially, it will also foster a deeper connection between the railway and the community it serves—making it not just a visitor attraction, but a living part of Bala's identity.

We believe this project aligns perfectly with national and regional priorities for rural development, sustainable tourism, and community empowerment. It offers a rare opportunity to invest in a scheme that is 'shovel-ready', locally supported, and rich in social value.

Our vision is clear: to bring the railway home to Bala, and in doing so, to unlock a new chapter of opportunity, pride, and prosperity for the town and its people. We invite you to be part of this journey.

3 'Red Dragon' Project

Project proposals

Our plan is to extend the line by approximately 1.2 kilometres, crossing the River Dee and terminating at a new station within the town centre.

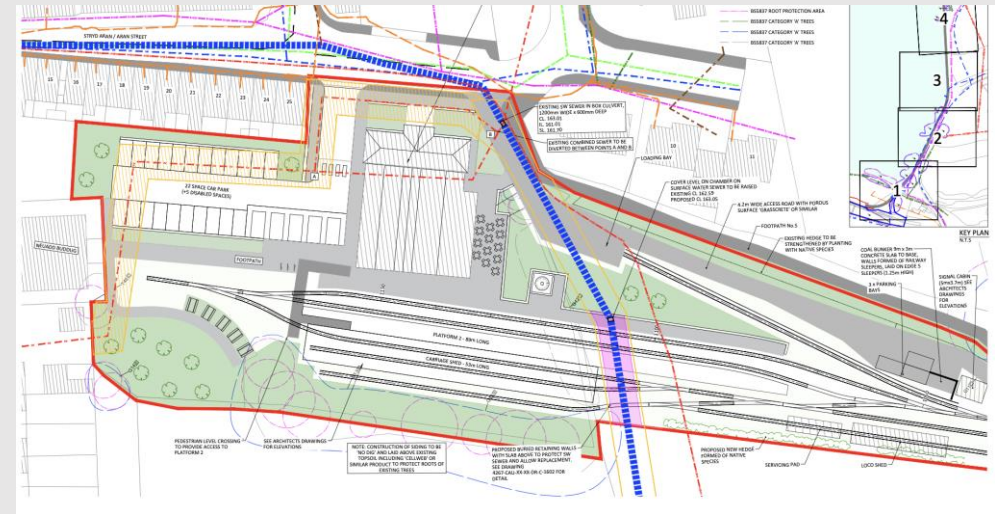
This will transform the railway from a rural attraction into a dynamic gateway—welcoming visitors directly into Bala.

In 2024, full planning permission was granted for the scheme, including:

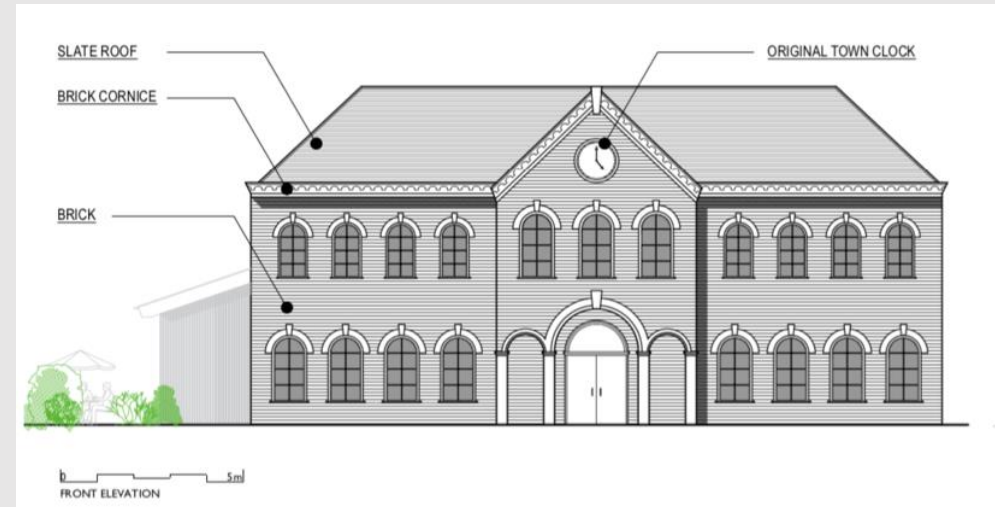
- Construction of a **new station** in Bala town centre, designed to complement the town's character and heritage.
- Installation of **track infrastructure**, including a **bridge** over the River Dee
- **Enhanced visitor facilities, signage, and accessibility improvements** to ensure the railway serves all members of the community.
- **Landscaping and environmental enhancements** to preserve the beauty of the surrounding area.

