

# Growing Baldock

Non-Technical Summary



October 2025

Urban&Civic

Hertfordshire



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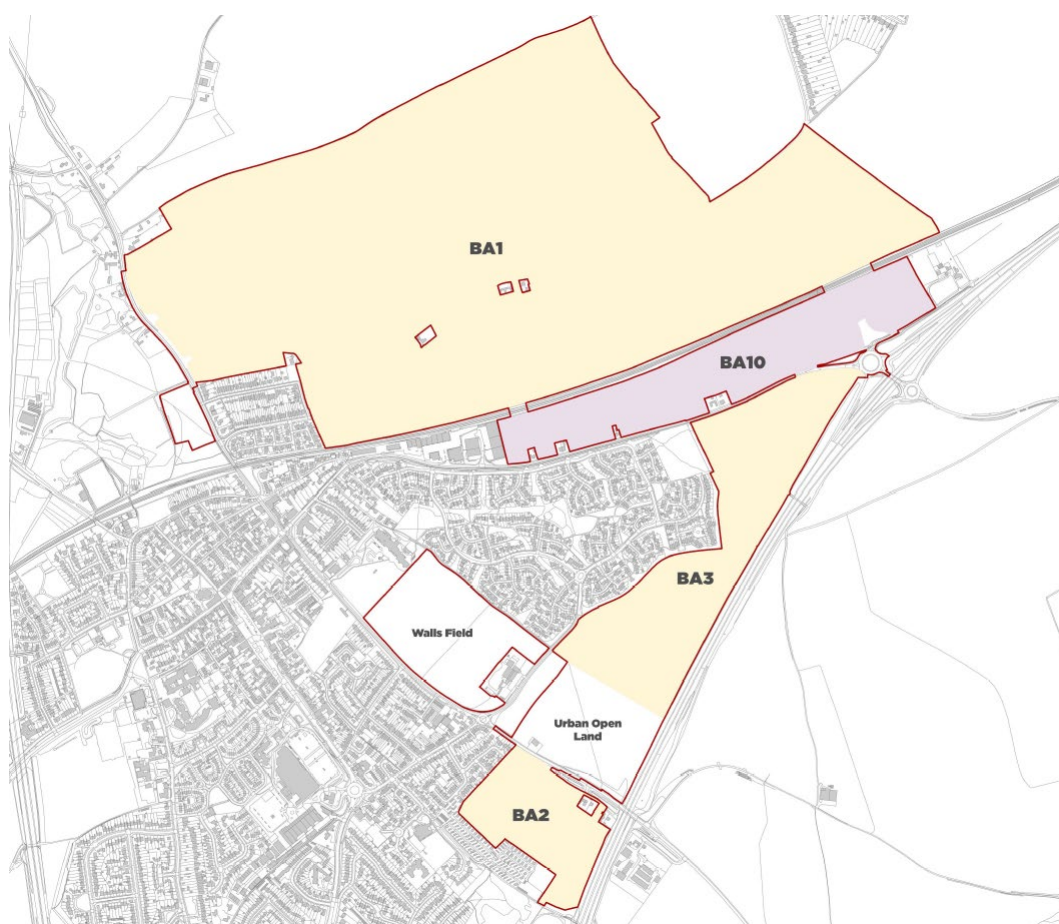
**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This document summarises the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') of the proposed "Growing Baldock" mixed-use development to the north and east of the town of Baldock (the 'Proposed Development'). The applicants are Urban&Civic Baldock North Ltd ('U&C') and Hertfordshire County Council ('HCC').
- 1.2 The site boundary plan (drawing reference: UAC092-001 Rev F) identifies the boundary of the planning application, which lies within the administrative boundary of North Herts Council ('NHC').
- 1.3 The purpose of an EIA is to assess the likely significant environmental effects of a development proposal. These effects have been assessed as "adverse" or "beneficial"; and of "major", "moderate", "minor" or "negligible" significance, in accordance with recognised EIA methodology and applying professional judgement. The significance of each effect takes into account both its "magnitude" and the "sensitivity" of the receptor affected. For example, a change of "large" magnitude affecting a receptor of "high" sensitivity would result in an effect of "major" significance. The significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development have been considered separately and in combination.
- 1.4 The scope of this EIA was agreed with NHC through their adoption of a formal Scoping Opinion in September 2025. The Scoping Opinion takes account of a Scoping Report submitted by David Lock Associates ('DLA') on behalf of Urban&Civic Baldock North Ltd and Hertfordshire County Council in April 2024, which contains a proposed scope for the EIA.
- 1.5 The full findings of this EIA are reported in an Environmental Statement ('ES'). The ES will be available for viewing on the Planning section of NHC's website (<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk>) and can also be obtained on request from:
- David Lock Associates  
50 North Thirteenth Street  
Central Milton Keynes  
MK9 3BP  
[mail@davidlock.com](mailto:mail@davidlock.com)
- 1.6 This concise document summarises the main findings of the ES in non-technical language for a wide readership.
- 1.7 The ES supports an outline planning application ('OPA') to NHC for the Proposed Development. Comments should therefore be directed to NHC via the above website.

