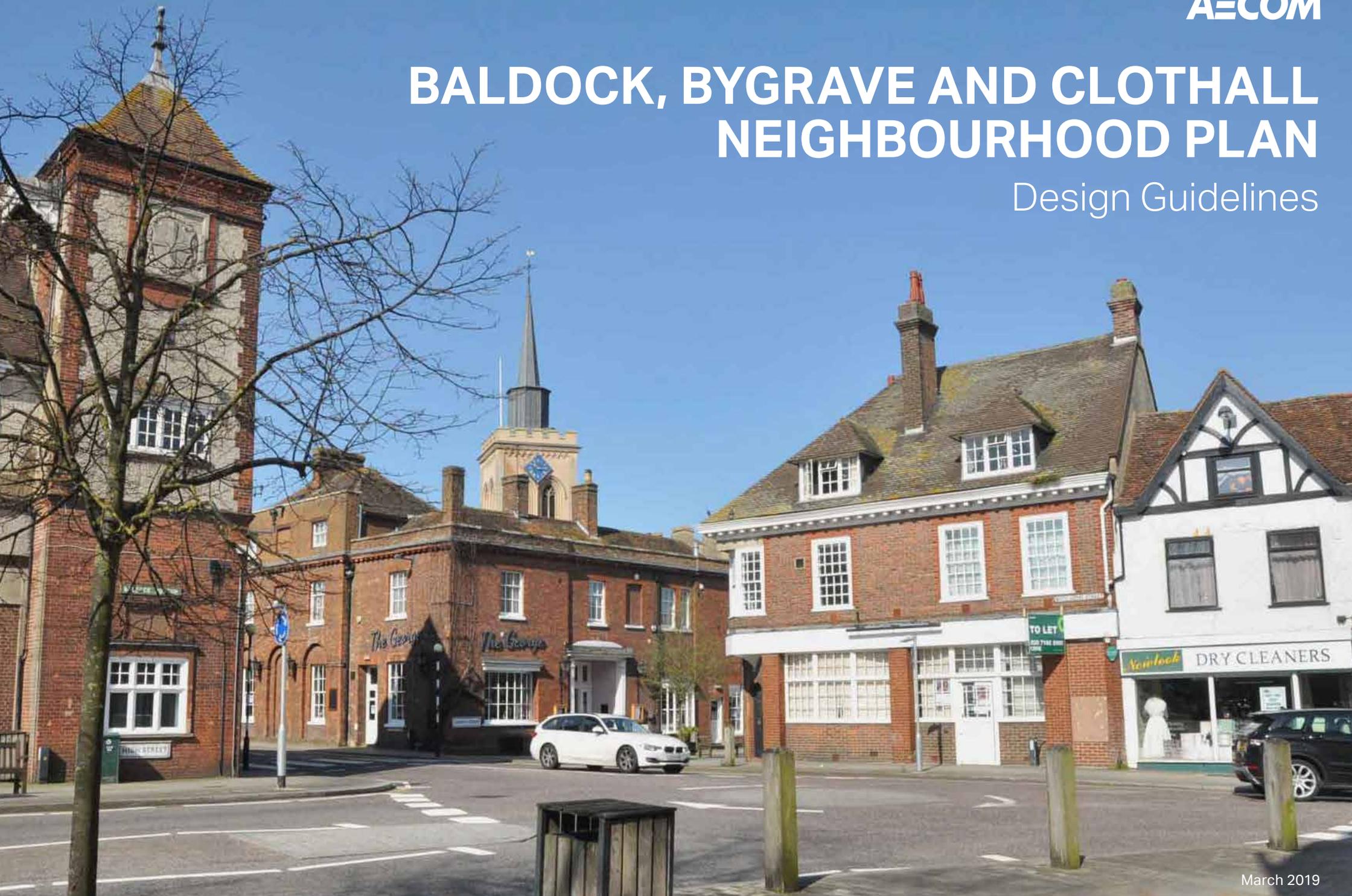


BALDOCK, BYGRAVE AND CLOTHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Design Guidelines





Quality information

Project role	Name	Position	Action summary	Signature	Date
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Introduction

01

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group. The support is intended to provide design guidelines based on the character and the special qualities of Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall.

1.2. Purpose of this document

This document is an annex to the Neighbourhood Plan. Its purpose is to add depth and illustration to the Plan's policies on design and growth, offering guidance on the community's expectations. Baldock, in particular, is about to undergo a period of significant expansion and it is important to existing and future residents that the quality of development is widely appreciated to be high. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2018, paragraph 125) states that "neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development"; this document does that for Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall.



Half timber house along Church Street.



Sun Street, showing good mix and variety of architectural style and building materials.