Following receipt of full planning permission, we now have a number of subsequent steps to realise our ambition. We have set out five stages of delivery; each requiring funding. The diagram overleaf sets out each of the five stages and the necessary funding requirement.

Analysis conducted on behalf of the trust indicates that, through increased passenger growth, directing existing tourism to the town centre, and encouraging longer stays and greater spend locally, **annual increases in GVA would provide a return on investment within 10 years.**



Rail infrastructure: The works include construction of a carriage shed and new signal box.

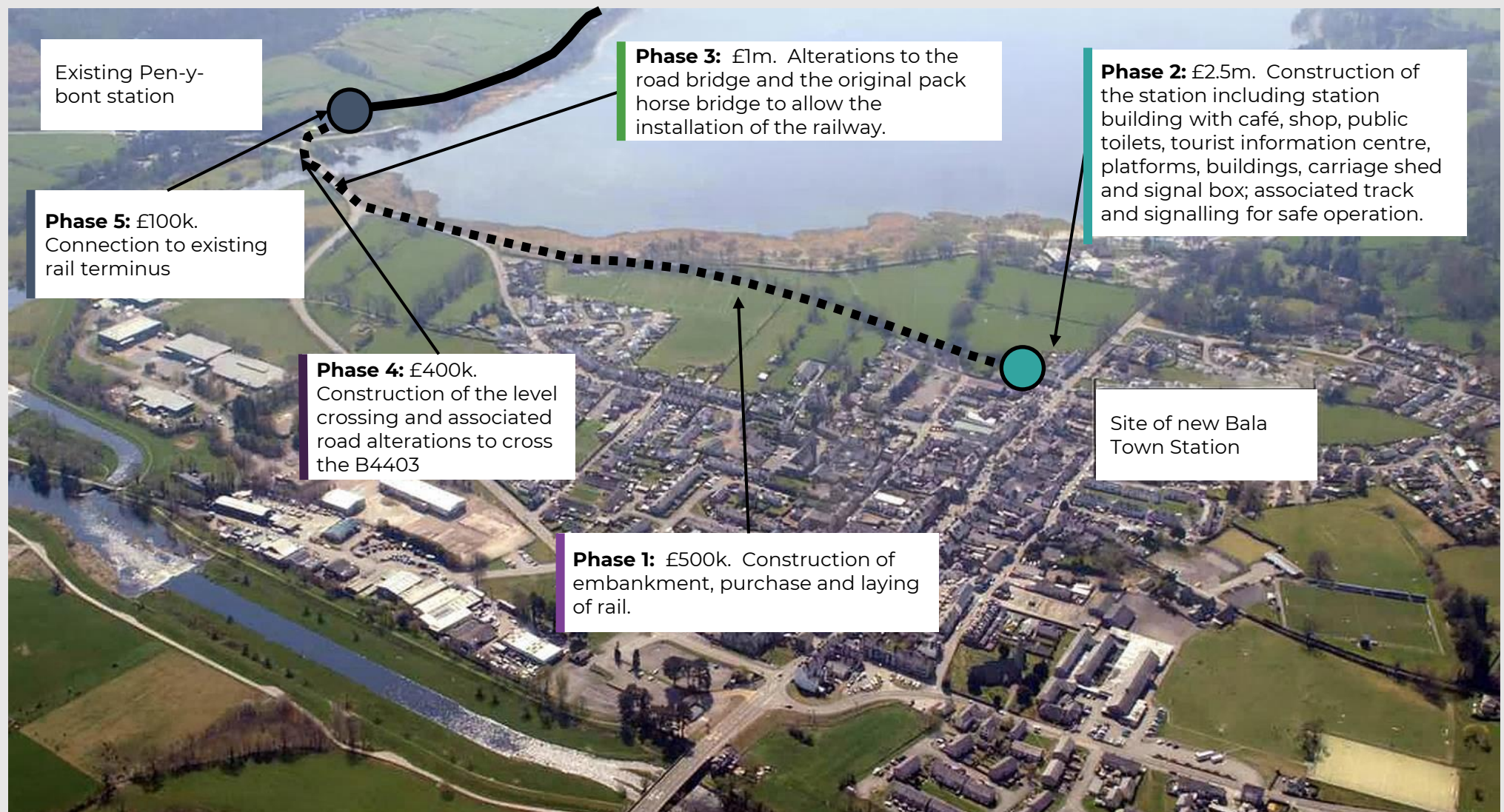


Proposed new station building: The new station building will provide the town with a café, community space, public toilets, tourist information, and shop; a 'hub' for the town.