## 2.0 THE SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### The Site

- 2.1 The Site is located to the north and east of the existing town of Baldock, north of the A505 and east of the A1(M).
- 2.2 The Site extends to approximately 220 hectares, and is divided into a number of parcels, as defined within the NHC Local Plan (2011-2031):
- **BA1**: Bounded to the west by the A507 North Road, to the north by the Millers Way Public Right of Way and to the south by the railway line;
  - **BA10**: Land between the Hitchin-Cambridge railway line to the north and the B656 Royston Road to the south;
  - **BA2**: Land to the south-west of Clothall Road and north-east of the Baldock Park Homes (Hillside Park) site and Weston Hills Local Nature Reserve;
  - **BA3**: Land to the south of Royston Road and north west of the A505, wrapping around the eastern edges of existing housing at Clothall Common;
  - **Urban Open Land**: Area of open space located between BA2 and BA3;
  - **Walls Field**: an area of open space which comprises part of a Scheduled Monument. This is located to the northeast of Clothall Road, north west of Wallington Road and to the south east of the Hartsfield Infant and Junior School; and
  - **Land West of North Road**: Small parcel of land west of North Road and east of the Ivel Springs Local Nature Reserve.
- 2.3 The Site is some 9 miles north of Stevenage and 20 miles south-west of Cambridge. Baldock train station is located adjacent to the site and provides access north to Cambridge and south to London. Baldock is located close to the strategic road network with access to the A505 bordering the town on the south east and access to the A1(M) to the west, separating Baldock from Letchworth Garden City. The Site is indicated overleaf in **Figure 1**, shown within a red line, with each parcel labelled accordingly.
- 2.4 The Site is currently predominantly in agricultural use, with some existing buildings present in agricultural or residential use in HCC ownership within the site boundary.

**Figure 1: North Herts Local Plan Allocation Sites Within OPA Site boundary****Proposed Development**

2.5 Outline planning approval is sought for the following:

*Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for means of highway access into the development from the A505/Royston Road, North Road and Clothall Road: for up to 3,200 homes, up to 16ha of employment, waste and leisure infrastructure, a mixed use local centre, up to 1 secondary school, up to 2 x primary schools, up to 1 SEND school, health hub, green infrastructure (including parks, formal sports provision, play, habitat areas, informal open space and structural planting), internal street network, access junctions and railway crossing, public transport infrastructure, pedestrian/cycle network (including PRoW diversions, active travel routes, mobility hubs and crossing of the railway), utilities and drainage infrastructure (including diversions of existing and provision of new infrastructure, pumping stations, sustainable drainage, primary substations, rising main/strategic sewer and renewable energy infrastructure), ground remodelling/earthworks and any necessary demolitions.*

2.6 The Proposed Development is shown on the Parameter Plan (ref: UAC092-002 Rev Q), which can be found in **Appendix 2.1** of the ES. This plan, the detailed site access junction plans and the associated Development Specification, have formed the basis for this EIA.

The detailed design of the Proposed Development will need to be in general accordance with the parameters shown on this plan and the spatial principles within the Development Specification. This conformity would be secured by appropriate conditions attached to any grant of outline planning permission for the Proposed Development. The Parameter Plan sets out the location of different land uses (e.g. dwellings, schools) for the Proposed Development, including fixing the boundary between built development and green infrastructure. It also provides the location of access points into the Site and the indicative alignment of the primary vehicular route, including a vehicular crossing over the railway. In addition, it depicts the location of an additional active travel underpass under the railway and the principal active travel routes through the Site. The Parameter Plan is shown in **Figure 2** overleaf.

