

A Guide to the Outline Planning Application

Planning Reference Number: 25/02571/OP



**Growing
Baldock**

Urban&Civic

This guide summarises the proposal for 'Growing Baldock', creating new neighbourhoods on the northern and eastern sides of the town. The vision includes 3,200 new homes, employment and essential infrastructure, comprising schools, new open space, and improvements to transport.

In 2021, Urban&Civic Limited (U&C) were appointed as master developer partner by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), who own the land, to work in partnership with them to deliver the significant project.

An Outline Planning Application has been prepared by U&C and HCC and submitted to North Herts Council for consideration. North Herts Council will now undertake consultation on the Outline Planning Application.

The guide helps explain the contents of the planning application, provides information on topics we know are of interest to the community and outlines next steps.

It also includes our contact details so you can get in touch with any questions.

How do I comment on the planning application?

You can view and comment on the planning application on North Herts Council website using the link below and entering the relevant application number: 25/02571/OP <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/view-and-comment-planning-applications>



▲ Outline Planning Application Sites

The proposed development spans approximately 220 hectares of predominantly agricultural land and is strategically located near existing transport links, including key roads and Baldock railway station.

In 2022, the site was allocated for development in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan. Many people also fed their

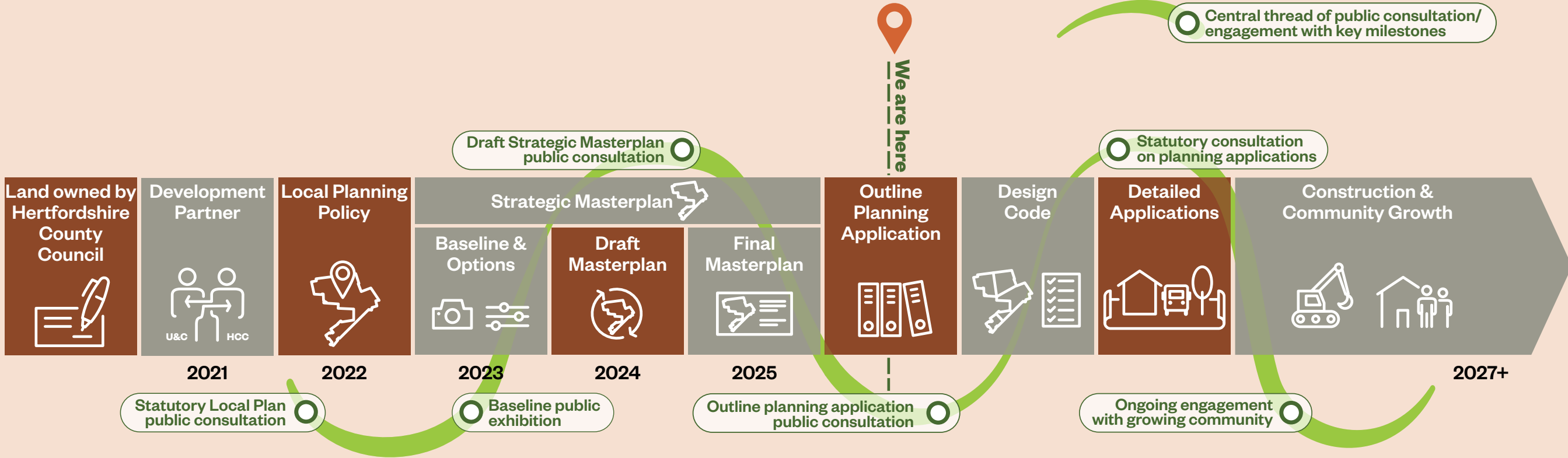
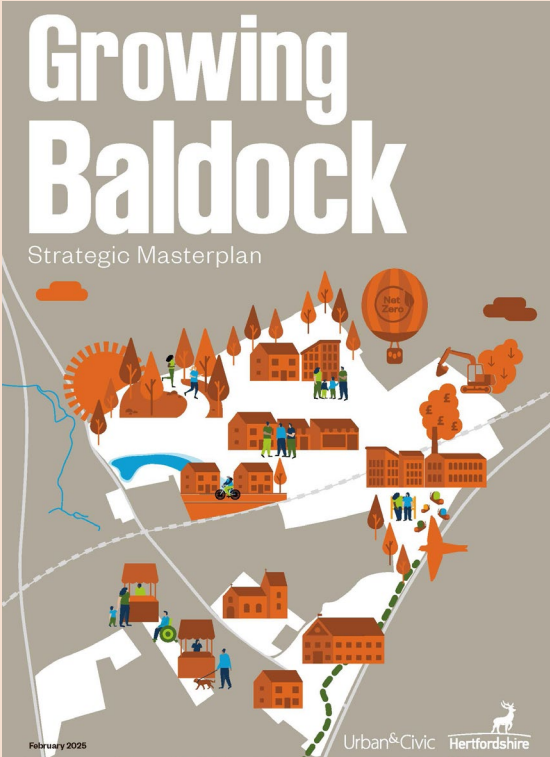
thoughts into the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan (2021) which sets out some core principles to guide the way Baldock should grow well and sustainably. These set the foundations for the Growing Baldock Strategic Masterplan which was then prepared, setting out how the growth would feel and work.