3 'Red Dragon' Project

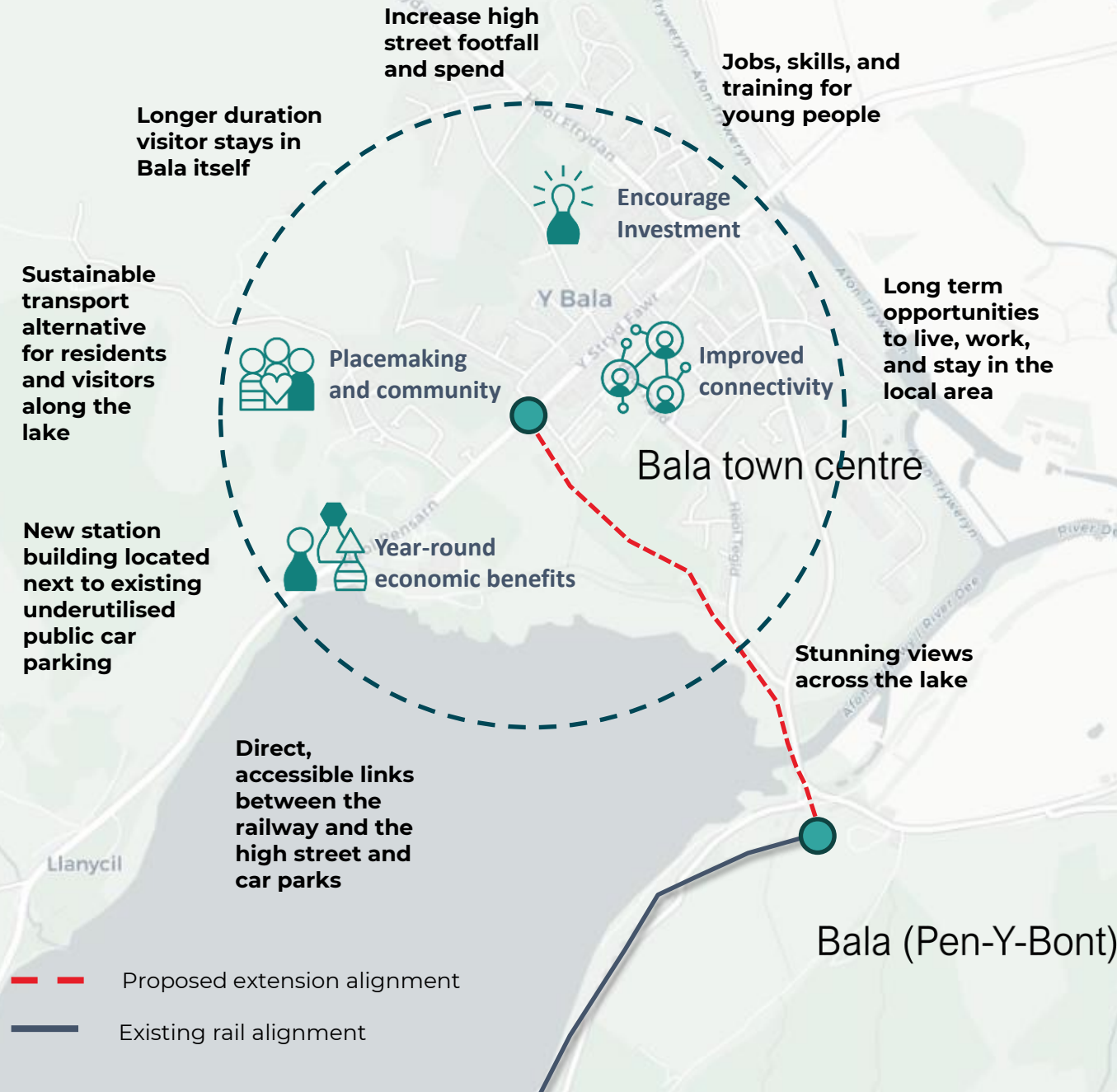
Project phasing

Delivery of the extension will be split into five phases.



Future opportunities

By bringing the terminus into the town, we can realise this potential and deliver lasting positive change.



For the last half century, the railway has terminated at its remote terminus nearly a mile outside the town. The extension will bring the railway right to the Bala's high street along the north shore of the lake affording visitors one of the finest views from a train anywhere in the UK.

We believe the extension of the railway is fundamental to realising the opportunity in Bala. This short extension will have a **transformational impact**. Analysis, and experience, shows that heritage rail lines **create jobs, strengthen cultural identity, develops local skills and expertise, and contributes significantly to local economies**.

Here it can provide **sustainable transport** between settlements, getting people to Bala Town centre without the need to get in the car. For visitors, it will offer **a natural place to commence their journeys**; allowing them to park in existing car parks in the town centre, **avoiding overspill parking** on surrounding local roads and the inconvenience and safety hazard that can create.

This along with **increases in tourist numbers** will, in turn, drive **increased footfall** and dwell times in the town centre; **encouraging people to stay – and spend – in Bala**.