2.7 The Parameter Plan incorporates a flexible land use parcel within the southern part of BA3, to the south of Clothall Common. This parcel will incorporate one of the following three potential land use mixes, dependent upon the outcome of an Education Review Process which will determine how secondary school needs will be met, whether a secondary school is required on BA3 and its size. The options will comprise:

- **Option 1** – Knights Templar expansion and relocation to BA3

Relocation and expansion (up to 12FE) of existing Knights Templar school to BA3. BA3 to accommodate SEND school and secondary school.

- **Option 2** – Knights Templar expansion

Expansion of Knights Templar on existing site (up to 10FE). BA3 to accommodate SEND school and residential.

- **Option 3** – Additional secondary school on BA3

Provision of additional secondary school (up to 5FE) on BA3. BA3 to accommodate SEND school, secondary school and residential.

2.8 The Urban Open Land to the south of BA3 would accommodate sports pitches, enhanced allotments and potentially play provision, with the final mix depending upon the land use to the north. If a secondary school is located in BA3, the majority of the Urban Open Land will form part of that school campus and be used for grass sports pitches. If there is no secondary school in BA3, and it is built as residential (and a SEND school), the Urban Open Land will incorporate all weather sports pitches and play provision and associated facilities e.g. parking and sports pavilion.

### **Phasing and Delivery**

2.9 The Site will be phased, with development commencing in site BA2 (Phase 1) and thereafter progressing in BA1 from a west to easterly direction (from North Road) alongside the build out of BA10. The final phase will comprise BA3 (dependent on the decision regarding secondary school provision). Infrastructure will be delivered at

appropriate triggers throughout the development, to be agreed as part of the S106 legal agreement. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2027 with the first completions (in BA2) in 2028. The Proposed Development completion date is envisaged to be approximately 2043 with an average annual housing completion rate of 200 dwellings per annum.