To help prepare the Strategic Masterplan, U&C undertook consultation, working with the community including surrounding villages, engaging them in 'The Baldock Conversation'.

The Strategic Masterplan was approved by North Hertfordshire Council in June 2025.

The Outline Planning Application is the next stage in the process, to move the plans into delivery.



▲ Progress so far and next steps

How the community have helped shape the plans

Understanding people’s views and gathering the knowledge of existing residents has been a key part of the work so far. We called this approach ‘The Baldock Conversation’ to reflect the genuine engagement to take this ambitious project forward in the right way for new and existing residents.

Early discussions with the community highlighted the importance of working with the town and its surrounding villages to ensure a “One Baldock” approach - not separate entities on the edge of the Town - and an approach to health, education and green spaces that worked across the wider area. This is an integral principle for the Outline Planning Application, and reflected in the plan for ongoing support for the historic Town Centre.

A summary of the engagement so far is shown opposite.

The Outline Planning Application submission does not mark the end of the Baldock Conversation. It provides an opportunity for you to give feedback on the outline plans. Consultation will continue on the more detailed planning applications that will come forward ahead of delivering the first homes and amenities.

Thank you to everyone who has provided feedback so far.



▲ A summary of the engagement so far

The Outline Planning Application Documents

The Outline Application can be broken down into formal and supporting documentation, addressing a wide range of topics and requirements.

The two formal documents set out the parameters and principles of development as well as locations of key aspects of the development. The ten supporting documents provide additional information and context to help decision makers assess the proposals. All the documents are available to read in full on our website or North Herts Councils planning portal, where you can also make comments.

The various documents that form the Outline Application are described briefly below:

Formal Documents

Development Specification, including Design Principles	Describes the proposed development, including a description of uses across the site, as well as design and access principles
Parameter Plan	The key plan, setting out the broad parameters for the proposed development

Supporting Documents

Planning Statement	Provides an overview of the site and proposed development, relevant planning history, as well as evaluating the development against local and national planning policy
Design and Access Statement	Reviews the site context and describes how the design and access evolved as well as setting out key design principles
Statement of Community Involvement	Outlines the public consultation that has taken place to inform the Strategic Masterplan and Outline Planning Application

Energy and Sustainability Statement	Outlines how the proposed development will address energy use and promote sustainable practices
Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)	A CEMP is a document that outlines how environmental impacts will be managed during the construction phases of the project
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan and Monitoring	Sets out how biodiversity will be enhanced and maintained
Environmental Statement, including mitigation measures, Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan	Identifies and assesses the impacts of the Outline Planning Application on the environment including: socio economics, landscape and visual impact assessment, ecology, heritage and archaeology, transport, air quality, noise and vibration, hydrology, and drainage, lighting, ground conditions, waste and climate change. Identifies mitigation measures for all impacts
Green Infrastructure Strategy	Sets out the location, amount and character of green infrastructure
Arboricultural Survey and Planning Statement	Assesses the impact of the development on existing trees and hedgerows, including measures to protect retained trees
Employment Strategy	The plan for use of the employment land and how it could come forward

Where to start?

The Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement give an overview of the proposals and explain the structure of the Outline Planning Application in more detail. The Environmental Statement is also a key document with a lot of technical detail. A non-technical Summary is provided and provides a useful starting point to help navigate wider detail as you want to.