The extension will also **create new jobs** – both during construction and operation – and provide **much needed and valuable skills and training opportunities** that encourage **local people to stay and live in the community**.

This is why the Red Dragon project is so well-supported.



Community support

“The railway coming into Bala will be **the best thing for the town for 200 years**”

County Councillor Dilwyn Morgan

“It would surely improve the railway and the town of Bala.”

“Very good idea. Preserved railways always bring money to the area”.

“Excellent idea – we need more attractions of historical value”.

“It would encourage a full day instead of half a day in the area”.

“if it had been easy to get to the centre of town then would have got off and had lunch there instead of immediate round trip”

“we have always thought that the shortfall to the town was a disappointment”

4 Investment case

The 'Red Dragon' Project's impact

The extension will support accessibility, promote sustainable travel, better manage visitor impacts, and preserve Welsh culture

Project Impact

The potential benefits of the scheme are numerous and well aligned with national and local policies. They respond directly to the key challenges faced by the town and support economic, environmental, and cultural aims.

Our case is strong. We have been identified as part of the Bala Place Making & Community Plan. We set out here the compelling nature of the case for investment across four key theme areas. We bring together the opinions and feedback from our community, an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the BLR and Bala itself, national and local policy objectives and heritage rail case studies.

We believe this scheme can have a profound impact on people of all ages and abilities; delivering a package of benefits and opportunities that will have an enduring and positive impact on our community.



Economic activity

Improved access and increased footfall are expected to drive higher spending in Bala's shops, cafés, and restaurants—supporting local businesses and encouraging new investment.



Placemaking and community

The new station will serve as a welcoming arrival point, visually showcasing Llyn Tegid and reinforcing Bala's role as a key destination within the Welsh Lake District and Snowdonia National Park.



Year-round benefits

By enhancing the visitor experience and linking directly to the town, the extension encourages longer stays and repeat visits, helping to stretch the tourism season beyond the summer peak.



Connectivity and access

The extension removes the need to navigate from the isolated Pen-y-bont terminus, offering a safer, more direct, and inclusive route into Bala town—especially important for those with mobility challenges.

The 'Red Dragon' Project's impact

Bringing the railway back home to Bala will secure long term economic, social, and environmental benefits for the town



Year-round benefits

- Create a uniquely beautiful vista across the lake between Pen-y-bont and the new terminus in Bala.
- Enhance the visitor experience, encouraging people to stay-and spend-in Bala town beyond the current summer peak season
- Allow the town to develop other leisure facilities including a lake path, that broaden's the appeal to a wider audience
- Draw people into the town centre by increasing the profile and visibility of the town



Connectivity and access

- Make it far more accessible and safer for patrons to use the train to get to the town
- Remove the growing parking issues on the road at Pen-y-bont station and at the beach car park at Llangower
- Provide a much more visible link between the town and BLR thereby integrating the attraction to the town's wider tourism offering
- Offer a sustainable means of transport for communities along the lake to access Bala
- Support the development of a lake path, complimenting existing walking routes.



Economic Activity

- Increase annual passengers to the railway from 34,000pa to 55,000pa
- Create 8 FTE jobs and protect the existing four full time employees and 16 seasonal café staff at Llanuwchllyn
- £1.4mGVA in the Bala area during operation
- Create 38 FTE jobs and £420k per annum GVA during the construction phase
- Generate £1.90 in local spending for every £1 spent on the railway
- **Provide a return on investment within 10 years** by way of increased tax and VAT receipts



Placemaking and community

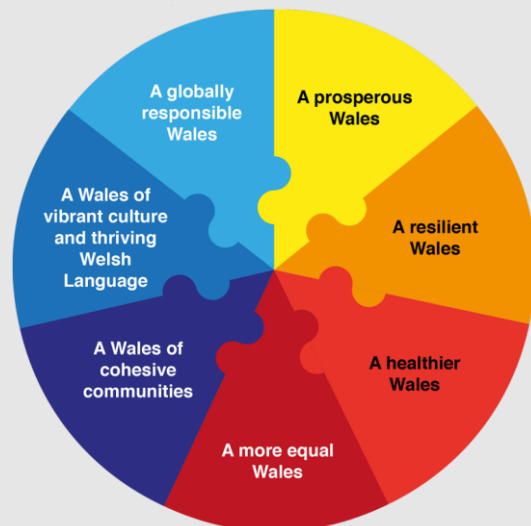
- Encourage young people to live and stay in Bala, supporting preservation of the Welsh Language and providing them with the skills and confidence to thrive.
- Create much needed community facilities at the heart of the town
- Provide a café, shop, tourist information, and public toilets
- Deliver a 'gateway' into Bala town; improving public presence and landscaping and enhancing the high streets

4 Investment case

Strategic fit

The extension will support accessibility, promote sustainable travel, better manage visitor impacts, and preserve Welsh culture

The Red Dragon Project presents a compelling strategic case for investment—one that aligns closely with national priorities for sustainable development, rural regeneration, and community wellbeing. This project is a catalyst for long-term, inclusive growth. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out a bold vision for Wales: to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the country. The Bala Lake Railway Extension embodies this vision across all seven well-being goals:



A Prosperous Wales By extending the railway into Bala town centre, the project will stimulate local economic activity. It will create new jobs, attract investment, and provide training opportunities—particularly in heritage skills and hospitality—helping to build a resilient local economy.