### **Consideration of Alternatives**

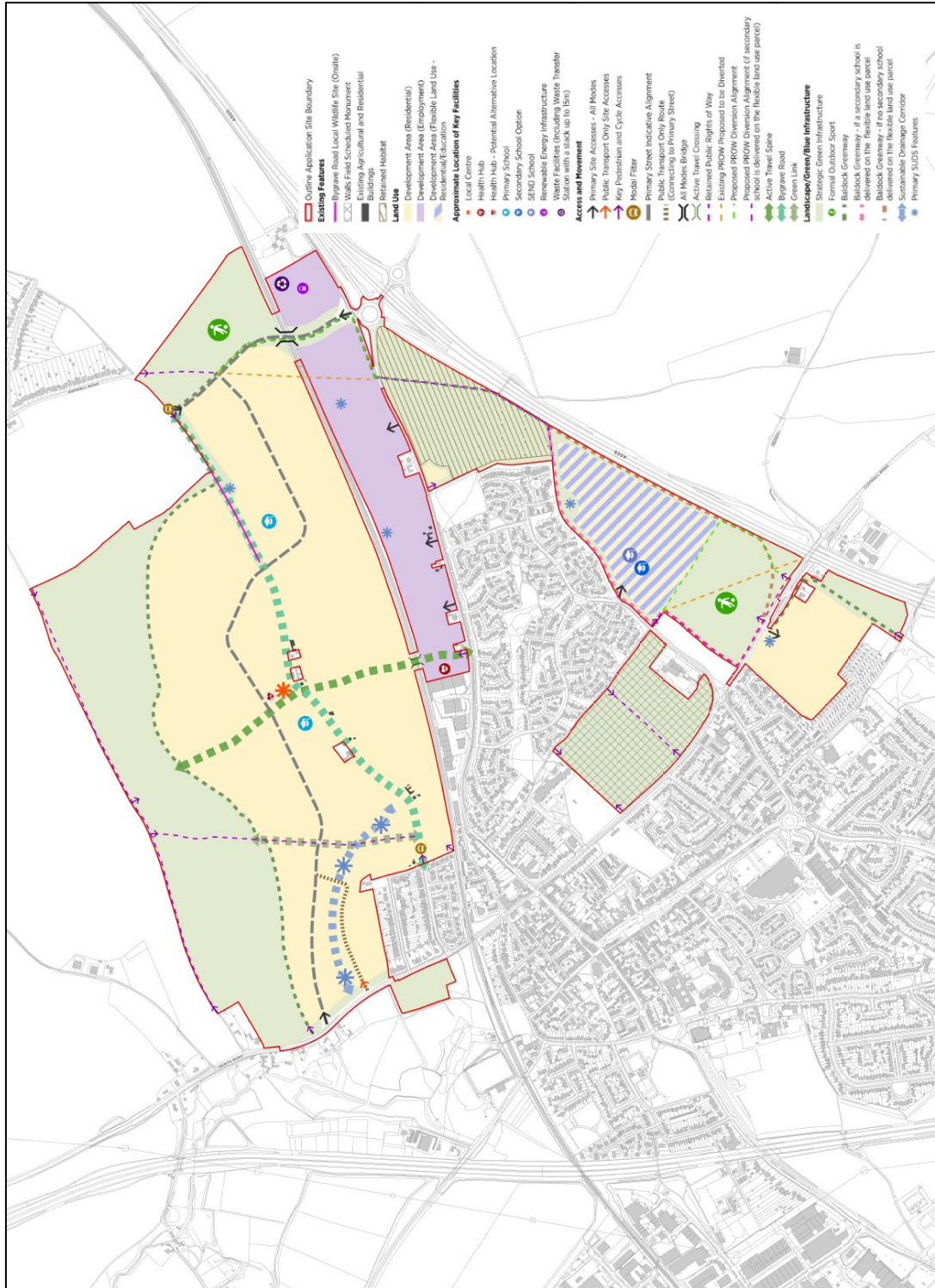
- 2.10 The adopted Local Plan comprises the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted in November 2022. The Local Plan sets out the spatial development strategy for the District including the allocation of at least 13,000 new homes. The Local Plan was consulted on throughout the preparation period and adoption process. Just under half of all new homes over the plan period are to be delivered on six Strategic Housing Sites removed from the Green Belt. Each strategic allocation has a site-specific policy which defines the required components of the development. The Local Plan identifies much of the Site as an urban extension made up of a series of development allocations (BA1, BA2, BA3, BA10).
- 2.11 The process undertaken by NHC considered a number of sites throughout the process including a Call for Sites, and consideration of potential alternative sites initial within a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Subsequently the preferred locations were tested further at Regulation 18. Local Plan Preferred Options stage.
- 2.12 The merits of the strategic development locations and reasonable alternative sites were further considered within the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal, published alongside the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 during examination.
- 2.13 Different development and spatial options within the Site were further tested through the Growing Baldock Strategic Masterplan (SMP) options testing stage, factoring in potential environmental impacts. The OPA has been prepared in alignment with the SMP which represents the preferred option masterplan resulting from the options testing process.

### **Cumulative Effects**

- 2.14 The assessment of cumulative effects considers those arising from the Proposed Development in combination with allocated or approved developments which are located nearby, which has been led by the guidance on cumulative assessment in EIA within the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (Reference ID: 4-024-20170728). The sites selected are approved developments, in addition to one site selected due to its proximity to Baldock and its allocated status and approved Strategic Masterplan.
- 2.15 The sites which have been considered include:

<b>Site</b>	<b>Policy/application reference</b>	<b>Summary of the Proposal</b>	<b>Status</b>
Land east of Rhee Spring and Orwell View, Royston Road, Baldock	NHLP Local Housing Allocation BA4 21/01882/FP	42 dwellings	Appeal allowed on 20 May 2025, to be commenced
Land to the east of Talbot Way And Kristiansand Way and Flint Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 1TY	NHLP Local Housing Allocation LG3 21/00504/OP	120 dwellings	Outline permission granted on 3 April 2025, to be commenced
Land to the north of Letchworth	NHLP Strategic Housing Site LG1	900 dwellings	Strategic Masterplan has been approved
Land west of Ashwell Road, Bygrave, SG7 5EB	22/00741/FP	53.62 ha solar farm	Full permission granted on 17 June 2024