If you need help finding specific information, please just get in touch using the contact details in this guide.

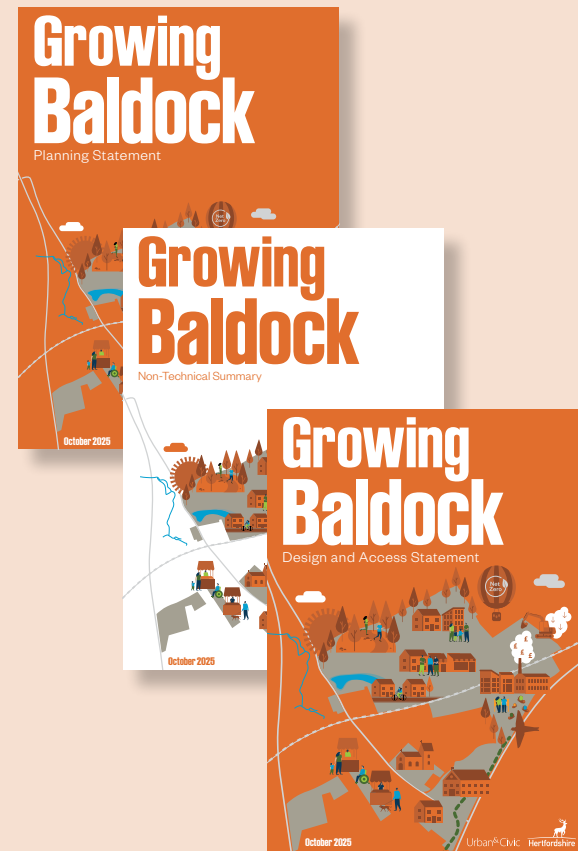
What happens now the Application is submitted?

Formal consultation - The Council will run its own formal consultation. This will be your opportunity to comment on the submitted plans directly.

Council review - The plans and all consultation feedback will be reviewed by North Herts Council, alongside input from a range of stakeholders.

Legal Framework - During this time, an initial framework will be developed to outline the delivery timing and funding of key amenities - including schools, the health centre, green spaces and more - to ensure they are delivered alongside new homes.

Planning Committee decision - Following review, the North Herts Councils Planning Committee will consider the application and decide on the next steps.



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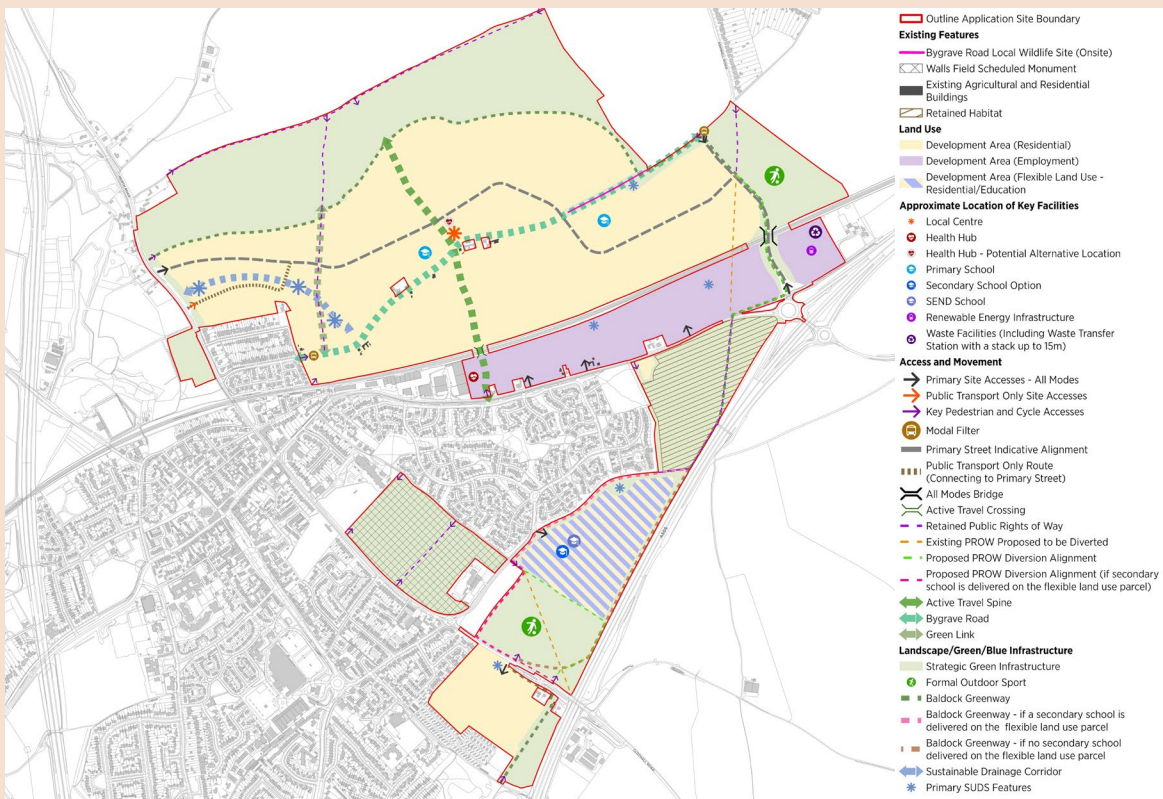
Questions you may have

