

Growing Baldock Advisory Forum

Meeting Minutes – 10th September 2025

Attendees: 16 attendees including representatives of community groups, ward councillors and North Herts Council met online.

Michael Bingham - Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group
Alison Gentle - Baldock Arts and Heritage Centre
Cllr Alistair Willoughby
Cllr Rhona Cameron
Cllr Tom Tyson
Alice Bearton - Hertfordshire County Council Children's Services
Robert Coldrey - Scouts
Tracy Westgate – North Hertfordshire District County community officer
Edward Hutchings, Headteacher, Knights Templar
Graham Lee, Chairman Ashwell Parish Council
Colin Wing, Friends of Baldock Green Spaces
Adrienne Waterfield - Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group
Shawn Nudd – Baldock Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group
Kelly Nichol - Weston Way Nursery representing Baldock schools
Philippa Curran – Urban and Civic
Kitty Eyre – Urban and Civic

Agenda:

1. Work so far and update from the team – U&C
2. Summer consultation overview and feedback - U&C/ All
3. Sharing the outline planning application - All
4. Working together in the future - All
5. AOB - All

A summary of the discussion:

U&C representatives summarised the work to date including progress since the Strategic Masterplan was adopted by North Herts Council in June 2025. The latest consultation events were discussed along with the upcoming timeline for the outline planning application submission.

AG asked if the scheme would be delivered in phases.

U&C confirmed a phased approach would be taken and talked through the approach, noting that an indicative phasing plan was shared in the summer consultation material.

MB requested clarity on the Design Code.

U&C said following submission of the Outline Application, a Design Code would be developed setting out key design principles and frameworks for detailed design of homes, landscape, infrastructure and amenities for the main areas of development. U&C said this wouldn't include BA2, the first phase of development, which would go straight to a Reserved Matters Application. More detailed information on the design of the first phase would be provided in the Outline Application documents.

Cllr TT asked for further detail on the County Councils COMET transport model and the timescale relevance in relation to the planning programme.

U&C said the approach to developing a strategy and modelling the proposals to understand their impact had been agreed with Hertfordshire County Council and North Herts Council.

It involved extensive surveys of the existing road network, and then modelling each of the interventions through a model created with the transport consultant and agreed with the County Council.

The findings would also be tested by the County Council's own strategic model (called COMET), which would be made available over the next few months. This would enable the team to check the findings of the model, and if additional adjustments need to be made or information provided, it could be done while the application is being considered.

EH– noted the delivery timeline was quick and requested clarity on when a decision would be made on a preferred solution for the high school.

Cllr TT requested clarity on the wording around education provision in the development specification which would form part of the outline planning application.

U&C said three options were being considered in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and the Department for Education. This planning approach allowed for flexibility, enabling pupil numbers to be monitored, ensuring funding and capacity were in place to support the preferred solution.

The plans also include land set aside for a SEND school. The final details and timings will be confirmed through the planning process.

KN – asked about the openness and flexibility of the outline planning application in relation to nursery provision. Noting she felt it was important we didn't have too many nurseries.

AG – reiterated the nursery point and commented that the primary school provision seemed excessive and wanted clarity they were both located north of the railway.

U&C confirmed both primary schools were located north of the railway. It was agreed that a separate meeting to discuss early years provision in more detail would be arranged in the future.

AG – referenced an upcoming allotment meeting with U&C, noting she was pleased it was in the diary – keen to discuss as the group had noted things had changed in terms of provision in the latest plans.

U&C confirmed a meeting with the allotment group will take place on 22nd September.

AG– said that the community centre would welcome more support.

It was agreed AG would send U&C some further community contacts to meet with on this point.

GL – asked how the villages would be notified of the application

U&C said North Herts Council would follow their internal planning process to let residents know the application was available to view and comment on. U&C would also share this information with their mailing list and on the Growing Baldock website to ensure widespread awareness.

GL - asked if the transport modelling would cover the villages in detail.

U&C noted a Transport Statement is being prepared and will be shared as part of the planning application. The COMET modelling would also be shared.

MB – asked if the community could get involved in the design of parcels in the future.

U&C confirmed consultation would be ongoing, with opportunities for the community to get involved.

At the end of the meeting there was a general discussion about sharing the planning application and it was agreed U&C would produce a guide to help explain the contents of the planning application, provide information on topics of key interest to the community and outline next steps.