**Figure 2: Parameter Plan (Revision Q)**



### 3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Proposed Development is being brought forward in the context of Central Government's commitment to growth and development, as outlined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024). The NPPF includes at paragraph 11 specific guidance as to how the presumption in favour of sustainable development is to apply in decision-taking on applications.
- 3.2 In particular, proposals in accordance with an up-to-date development plan are to be approved without delay. The NPPF requires, in paragraph 11(c), that determination of planning applications should be in accordance with an up to date Development Plan. This planning application has been prepared on this basis, purposely following the clear policy framework established by North Hertfordshire Council through its adopted Development Plan.
- 3.3 In Baldock, the statutory Local Development Plan comprises the adopted Local Plan for North Hertfordshire (NHLP 2011-2031), which contains specific allocations for the urban extension to the east and north of Baldock, and the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan (June 2021).
- 3.4 As outlined in Section 2.0, the Proposed Development relates to sites allocated under Policy SP14 (which covers site BA1) and Policies BA2, BA3 and BA10 in particular.
- 3.5 Notwithstanding the above, the NPPF also requires that decision takers consider if the Development Plan is up to date (paragraph 11(d)). The assessment to determine whether policies are to be identified as "out of date" should follow footnote 8 of the Framework. This states that paragraph 11 (d) is engaged where: "*the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years*".
- 3.6 NHC published an updated housing land supply statement in May 2024 confirming a supply of 3.9 years against a five-year requirement.

Paragraph 11(d) sets out: "*Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

*(i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*(ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations,*

*making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination”.*

- 3.7 The OPA is not affected by any Footnote 7 designations that would otherwise restrict development or provide a strong reason for refusal, therefore the ‘tilted balance’ applies, meaning that the Proposed Development should be approved without delay if there are no adverse impacts that significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits.

**4.0 TRANSPORT**

- 4.1 The assessment of the environmental effects of the Proposed Development in respect of transport has been undertaken in accordance with established guidance. A wider Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan (**Appendices 4.1 and 4.2**) have also been prepared to support the ES.
- 4.2 The Transport Assessment presents local junction modelling to understand the local impacts, and the COMET model will be used prior to determination of the planning application to validate this exercise and identify any residual interventions required. A Transport Assessment Addendum will be submitted following validation of the OPA. This will include the results of an exercise to model the Proposed Development using Hertfordshire's strategic transport model – COMET. This approach has been agreed with NHC and HCC.
- 4.3 No significant effects on the matters assessed are predicted to arise during the construction of the Proposed Development. Construction traffic would be managed in accordance with a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). This will ensure the effects would be **negligible to minor adverse** (not significant).
- 4.4 Following the completion of the Proposed Development and implementation of mitigation measures such as pedestrian crossing points, traffic calming and improving footpaths with lighting and signage, the impacts from operational road traffic are considered to be **negligible to minor adverse** (not significant).

## 5.0 NOISE AND VIBRATION

- 5.1 During construction, the potential noise and vibration impacts of the Proposed Development would have a temporary effect. Practical construction noise and vibration control measures are secured through the implementation of measures within the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), which adopts construction best practices and will be supplemented by detailed CEMPs as development progresses. These will be submitted for each phase of development, and with each Reserved Matters application. The detailed CEMPs will provide further and more comprehensive information when contractors are appointed to strengthen management of construction sites on each development parcel. This will ensure that the construction stage effects upon existing properties and other sensitive receptors are assessed as **negligible to minor adverse** for both noise and vibration (not significant).
- 5.2 After the Proposed Development is complete ('the post-completion phase'), the measures which have been incorporated within the design of the Proposed Development (for example, site layout, and additional measures such as plant noise limits) would result in a **negligible** (not significant) **to moderate adverse** (significant) impact in relation to development-led traffic noise and a **negligible** impact in relation to noise generated from non-residential uses (not significant).

**6.0 AIR QUALITY**

- 6.1 The potential for impacts on local air quality has been tested in the context of existing conditions at the Site and within the surrounding area.
- 6.2 Construction works have the potential to create dust and particulates. During construction, a package of mitigation measures would be secured through the OCEMP and subsequent detailed CEMPs, which would minimise increases in levels of dust and particulates, with resultant effects being **negligible** (not significant).
- 6.3 At the post-completion stage, the assessment of air quality impacts on the surrounding area and new population exposure has identified that the Proposed Development effects on both existing households and businesses in and around Baldock (existing receptors), and on the future occupants of the development, would be **negligible** (not significant). Therefore, no further mitigation measures are considered necessary.

