

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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North Hertfordshire District Council

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Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2031 : Submission Version Regulation 16 – Public consultation Comments made on behalf of North Hertfordshire District Council

The District Council welcomes the publication of the Submission Version of the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan and appreciates the significant amount of work undertaken by Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group, Bygrave Parish Council and Clothall with Luffenhall Parish Meeting in reaching this stage in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In reviewing the submitted Neighbourhood Plan documents, it is clear that a substantial amount of public consultation has taken place during the preparation of the neighbourhood plan and that this is reflected in the comprehensive Consultation Statement. The attached comments reflect that many of the issues raised previously by the District Council both in discussions and in the formal comments submitted have been addressed and that this is clearly set out in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

All neighbourhood plans must meet certain “basic conditions” before they can come into force. These are tested through the independent examination, before a plan can proceed to a referendum. The basic conditions for neighbourhood plans are to:

- have regard to national policy;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area; and
- be compatible with EU obligations.

In terms of compliance with existing planning policy, the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations are clear that the neighbourhood plan should be in “general” conformity with the current statutory Local Plan. The adopted local plan for North Hertfordshire is the District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations, 1996.

Although a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan, Planning Practice Guidance does state that emerging evidence is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions. The District Council acknowledges the significant amount of work that the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group has undertaken to ensure that

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David Scholes
Chief Executive

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the neighbourhood plan has been prepared having regard to the emerging policies in the Local Plan, which is at a relatively advanced stage of preparation.

The District Council is satisfied that the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the saved policies from the District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations, 1996 and has regard to national planning policy.

In submitting these representations, it should be clear that the District Council supports Bygrave Parish Council's ambition to put into place a neighbourhood plan for the combined parishes of Bygrave and Clothall with Baldock. The District Council will continue to work with the Parish Council and the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group in the next stages of the neighbourhood plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Clark', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Paul Clark
Executive Member for Planning and Transport

Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 – Public Consultation

There are a number of detailed comments on the submitted version of the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan which are set out below:

Policy G1 : Improving access and parking
Page 9 – 1st and 2nd paragraphs

It is acknowledged that the evidence for the neighbourhood plan demonstrates that the community are in favour of providing more car parking for the railway station. However, there needs to be a balance between the provision of additional car parking for the railway station, managing on-street car parking and the need to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport and indeed the supporting text for Policy G1 has been amended to reflect this. However, the District Council is concerned that the neighbourhood plan continues to suggest that the use of BE2: Royston Road might be considered suitable of the provision of additional car parking. As stated in the representations to the Regulation 14 version of the neighbourhood plan, the District Council could only support this if:

- i. there is evidence to demonstrate that the loss of employment land would not materially impact upon the strategic employment aims of the Local Plan;
- ii. an alternate site was identified where an equivalent amount of employment could be re-provided; and / or
- iii. that the impacts of providing car parking in this location both in terms of car movements and upon sustainable travel can be demonstrated.

Policy E5 : Development north of the railway
Page 25

The policy in the Regulation 14 version of the neighbourhood plan stated that there should be a clear visual and physical gap (of at least 250m) between the expanded built edge of Baldock and Lower Bygrave. In its' representations, the District Council stated that to support the proposal for this "gap" there should be evidence to justify the distance and that there should be no conflict with the overall aims in the emerging Local Plan to deliver 2,800 homes and associated infrastructure. The amendment to the policy to remove the reference "*(of at least 250m)*" is welcome and it is acknowledged that the evidence commissioned by the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group addresses the physical and visual gap between the expanded built edge of Baldock and the existing settlement of Bygrave.

Policy V1 : Bygrave Village and Policy V2 : Clothall and Luffenhall
Pages 32 and 33

Criterion (a) of both these policies should be amended to incorporate the phrase "except in very special circumstances" to ensure consistency with the approach to Green Belt in paragraph 143 of the National Planning Policy Framework.