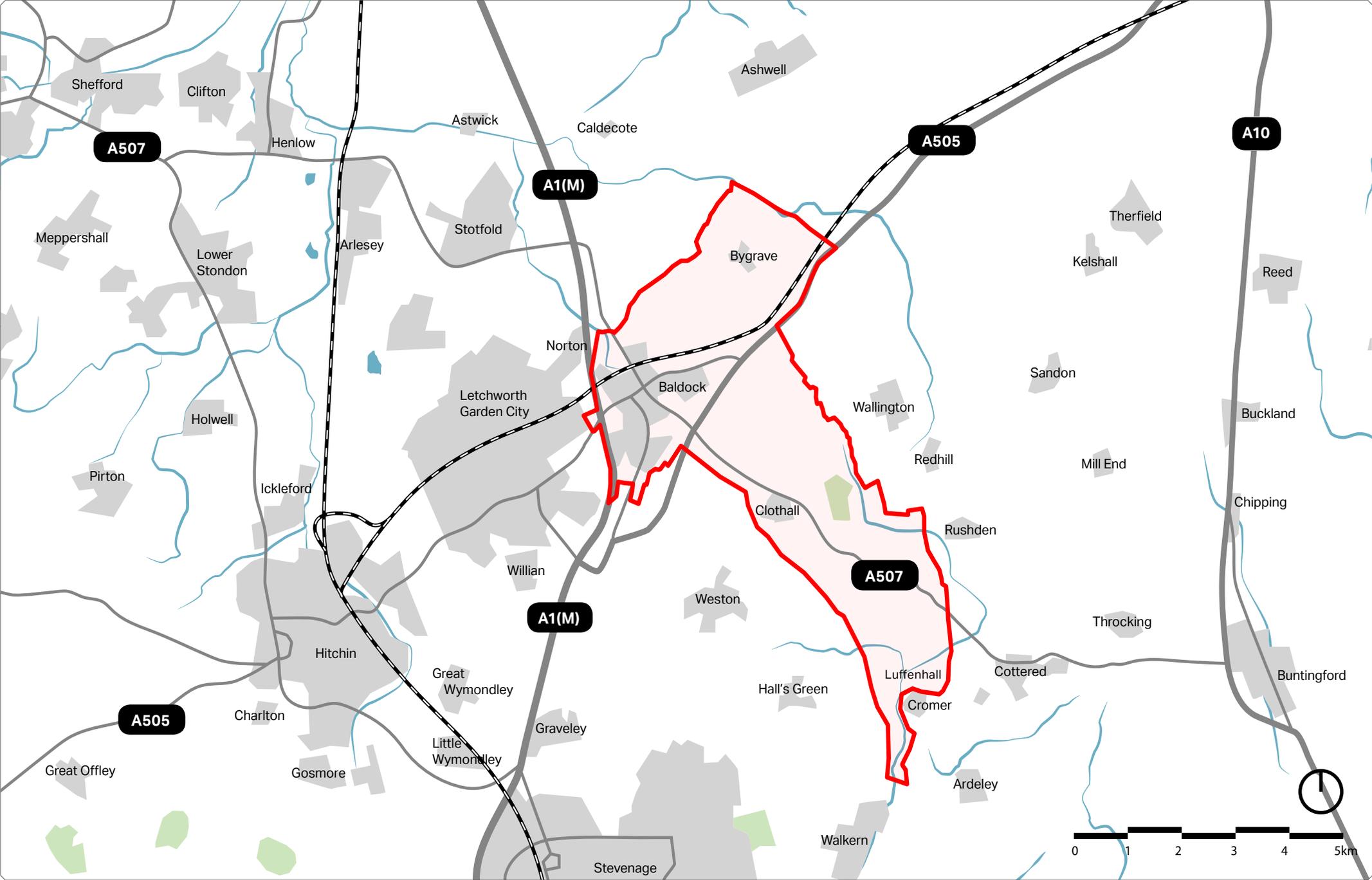


Active frontages along Whitehorse Street.

1.3. Preparing the Guidelines

The following steps were undertaken to produce this document:

- Initial meeting between AECOM and the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group and joint site visit;
- Review of existing baseline documents;
- Urban design analysis;
- Initial engagement on community design preferences at Baldock Street Fair;
- Meeting with Hertfordshire County Council and North Herts District Council;
- Community workshop on emerging design principles;
- Formal consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan; and
- Preparation of final Design Guidelines.



Strategic plan showing Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan Area.

1.4. Engagement

The Guidelines are built upon two foundations:

- The principles of good design and planning, as advised by AECOM's specialists and based on widely-accepted good practice; and
- Local perceptions of what good design means in Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall.

Two events - a stall at the Baldock Street Fair and a workshop on design principles - were held to better understand the second of these. Both events are described in this section.

Baldock Street Fair

The Street Fair is an annual event that brings the community together. In 2018, it was held on 19 May, when the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group's stall was used to display images of 11 buildings and spaces, with sticky notes to enable people to note what they liked and disliked about the images.

The images were chosen to illustrate different recent approaches to planning and design.