A Resilient Wales The scheme includes environmental enhancements and sustainable design principles. It promotes low-carbon tourism and encourages modal shift from car to rail.

A Healthier Wales By encouraging active travel and outdoor recreation, the railway supports physical and mental well-being. The project also fosters social cohesion through shared community purpose and pride

A More Equal Wales The extension will improve accessibility for all, including those with limited mobility, and bring the railway within reach of more residents. It will create inclusive opportunities for volunteering, employment, and community engagement

A Wales of Cohesive Communities This is a community-powered initiative; uniting Bala’s residents, volunteers, and businesses, fostering stronger local networks and civic pride. It enhances connectivity, supports rural vitality, and contributes to balanced regional growth. It is also shovel-ready, with land secured, plans developed, and strong public backing—making it a low-risk, high-impact investment.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language The railway is a living heritage asset. Its extension will strengthen Bala’s cultural identity, celebrate its industrial past, and promote the Welsh language through signage, interpretation, and community events.

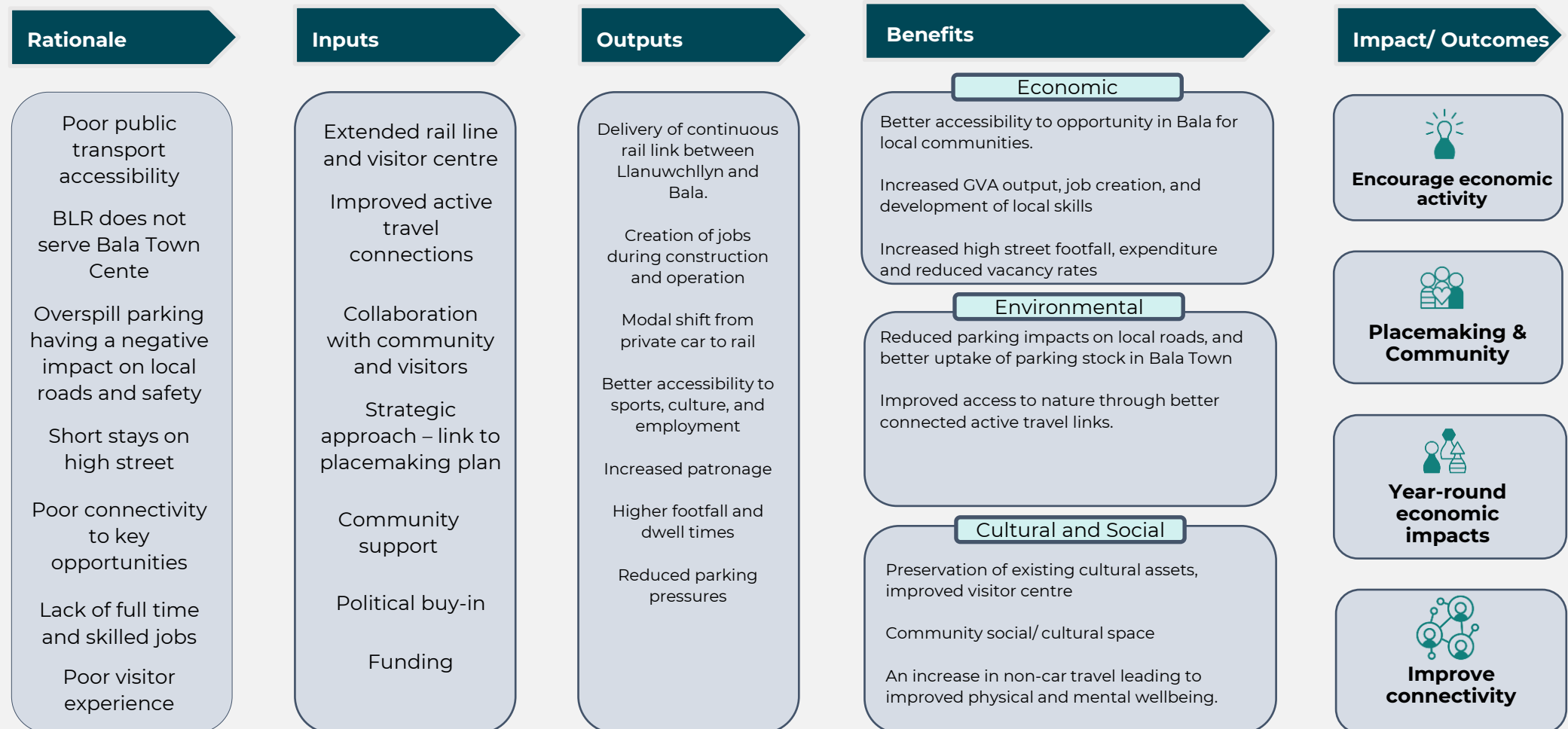
A Globally Responsible Wales The project demonstrates responsible stewardship of heritage and natural resources. It supports sustainable tourism and aligns with global goals for inclusive, community-led development.