**7.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL**

- 7.1 Landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development have been considered in relation to both landscape character and value, as well as predicted effects upon visual amenity and intrusion upon residents and users of nearby Public Rights of Way.
- 7.2 The construction phase is likely to involve infrastructure and necessary ongoing construction activities. At this stage, the impacts on the landscape receptors (viewpoints) would be temporary and the effects would range from **moderate** to **major adverse**.
- 7.3 Following completion of the development, particularly after establishment of mitigation planting, effects would be **moderate beneficial** on the landscape character of Walls Field, the Urban Open Land and the northern elevated areas of BA3. The effects from viewpoints including from public footpaths and bridleways would range from **negligible** to **minor adverse** (not significant) and **moderate adverse** (significant – lower end).

**8.0 BUILT HERITAGE**

- 8.1 The assessment considered potential impacts on nearby designated heritage assets, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and the Baldock Conservation Area.
- 8.2 During the construction period, there is potential for noise, dust, and traffic to affect the setting of the assets in the closest proximity to the Site (scheduled monuments, and the Listed Buildings along North Road). These would be mitigated through phasing and design of the Proposed Development and additional measures which are secured within the OCEMP, resulting in **neutral/negligible** residual effects (not significant).
- 8.3 During the post-completion phase, the Proposed Development would extend Baldock's built form, altering the wider setting of some heritage assets. However, substantial green buffers and open space are embedded within the Parameter Plan, which would preserve the significance of these heritage assets. Additionally, no designated heritage assets would be directly affected, and the proposals do not alter the context of key features such as the scheduled monuments and the Church of St Mary. As relevant mitigation has been considered throughout the development of the proposals, residual effects post-completion are therefore assessed as **neutral/negligible** (not significant).

**9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY**

- 9.1 The assessment has considered the potential direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Development on known and potential archaeological remains within the Application Site.
- 9.2 During the construction stage, the Proposed Development would result in direct impacts on the buried archaeological remains, including Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age and Romano-British settlements, and post-medieval features, which are considered moderate to major adverse impacts due to the permanent loss of archaeological context. Indirect effects may also occur on the setting of nearby scheduled monuments through temporary disturbances associated with construction work, and the impact would be minor adverse. Following the mitigation measures, including archaeological excavation and recording before development and relevant construction management measures, the residual effects are considered **negligible** (not significant).
- 9.3 Following completion of the Proposed Development, the scheduled monument within Walls Field will be removed from intensive agricultural use and managed as informal open space. This would stop ongoing erosion, resulting in a moderate beneficial effect. Indirect impacts may arise from new buildings, increased traffic, lighting, and noise, potentially affecting the setting of nearby scheduled monuments. Mitigation measures, including green infrastructure and screening with trees and hedgerows, would reduce these impacts. As a result, residual effects post-completion are concluded to be **negligible** (not significant) to **moderate beneficial** (significant).

**10.0 HYDROLOGY AND FLOODING**

- 10.1 The assessment considers the potential impacts on surface water, groundwater, and flood risk. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 with low risk of fluvial and surface water flooding.
- 10.2 During the construction stage, temporary impacts may arise from earthworks and site activities, including increased surface runoff, potential groundwater disturbance, and pollution risks to watercourses and aquifers. These effects are considered moderate to minor adverse. Mitigation would be delivered through temporary drainage strategies to manage surface water runoff, as well as the measures set out in the OCEMP and subsequent detailed CEMPs. The effects post-mitigation are considered to be **negligible** (not significant).
- 10.3 After completion of the Proposed Development, the embedded drainage strategy would include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage runoff, treat water and protect water receptors such as the aquifer, including having regard for the effects of climate change. With the embedded mitigation, the effects would be **negligible** for water quality and groundwater, and **minor beneficial** for flood risk (not significant).