There was a steady flow of visitors to the stall throughout the day. Their views are summarised over the following pages.

The headline findings of the event were that local people **like**:

- Low rise buildings;
- Open space and landscaping; and
- Wide and uncluttered pavements.

But they **dislike**:

- On-street parking;
- Buildings that are not in keeping with surrounding ones; and
- High density.

The results of this exercise are summarised more fully on the next two pages.





BOARD 1

TOTAL LIKES: 6
Open Space & Landscaping 3
Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 3

TOTAL DISLIKES: 38
High Density & Crowding 11
Undesired Buildings 26



BOARD 2

TOTAL LIKES: 20
Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 11
Off-Road Parking 4
Community Feel 5

TOTAL DISLIKES: 5
Lack of Green Space 3
High Density & Overcrowding 2



BOARD 3

TOTAL LIKES: 5
Pleasant & Quiet 3
Off-Road Parking 2

TOTAL DISLIKES: 12
Undesired Buildings 7
Lack of Cycle Paths 3
Safety Concerns 2



BOARD 4

TOTAL LIKES: 8
Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 8

TOTAL DISLIKES: 17
High Density & Crowding 8
Undesired Buildings 9



BOARD 5

TOTAL LIKES: 19
Open Space & Landscaping 12
Pleasant & Quiet 7

TOTAL DISLIKES: 14
Parking Issues 12
Lack of Cycle Path 2



BOARD 6

TOTAL LIKES: 8
Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 5
Open Space & Landscaping 3

TOTAL DISLIKES: 11
Undesired Buildings 5
Concerns Regarding Building Deterioration 5
Insufficient Bins 1



BOARD 7

TOTAL LIKES: 8

- Open Space & Landscaping 3
- Community Feel 3
- Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 2

TOTAL DISLIKES: 24

- Parking Issues 8
- High Density & Crowding 7
- Undesired Buildings 4



BOARD 8

TOTAL LIKES: 21

- Open Space & Landscaping 8
- Pleasant & Quiet 6
- Wide & Uncluttered Pavements 5

TOTAL DISLIKES: 19

- Parking Issues 11
- Lack of Cycle Path 2
- High Density & Crowding 2



BOARD 9

TOTAL LIKES: 27

- Open Space & Landscaping 14
- Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 11
- Cycle & Pedestrian Friendly 2

TOTAL DISLIKES: 16

- Undesired Buildings 7
- Parking Issues 3
- High Density & Crowding 3



BOARD 10

TOTAL LIKES: 18

- Wide & Uncluttered Pavements 7
- Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 6
- Cycle & Pedestrian Friendly 5

TOTAL DISLIKES: 22

- High Density & Crowding 8
- Parking Issues 6
- Lack of Green Space 3



BOARD 11

TOTAL LIKES: 27

- Wide & Uncluttered Pavements 11
- Desired Buildings & Appropriate Massing 9
- Off-Road Parking 3

TOTAL DISLIKES: 10

- Undesired Buildings 2
- High Density & Crowding 2
- Lack of Cycle Path 2

Total positive and negative comments for each board.

BOARD 1
Positive 6
Negative 38

BOARD 5
Positive 19
Negative 14

BOARD 9
Positive 27
Negative 16

BOARD 2
Positive 20
Negative 5

BOARD 6
Positive 8
Negative 11

BOARD 10
Positive 18
Negative 22

BOARD 3
Positive 5
Negative 12

BOARD 7
Positive 8
Negative 24

BOARD 11
Positive 27
Negative 10

BOARD 4
Positive 8
Negative 17

BOARD 8
Positive 21
Negative 19

Design principles workshop

The findings from the Street Fair, with its wide reach, fed into the initial development of these Guidelines. A more focused workshop, open to all, was subsequently held on 8 October 2018 to test some of the emerging content.

In four groups, participants discussed and completed a series of worksheets covering five themes:

- Town structure;
- Movement;
- Buildings;
- Parking; and
- Eco design.

A number of design principles or approaches were presented under each theme, aligned with the emerging content of the Guidelines. There was broad agreement that the principles and approaches were appropriate. In particular, there was consensus on the following:

Theme	Consensus
Town structure	<p>-Edges: where new development abuts existing homes, new buildings should be no higher than the existing ones, and planting should be used to soften the edges of new development.</p> <p>-Frontages: ground floor units should be flexible and adaptable to respond to future changing needs.</p> <p>-Landmarks and vistas: development should be designed to respond to existing views and landmarks.</p>
Movement	<p>-Connectivity: high quality new walking and cycling routes which connect to existing routes and amenities should be a priority any new development, and walking routes should usually run along streets, not be segregated from them.</p>
Buildings	<p>-Scale and massing: buildings should be sympathetic in scale to the context, and should not usually exceed 3 storeys in central areas and 2-2.5 storeys in residential areas.</p> <p>-Privacy: homes should be set back from the street with front garden landscaping, front gardens should be at least 1.5 metres deep and back-to-back distances should be at least 21 metres.</p>
Parking	<p>-Residential parking: on-plot is preferred, with on-street being the least preferred.</p>
Eco design	<p>-Permeable paving: permeable paving should be used to let water filter through and reduce flood risk.</p> <p>-Green roofs: green roofs should be used to improve biodiversity and reduce flooding.</p>

These community preferences are reflected in the Guidelines that follow.