4 Investment case

Case for change

A clear alignment exists between the current problems and the solutions offered by the Red Dragon Project

Theory of Change





The economic opportunity for Bala

Passenger Growth: From 34,000 to 55,000 annually

Increased spend in Bala and local area from passenger growth: from £700k to £1.12M/year

GVA Impact: £160k net annual gain; 12 FTE jobs supported

Construction Boost: £1.4m GVA; 38 FTE jobs (1 year)

Skills and training: for young people to develop skills and experience in engineering, hospitality and retail.

Strong ROI: Payback in 10 years



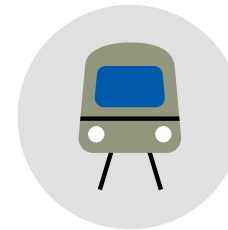
4 Investment case

Heritage Rail: a proven investment

Heritage railways offer significant cultural, social, and economic benefits.

They preserve historic infrastructure and engineering, fostering community pride and educational opportunities. As tourist attractions, they stimulate local economies by boosting visitor spending in hospitality, retail, and services.

Heritage lines also create jobs, support volunteerism, and promote sustainable leisure travel. Their charm and authenticity enhance regional identity, making them valuable assets for rural regeneration and long-term economic resilience.



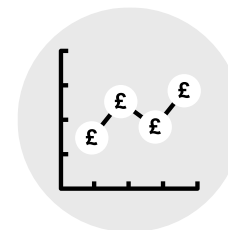
Proven impact

Heritage railways are a proven means of promoting sustainable, local regeneration. Our findings are evidenced by the Heritage Rail Association, All Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail, and case studies presented hereafter.



Employment

Heritage railways stimulate local job growth directly and indirectly, offering opportunities in engineering, hospitality, and retail. They provide young people with opportunities to work, and live, in rural communities.



Economic Value

Investment in heritage rail contribute significantly to local economies through tourism, and associated spending in local communities.



Sustainable passenger transport

Each year heritage railways attract 13m visitors, carrying 18.6m passenger journeys over 130m passenger miles. Whilst primarily leisure trips, they can offer a genuine alternative to rural communities otherwise underserved by public transport.

Heritage Railway Economic Impacts

All Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail

*“Heritage railways make a **major contribution to the economies of the areas they serve** both in terms of attracting tourism and of substantial spending on local services. Research undertaken for a number of railways suggests a **mean benefit to the local economy of around 2.7 times the railway’s turnover**. In aggregate, this would suggest that the **economic benefit nationally is just under £250m**”.*

*“Heritage railways also provide **employment and valuable skills training including apprenticeships**. Frequently this is in areas of the country where employment opportunities, particularly for skilled workers, are low. In particular, they provide **entry level jobs for a wide range of skills and disciplines**. “*

4 Investment case

Case studies



Welsh Highland Railway

Following its reopening between Caernarfon and Porthmadog in 2011, the line is now estimated to have had a **£15 million annual impact** on the Gwynedd economy, accommodating **250,000 passengers annually**.

£15m pa GVA



Source: "Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways: A Sustainable Future"



Severn Valley Railway

The Severn Valley Railway has been estimated to return **£10.35m in economic value annually**; a ratio of turnover to economic value of 2.11.

£10m pa GVA



Source: "Report on the Value of Heritage Railways" All Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail



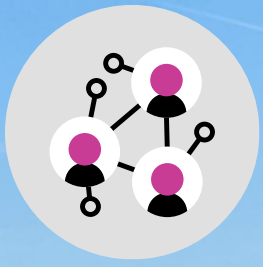
North Yorkshire Moors Railway

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway is **estimated to be worth £30million to the regional economy**, carrying **350,000 passengers annually**, and employs around **100 staff**.