We know from recent consultation and discussion with the Growing Baldock Advisory Forum, which includes representatives of local groups and communities, that there are topics that are of most interest to the community. We have highlighted responses to these key topics below, as well as signposting to where you can find out more in the Outline Planning Application documents.

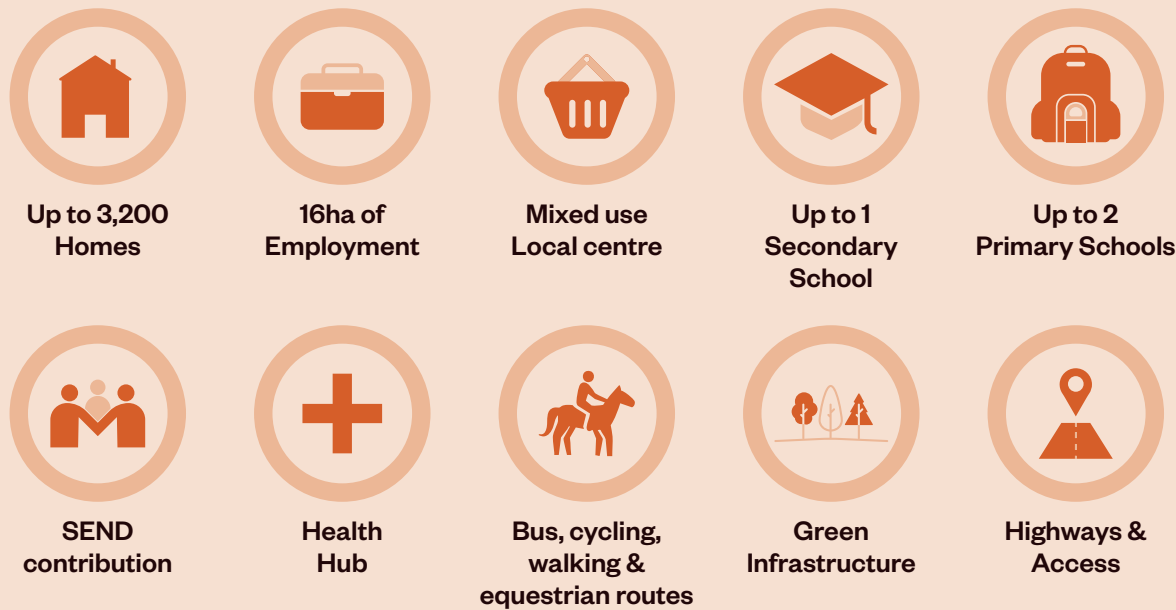


What are you asking outline planning permission for?

The Outline Planning Application seeks permission for up to 3,200 new homes, including homes to buy, rent and affordable homes, together with supporting infrastructure, as shown in the Parameter Plan below.



▲ Parameter Plan



When would building start if the Outline Planning Application is approved?