1.5. The importance of good design

As the NPPF (paragraph 124) notes, “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.

Research, such as for the Government’s Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, *The Value of Good Design*¹) has shown that good design of buildings and places can:

- Improve health and well-being;
- Increase civic pride and cultural activity;
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- Reduce pollution.

¹ <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-good-design.pdf>

Local people understand what good design means in the context of Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall. The Planning Group’s baseline work shows that they appreciate the town centre’s qualities (“a clear historic street pattern with prominent, attractive, features”, “consistency of building types and materials, together with the limited range of building heights, give the town centre a strong, distinctive character”) and those of some residential neighbourhoods (“distinctive ‘semi-rural’ character, with wide streets and verges, consistent house types and large gardens”).

This document seeks to harness an understanding of how good design can make future development as endearingly popular as the best of what has gone before.



Half timber building set back from London Road.



Local heritage building with coaching arches, along Church Street.



Corner building part of local heritage laying on the junction between Royston Road and Station Road.



Heritage buildings along the High Street with front parking bays.



Views from the High Street towards St Mary The Virgin.



Quality public realm.



Local heritage building with coaching arches along the High Street.



New three storey residential development in Baldock.

1.6. Planning context

The past and present

With Iron Age and Roman origins, the modern town was founded by the Knights Templar in the twelfth century and flourished as a staging post between London and the north, as evidenced by the coaching inns. The arrival of the railway in 1850 provided another impetus and the town has continued to grow, whilst retaining its traditional market town character, with fine medieval and Georgian buildings.

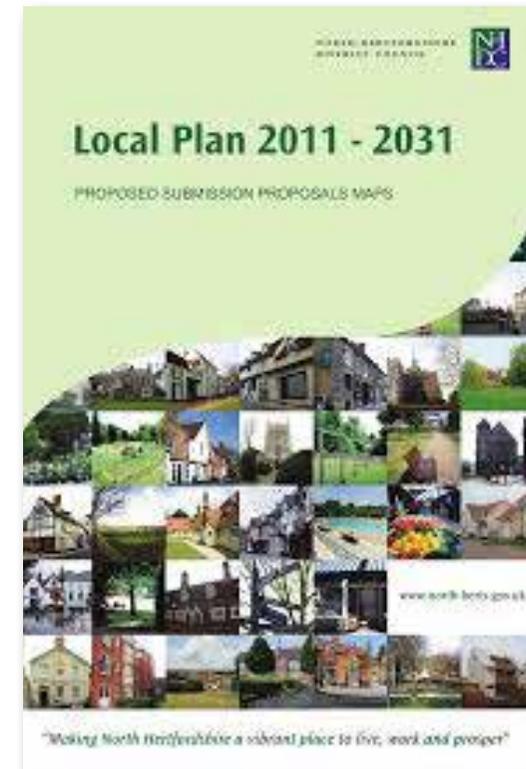
At the 2011 census the population of Baldock was 10,280, and there were 4,491 dwellings in the town. It is the smallest of the four North Hertfordshire towns.

Future

The draft North Hertfordshire Local Plan envisages another period of very significant growth for Baldock. In particular, over the period 2011-2031, it seeks to allocate 10 sites for housing, totalling an estimated 3,386 homes in urban extensions on the edge of town and smaller sites within Baldock.

The map on page 15 shows those allocations that the design guidelines focus on; these being the urban extensions that account for most of the growth, and two sensitive regeneration sites within the town.

The Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall communities are determined that any new development is planned and designed in such a way that instills a sense of pride in their community; these Guidelines, if applied well, will help to make that aspiration a reality.