£30m pa GVA



Source: <https://www.nymr.co.uk/north-york-moors-historical-railway-trust>



Connectivity and access

Sustainable travel: Improves connectivity between Bala town and surrounding areas, offering a sustainable, scenic alternative to car travel.

Active travel: Allow the town to develop other key leisure facilities (e.g. lake path etc)

Inclusive accessibility: improve accessibility, particularly for those with disabilities.

Parking: Directs people to existing parking in Bala, avoiding on-street parking along the lake

Public transport: new station building offers a potential interchange with the Sherpa Services

Year-round benefits

Enhanced visitor experience: stunning views, tourist information, and better integration between the town, lake-front, beaches, and railway.

Longer stays: better, more direct access to tourist attractions and leisure encouraging people to stay longer, in and beyond the summer season.

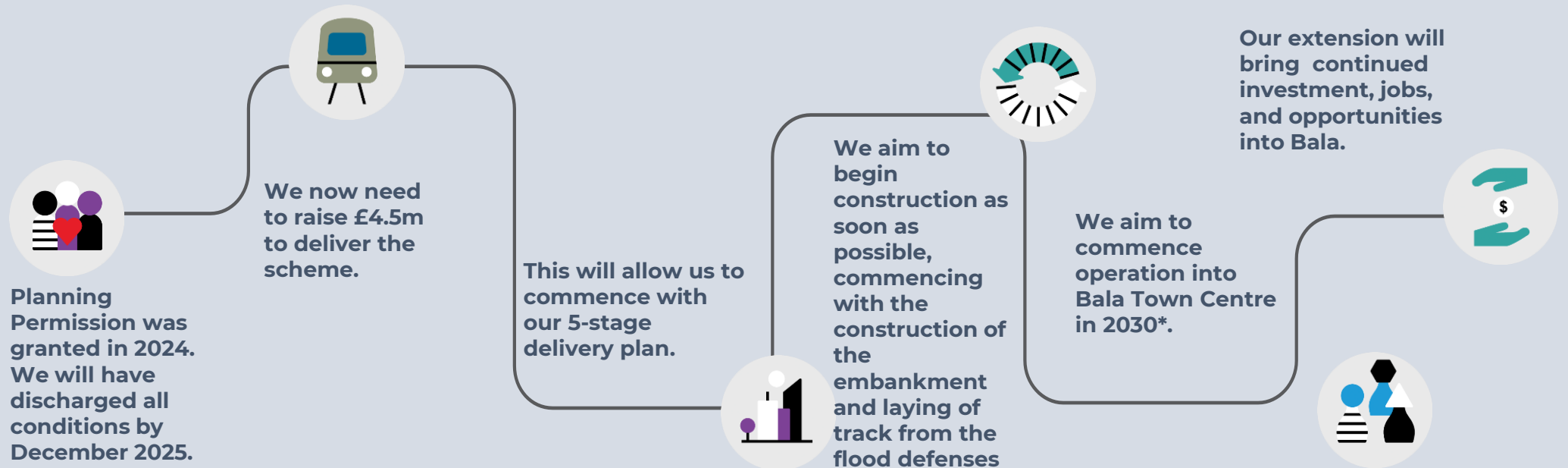
A long-term future: local jobs providing opportunities for local people to remain in Bala and contribute to its economy

Town centre trips: greater ease – and reason – for people to travel into Bala throughout the year



Delivery Plan

We have the plans in place; we understand what it takes to deliver, and your funding can make this happen.



Discharge of conditions

Achieving planning permission in 2024 was a significant milestone and represents the culmination of more than 10 years work.

Detailed design

We are now commencing with detailed design for the scheme but require further funding to make this happen.

Procurement

Once the funding is in place we will procure a team to obtain a TAWO and construct the scheme.

Construction

We are aiming to commence construction in Spring 2026* and expect that completion of all 5 phases will take 4 years*.

Opening

We hope to open the extended line to its first passengers in 2030*.

Operation

Bala Lake Railway will continue to serve its tourists and communities long into the future.

Funding requirements

We have set out 5 phases of delivery; each bringing us closer to achieving our dream of returning the line to Bala.