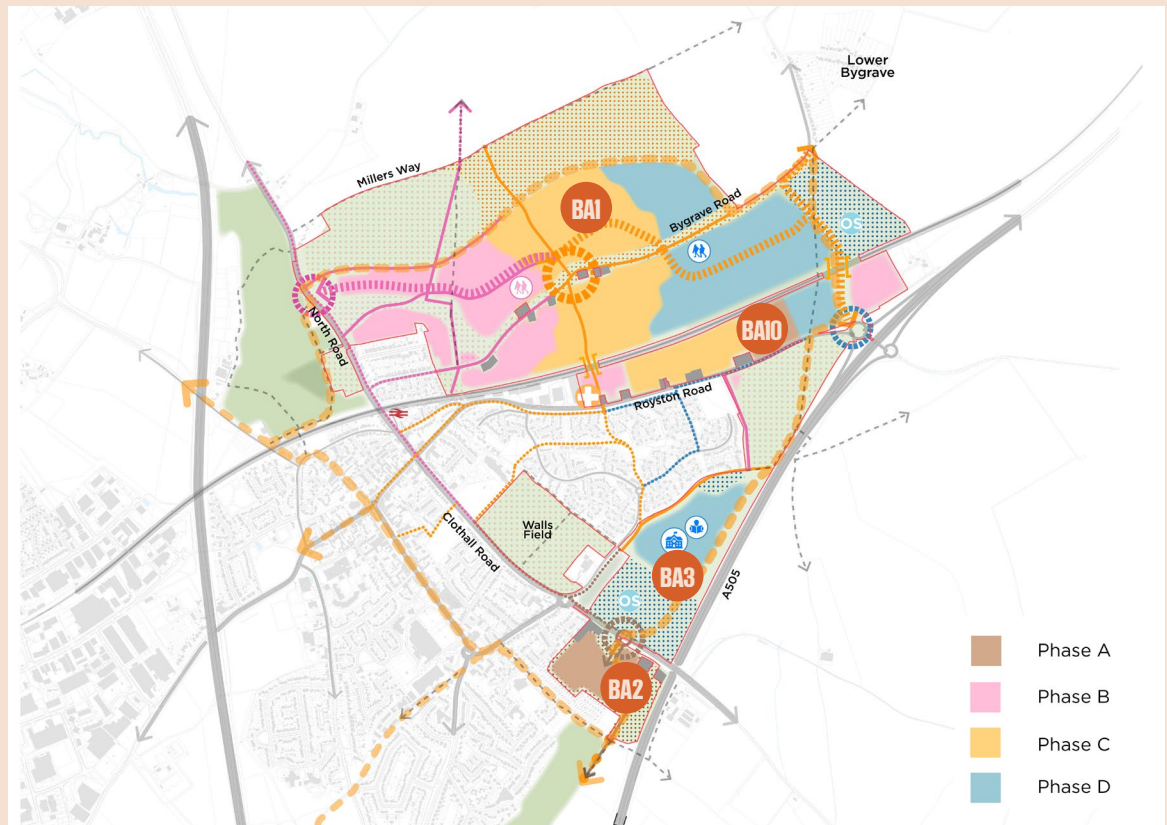
If approved by North Herts Council, the Outline Planning Application would establish the overall framework for development.

Further detailed applications would then need to be developed and approved by North Herts Council for specific areas - individual housing parcels or buildings, green spaces and schools, with consultation at each stage.

We plan to start development in BA2, followed by BA1 (broadly delivered from west to east) and BA10, potentially in parallel with BA1.

The phasing and land use mix of BA3 will depend on the outcome of the discussions on secondary school provision and you can find out more on this below.

The phased construction will take around 15 years and we will continue to consult with the community on the more detailed plans.



▲ Phasing Plan

When will key facilities be delivered?

The timing of key infrastructure like schools, health provision, parks and transport connections will be agreed with the local authorities through the planning process and set down in the legal planning framework for the development. This is normally done by the number of homes occupied.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Parameter Plan - Shows the location of schools, health centre, local centre and green spaces

Design & Access Statement - Placemaking and the integration of new facilities

Will there be a new health facility?

Space is being set aside to create a larger health facility which will serve Baldock and the surrounding villages, including doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers. The details and timing of this will be worked through as part of the planning framework and set out in planning obligations.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Design and Access Statement - Placemaking and integration of new facilities

What is the approach to providing schools?