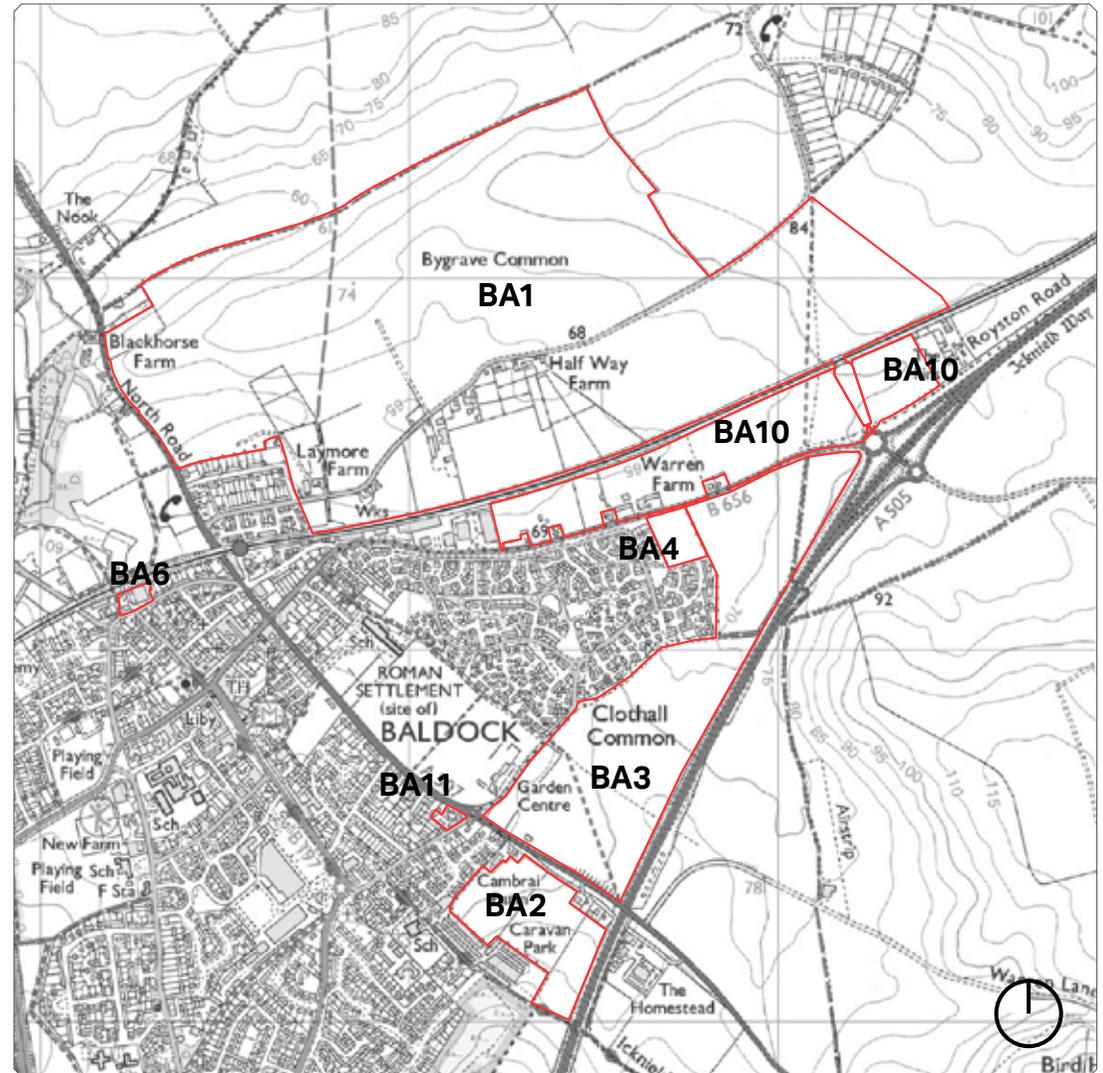


Urban extensions - estimated new homes

BA1	Land at North of Baldock 2,800 new dwellings
BA2	Land at west of Clothall Road (Clothall Parish) 200 new dwellings
BA3	Land at south of Clothall Common (Clothall parish) 245 new dwellings
BA4	Land at east of Clothall Common (part in Clothall parish) 50 new dwellings
BA10	Royston Road Employment allocation

Regeneration sites - estimated new homes

BA6	Land at Icknield Way 26 new dwellings
BA11	Deans Yard, South Road 20 new dwellings



Strategic Housing and Employment Sites from the Draft North Herts Local Plan.



Legends Barber

One way

sky spot



Design Guidance

02

WHITE HORSE STREET

2. Design Guidance

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this Design Guidance is to ensure that future developments consider local character and can enhance local distinctiveness by creating good quality developments, thriving communities and prosperous places to live.

This chapter provides a set of principles that can be applied to all new development, whereas the following chapters focus on urban extensions and regeneration sites respectively.

2.2. Placemaking and design principles

This section introduces a set of placemaking principles that will influence the design of the area's streets, homes and open spaces, and the interfaces between them.