**11.0 ECOLOGY**

- 11.1 The ecological assessment has evaluated potential impacts on habitats, species, and designated sites. The Site supports a range of ecological features, including species-rich grassland, hedgerows, breeding birds, reptiles, and a small population of lizard orchid.
- 11.2 During the construction stage, habitat loss and disturbance are expected, particularly to arable land and field margins. Without mitigation, effects on species such as corn bunting, brown hare, and hedgehog would be moderate to minor adverse. Mitigation measures include phased clearance, ecological supervision, protective fencing, and construction management secured via the OCEMP and the subsequent Landscape and Ecological Management Plan ('LEMP') and species-specific Reasonable Avoidance Measures ('RAMs').
- 11.3 With these mitigation measures in place, the construction effects would be reduced to **negligible** for most receptors, and **minor adverse** on the Ivel Springs Local Nature Reserve and Bygrave Road Local Wildlife Site (not significant). For arable grassland and hedgerow habitats, the effects would be **minor adverse** at the local level. Species specific impacts range from neutral/**negligible** to **minor adverse** (not significant).
- 11.4 At the post-completion stage, the development is expected to result in a strong net ecological gain by delivering extensive green infrastructure, including species-rich grassland, wetlands, hedgerow enhancement, and habitat corridors. These would improve ecological connectivity and support a wider range of species. Specific measures for corn bunting (including off-site mitigation), bats, amphibians, and reptiles are expected to enhance habitat quality and resilience alongside the transition from arable land to a species-rich landscape. As a result, residual effects post-completion are assessed as **minor** (not significant) to **major beneficial** (significant) at the Site to County level, depending on the receptor.

## 12.0 GROUND CONDITIONS AND SOILS

- 12.1 The assessment considers potential impacts on soils, geology, hydrogeology, land stability, and contamination. Extensive ground investigations have confirmed that the Site is suitable for development with no significant contamination or ground gas risks.
- 12.2 During the construction stage, potential effects include minor risks from spillage, disturbance of soils, and ground movement due to chalk dissolution or clay shrinkage, ranging from minor beneficial to major adverse effects. Mitigation measures such as controlled earthworks, appropriate foundation design, and adherence to best practice standards would be implemented. In this case, residual effects are assessed as **negligible to minor beneficial** (not significant).
- 12.3 At the post-completion stage, the development is not expected to significantly affect ground conditions. Landscaping, residential use, and infrastructure would be managed to avoid adverse impacts, and the effect should be negligible. The effect in terms of any identified local soil contamination through controlled management or removal of such contamination would be locally minor beneficial. Where minor contamination is encountered, clean cover systems and hardstanding would break exposure pathways. Residual effects are therefore considered **negligible to minor beneficial** (not significant).

### 13.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HEALTH

- 13.1 The socio-economic and health assessment for the Growing Baldock development identifies a range of beneficial impacts across housing, employment, education, health, and community infrastructure.
- 13.2 During construction, the development is expected to support the local and regional economy, resulting in **moderate beneficial effects** (significant). Impacts on health as well as on social infrastructure, such as temporarily diverting Public Rights of Way, would be **negligible** (not significant). Health impacts, such as from airborne dust, would be reduced by measures secured within the OCEMP and subsequent detailed CEMPs, resulting in impacts being **negligible** (not significant), alongside controlled health risks and new job opportunities.
- 13.3 Following completion, the Proposed Development would have **major beneficial** effects (significant) on housing provision and employment. There would be **moderate beneficial** effects (significant) on health, community infrastructure, and sustainability, taking account of the proposed provision of new community infrastructure, including a health hub and extensive green infrastructure. As the Proposed Development includes embedded mitigation, no further specific mitigation is consequently required.

**14.0 WASTE**

- 14.1 The assessment considers the capacity of existing waste infrastructure in Hertfordshire and outlines mitigation measures to ensure sustainable waste management.
- 14.2 At the construction stage, the Proposed Development is expected to generate a range of inert, non-hazardous, and hazardous wastes. The diversion of waste from landfills would be limited, resulting in a substantial adverse impact due to the high sensitivity of landfill capacity in the region. However, with the implementation of a Site Waste Management Plan that includes design-stage waste minimisation and recycling targets, the impact during construction would be reduced to **minor adverse** (not significant).
- 14.3 Once operational, the development would generate household, commercial, and institutional waste across residential, retail, education, health, and community uses. The impact on landfill capacity would be major adverse. However, with embedded design measures for waste segregation, adequate storage provision, and alignment with local collection services and recycling targets, residual impacts from the Proposed Development would be reduced to **minor adverse** (not significant).