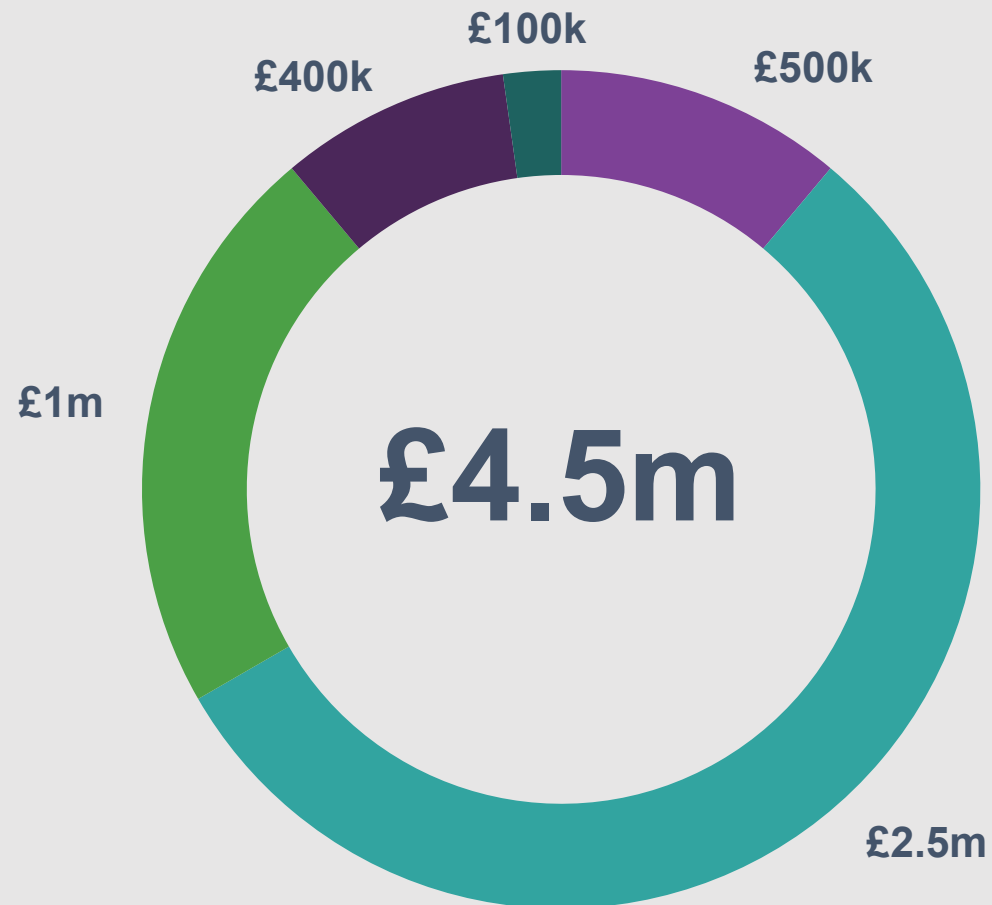
Phase 1: Construction of the embankment down from the flood defences, acquire and lay the track on the embankment and along the newly upgraded flood defences.

Phase 2: Construction of the station including a cafe and shop, public toilets, and tourist information centre. Construction of a carriage shed and signal box, signalling and associated track work.

Phase 3: Alterations to both the 1950s built road bridge and original pack horse bridge and installation the track.

Phase 4: Delivery of level crossing over the B4403

Phase 5 : Providing a connection to the existing railway



A final word from our chairman

This project is shovel-ready, community-backed, and economically sound – please help us make it happen.

The time to invest in Bala is now

Julian Birley BEM, Chairman

I am honoured to present this prospectus and highlight to you the opportunity it represents. The proposed extension of the Bala Lake Railway is a landmark initiative—one that promises to deliver lasting benefits to the local economy, the wider heritage sector, and the communities we serve.

This scheme is the culmination of years of careful planning, consultation, and unwavering commitment to achieving our goal. Extending the line into Bala town will not only enhance the visitor experience and increase footfall but will also strengthen the railway's role as a catalyst for regional development and cultural preservation.

With your investment, we can now take the next decisive step—transforming aspiration into achievement.

I respectfully encourage you to consider the long-term significance of this endeavour.

By supporting the extension, you will be contributing to a legacy of stewardship, sustainability, and community enrichment. Your involvement will help ensure that the Bala Lake Railway continues to thrive—not only as a heritage attraction, but as a vital and forward-looking institution.

This project is 'shovel ready', community-backed, and economically sound. It delivers strong value for money, supports rural regeneration, and enhances one of Wales' most scenic heritage railways.

On behalf of the Trustees and all those who care deeply about the future of the railway, I thank you for your interest and support.



**Julian Birley –
Chairman**

E:
[julian.birley@balalake
railwaytrust.org.uk](mailto:julian.birley@balalake
railwaytrust.org.uk)

P: +44 (0)7831 120564
Penrhiwdwrch
Llanuwchllyn
Gwynedd
LL23 7DE

**Christina Kennedy –
Trustee**

E:
[christina.kennedy@balalake
railwaytrust.org.uk](mailto:christina.kennedy@balalake
railwaytrust.org.uk)

P: +44 (0)7710 252155
Allways
West Shepton
Shepton Mallet
Somerset
BA4 5UH

THE BALA LAKE
RAILWAY TRUST

ARUP