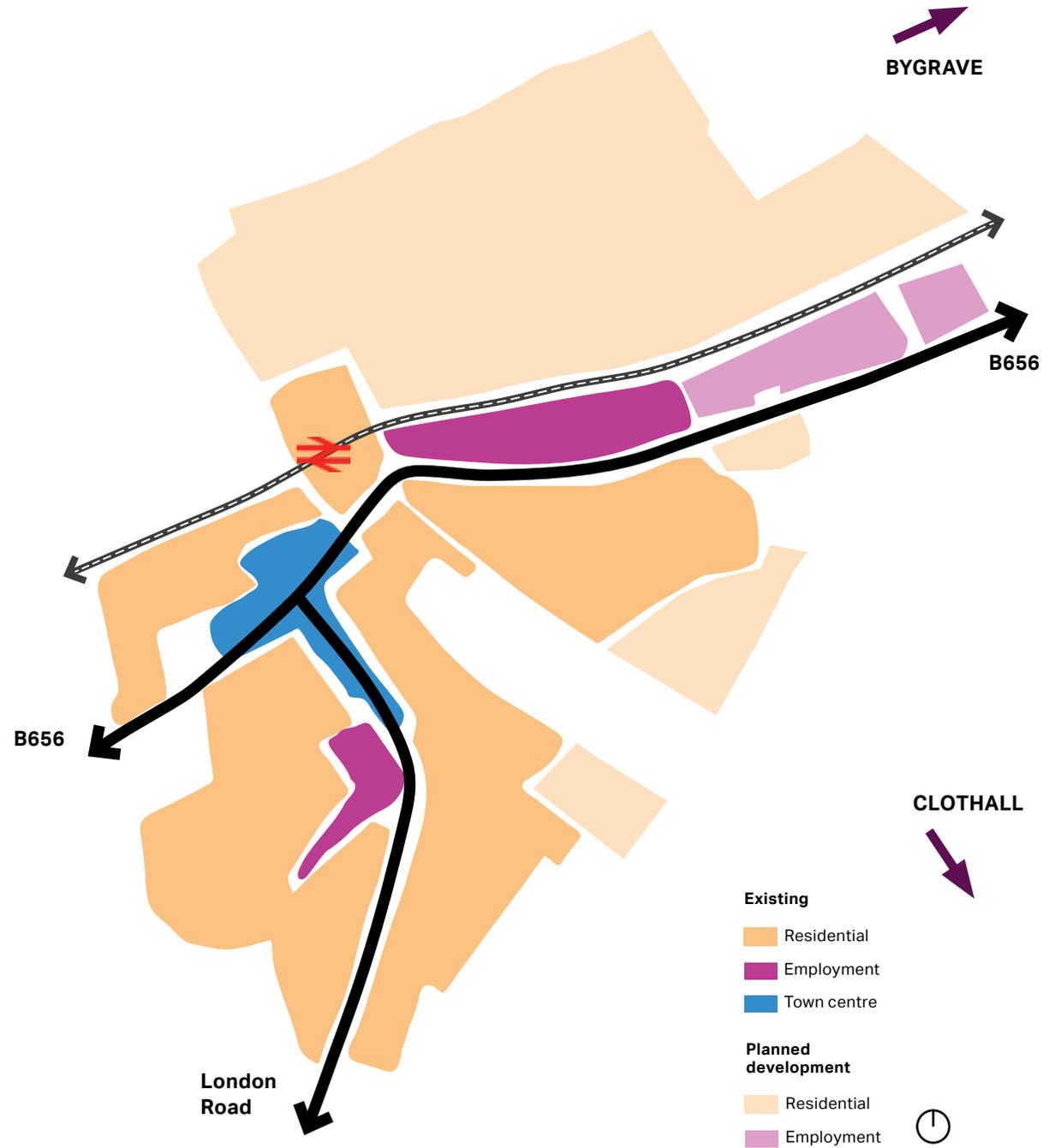


2.2.1. Land use and density

Baldock has mostly developed at a low rise scale, predominantly featuring two storey dwellings. There are several buildings of 3 and 4 storeys within the town centre, which increase the density especially around the High Street/ Hitchin Street/ Whitehorse Street junction. The historic core is predominantly Georgian in character, where the terraced buildings create a strong building line fronting the pavement. The taller buildings here relate well to the wider high street and make the town centre legible as the heart of the settlement.

In case of new developments, density should be appropriate to the location, responding to the character of the existing settlement areas. However, in case of larger development areas such as the BA1 urban extension site, proposals should include a range of densities, building types and forms. Higher densities should be focused around key movement nodes or strategic points, although with reference to existing patterns and buildings. A varied density and land use distribution profile in the case of large development sites adds interest and supports local facilities and public transport, and support legibility of the various character areas.

The images on the following page provide an illustration of existing densities within Baldock.





Low density up to 30dph

The built up area confined by Nightingale Way, Elmwood Avenue, Mons Avenue and Clare Crescent has an overall density of 22 dwellings per hectare (dph).

The area is low of density due to the open green space that can be found within the block, bordered by the back gardens of the dwellings.



Medium density 30-50dph

A typical medium density block in Baldock at plan level is mostly similar to the area shown above. The density here is 31 dph.

There is a combination of mainly terraced and semi-detached dwellings which in all cases have front gardens.



High density above 50 dph

High density blocks are unusual in Baldock; they barely pass 50+ dph.

The illustrated area has a density of 51 dph and mainly consists of terraced and semi-detached dwellings with gardens to the rear (and, in some cases, the front).