**15.0 LIGHTING**

- 15.1 The assessment considers the potential impacts of artificial lighting during both construction and operation phases. The Site is currently undeveloped farmland with minimal existing lighting, classified as Environmental Zone E2, indicating a relatively dark landscape.
- 15.2 During construction, temporary lighting would be required for safety and operational reasons, resulting in minor to moderate adverse effects due to light spill and glare. However, these short-term effects would be minimised to **minor adverse** effects (not significant) with appropriate lighting controls and shielding to be set out in detailed CEMPs.
- 15.2.1 When the Proposed Development is complete, permanent lighting would be introduced across the Site. Although this would increase sky glow and cause some visual change, mitigation measures such as dark sky-compliant lanterns, directional luminaires, and warm-spectrum lighting would reduce glare and limit ecological impacts. The significance of the impact is considered to be **minor adverse** in terms of glare to road users and residents, as well as **minor adverse** in terms of skyglow (not significant).

**16.0 UTILITIES**

- 16.1 The utilities assessment has assessed the potential for impacts upon existing clean water, electricity, gas, and telecommunications networks.
- 16.2 During construction, works may affect existing utility assets both on-site and off-site. Activities such as demolition, road construction, and access junctions could require diversion or protection of clean water, electricity, gas, and telecoms infrastructure. These impacts are considered minor adverse. Mitigation would include safe digging practices, trial excavations, and coordination with utility providers to manage asset protection and reconfiguration. With mitigation in place, effects during construction are considered **negligible** (not significant).
- 16.3 Following completion of the Proposed Development, there would be additional demand for clean water and electricity networks. These impacts are considered to be minor adverse, however reinforcement works would be undertaken, including a new on-site primary electricity substation and a connection to a trunk water main. Taking into account this mitigation, the effects are considered **negligible** (not significant).

**17.0 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 17.1 The climate change assessment evaluates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during construction and operation and considers the development's alignment with the UK's net-zero 2050 trajectory. The assessment follows the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals ('ISEP') guidance and compares estimated emissions against local and national carbon budgets.
- 17.2 During construction, GHG emissions would arise from the manufacture and transport of materials, use of site equipment, and waste treatment, which are considered to have a moderate adverse effect. Mitigation would be delivered through upfront embodied carbon targets aligned with the UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard, exceeding business-as-usual benchmarks. These targets would be secured through Life Cycle Assessments at the reserved matters stage. With mitigation, effects would be **minor adverse** (not significant).
- 17.3 Post-completion, operational GHG emissions would result from electricity use across residential and non-residential buildings. These emissions are considered to have a moderate adverse effect. Mitigation would be achieved through compliance with the Future Homes and Future Buildings Standards, including high-performance building fabric, low-carbon heating, and solar PV provision. Energy Use Intensity (EUI) targets would be applied to all building types and secured through energy modelling at the reserved matters stage. With mitigation, the residual effect would be reduced to **minor adverse** (not significant).

**18.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 18.1 The Proposed Development would enable the delivery of 3,200 new homes, including affordable housing, primary and secondary education provision, up to 16 hectares of employment land, a local centre and extensive areas of open space for formal sports, ecological areas and informal recreational provision. The Proposed Development would be delivered as an extension to the existing town of Baldock, providing homes and facilities which complement the character and function of the existing market town.
- 18.2 The delivery of a range of new homes, impacts on the local economy and job creation, and extensive open space improvements to areas of the site such as Walls Field and parts of BA3 are assessed as beneficial effects (from major to minor beneficial).
- 18.3 Moderate adverse effects would be limited to noise (traffic noise impact on identified receptors) and landscape impacts from some viewpoints (these include from surrounding Public Rights of Way and residential addresses).
- 18.4 All other effects are assessed as either minor (beneficial or adverse) or negligible, or equivalent and therefore not significant in EIA terms.
- 18.5 No significant cumulative effects are identified whether with other development proposals or in the interaction between particular topic areas.
- 18.6 In overall terms, the outcome of the EIA is that there are a number of significant beneficial effects which clearly outweigh the limited significant adverse effects (noise and landscape).