Pupils from the new homes will initially fill places at existing primary schools. To accommodate long-term growth, up to two new primary schools are planned north of the railway.

A financial contribution will also be made for special educational needs provision.

For secondary education, a flexible approach will be taken in partnership with local stakeholders, with a shared aspiration to deliver a larger, relocated Knights Templar School (KTS) within the new development.

As funding is not yet secured for this preferred option, the planning application will include three potential scenarios to ensure resilience:

- Relocate and expand KTS to a new site within the development (preferred option), as shown on page 13 above.
- Expand KTS on its existing site.
- Open a smaller new secondary school in the proposed location to work alongside KTS.

These options will continue to be explored in collaboration with Urban&Civic, the District and County Councils and the Department for Education over the coming years.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Parameter Plan - shows the location of schools

Design and Access Statement - Placemaking and the integration of new facilities

What is the transport strategy?

We have developed a three-point transport plan, over a number of years through consultation and detailed analysis:

1. Reduce through-traffic that doesn't benefit Baldock, especially lorries, to ease congestion, improve air quality and make roads safer. New connections to the existing town centre will also encourage sustainable movements by walking and cycling routes. This includes:
 - Building a new road across the railway line to link north Baldock with Royston Road and the A505.
 - Introducing a one-way alternating traffic system under the Station Road railway bridge.
2. Create a 'Walk and Cycle First' town - making it safer and quicker to walk or cycle to key locations including new pedestrian and cycle crossings over and under the railway. We are aiming for half of all trips by new residents to be made on foot, by bike, or via public transport.
3. Improve connections between Baldock and nearby villages through new road, cycle and bus links. This includes:
 - A new road link to provide better access to the town centre, retaining Bygrave Road as a pleasant walking and cycling route.
 - Improved access to the station via a new northern entrance with walking, cycling and bus connections.
 - Integrated bus services, including coordination with existing routes and a new shuttle loop through the town.

You can read more about the transport proposals here or follow the link: <https://growingbaldock.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Growing-Baldock-Helping-you-get-around.pdf>

As homes are delivered, travel behaviour will be monitored, and interventions will be adjusted and phased accordingly.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Parameter Plan - Key access points and routes through the site

Transport Statement and Addendum - Approach to transport on site & wider impacts & mitigation

Environmental Statement (transport) - Transport impacts & mitigations

Design & Access Statement - Street & walking/cycling route types & car parking principles

How has the transport strategy been tested?

The approach to developing a strategy, and modelling the proposals to understand their impact was agreed with Hertfordshire County Council (as the highways authority) and North Herts Council (as the planning authority). It involved 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 have also been tested by the County Council's own strategic model (COMET), which has now been made public.

What parts of the development area will remain green?

The plans include key green spaces including Bygrave Common and space providing a green buffer between Baldock and Bygrave, Walls Field, and further open land next to this, as well as a range of smaller green spaces coming forward within the development. The spaces will be connected by a Baldock Greenway walking and cycling route.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Parameter Plan - Areas of retained and new habitat

Green Infrastructure Strategy - Locations and types of green space

Biodiversity Net Gain Plan - Areas of biodiversity net gain

Ecological Management Plan - How ecological areas will be managed

Environmental Statement (ecology) - Ecological impacts and mitigation

Environmental Statement (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) - Effects of development on landscape and views

What are the impacts on local water and the local aquifer, an important source of fresh water?

The local water company - Affinity Water - have confirmed there is enough water to support the new development and there will be no groundwater extraction from the aquifer to cater for new homes.

Detailed design of the homes will include a range of low water technology.

The landscape is also designed to capture surface water run off to maximise infiltration into the aquifer.

i You can find out further information on this topic in the following documents:

Sustainability Statement - The approach to delivering sustainable development

Drainage Strategy - How the drainage is designed



Keep Updated

We hope this guide is helpful. You can find out more, follow progress and stay informed via the Growing Baldock website and social media channels:



growingbaldock.co.uk



growingbaldock@urbanandcivic.com



<https://www.facebook.com/GrowingBaldock/>

Or through the North Herts Council's dedicated web page:



north-herts.gov.uk/growing-baldock-masterplan



North Herts
planning portal



Growing Baldock
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