2.2.2. Placemaking

What urban designers and planners call ‘placemaking’ is about creating the physical conditions that residents and users find attractive and safe, with good levels of social interaction and layouts that are easily understood. The placemaking principles set out in the following pages should be used to assess the design quality of future development or regeneration proposals.



Gateways

Design proposals should consider placing distinctive elements to engender a sense of arrival and act as landmarks within new developments.

Gateway buildings and features should reflect local character. This can, for example, mean larger houses in local materials with an emphasis on the design of chimneys and fenestration, as well as well laid and maintained landscape.

Local examples of distinctive gateway and landmark buildings



Hierarchy of movement

The network of streets should be designed to enable direct and convenient walking routes to public transport stops and to town and local centres. Streets should be considered as spaces for use by all, not just by motor vehicles. They must provide a safe and pleasant-to-use environment at all times of the day. Streets should be designed considering the needs of users in the following order:

- pedestrians;
- cyclists;
- public transport users;
- other motor traffic.

Streets should be differentiated based on their character, role and function, and can be identified based on their proportion to the scale of development as primary, secondary or tertiary.

To stimulate and support district and local centres, movement routes should be designed in a way that they go 'through' places rather than 'around' them.



Example of primary street, The High Street.



Example of secondary street, Chilvers Bank.



Example of cul-de-sac (tertiary), King's Mount.

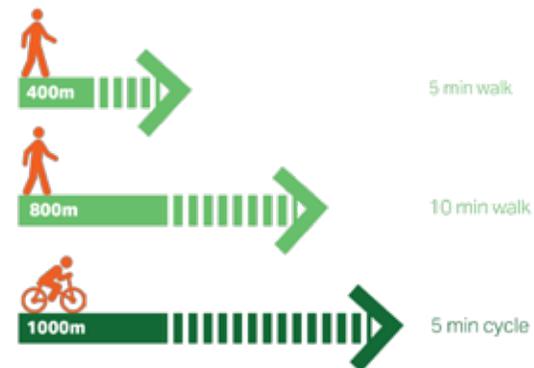
Walkable places

Creating new walking routes which are well connected to existing ones is a prerequisite for any large-scale new development. Walking routes should usually be laid out in a way that they follow the shortest and straightest distance between two points.

The success of a place is influenced by how walkable it is. It is good practice to plan new homes within a 400 metres walking distance (= 5 minutes) of bus stops and local green spaces and within 800 metres (= 10 minutes) of local shops, schools or parks.

Pedestrian footpaths should be at least 2 metres wide and be well lit to encourage use at all times.

Walking routes should usually run along streets, not be segregated from them.



Connectivity

A connected street network provides people with a choice of different routes and allows traffic to be dispersed more evenly across an area rather than concentrated on to heavily trafficked roads.

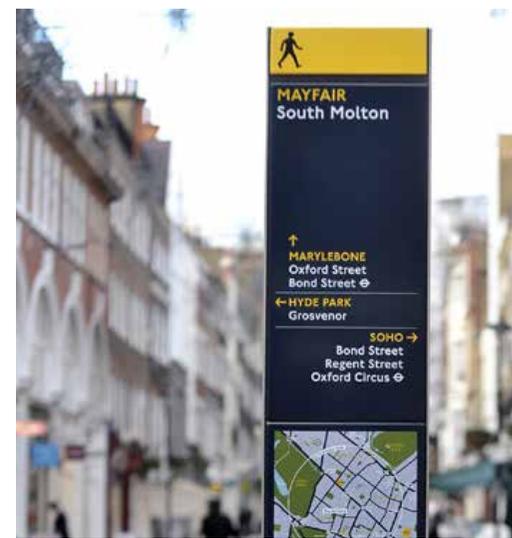
Wayfinding and legibility

Developers of new schemes should aim to create places that have a clear identity and that are easy to navigate. As noted above, local landmark buildings and clear, direct routes can aid legibility.

Clear signage should be placed at key nodes and arrival points to aid orientation.



Diagram reflecting how accessible the historic core of the town is both at a vehicular and pedestrian level.



Good example of signage for wayfinding: Mayfair, London.



Local example of wayfinding.

Cycle paths

Cycling routes should be safe and direct and should form part of a well connected network within Baldock.

Where dedicated cycle paths are required, these should be separate from other traffic and pedestrians. However, these cycle paths always be well over-looked and at the same grade as other routes where possible.

The narrow Ashwell Road/Bygrave Road could be successfully converted to a cycle and pedestrian only spine, to some extent maintaining its rural character.



Good example of dedicated cycling lane.

Enclosure

Enclosure is the relationship between public spaces and the buildings or other features that surround them. A more cohesive and attractive urban form is achieved where this relationship is in proportion. The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered to achieve a satisfactory sense of enclosure:

- Façades should have an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height (see below right);
- Buildings should be designed to turn corners and terminate views;
- Narrow gaps between buildings should be avoided, they should be either detached/semi-detached or properly linked;
- Generally, building lines should run parallel to the back of the pavement; and
- In the case of terraced buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths, land uses and facade alignments should be considered during the design process to create an attractive townscape.

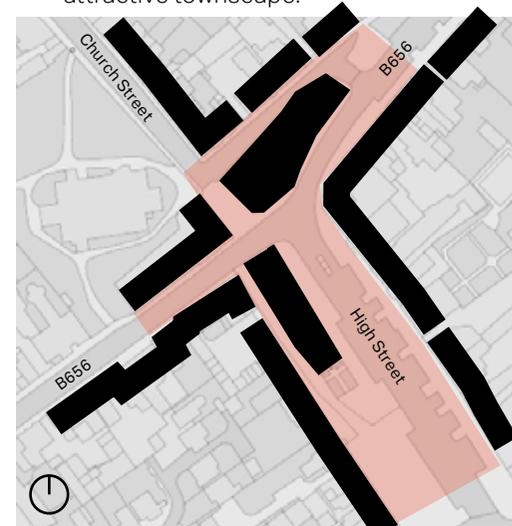
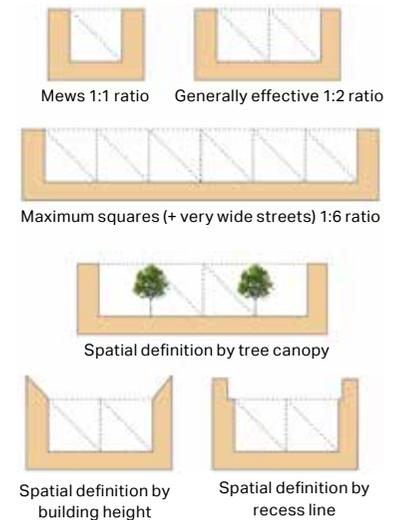


Diagram reflecting how public space is enclosed by buildings around the town centre.



*Images from Urban Design Compendium (Homes England)

Landmarks and vistas

Places should be planned to respond to existing view corridors or reinforce views of existing landmarks. St Mary the Virgin is Baldock's most notable landmark. Its prominence should be preserved as a focal point from any new development if the church is visible.

The open view across the valley from upper Bygrave to Baldock needs to be considered.

As well as relating carefully to existing heritage features, landmark buildings should also be innovative and interesting. They should promote good architecture and ensure that places are distinct, recognisable and memorable.

2.2.3. Urban Structure

Urban structure comprises the pattern or arrangement of urban blocks, streets, buildings, public realm and landscape. The size and organisation of any block varies depending upon diverse parameters such as location, land use and density. At an urban scale, it is important to achieve a good mix of block form and block size, to facilitate adaptability over the years and ensure a good variety of uses within the new parts of the development.

New development should respond to the existing pattern of development within Baldock, taking cues from existing block sizes and structures, patterns of plot subdivision and the relationship between the built and the non-built private space.



Views from BA1 urban extension site, towards Baldock.

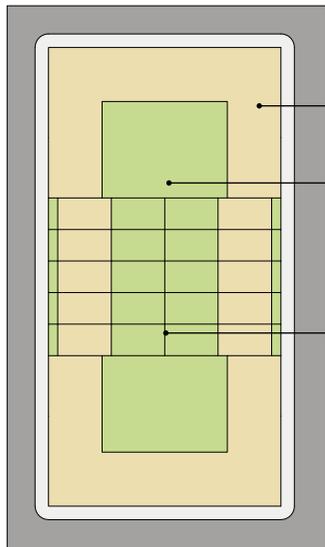
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Block typologies

Perimeter block

A perimeter block structure with no public access to its centre is a well proven and flexible approach to the layout of residential and other areas. It contributes to safety by clearly distinguishing between the fronts and the backs of buildings, between public and private space, and enabling continuous overlooking of the street. It can be very efficient in terms of development density. Gardens within the block can be private, communal or both.



Building façades along street junctions should avoid blank walls on any sides facing onto the streets.

Shared or communal courtyards must be designed to high standard and should serve as social spaces where local residents can spend quality time.

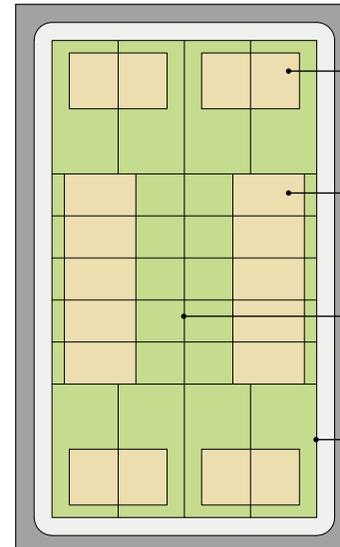
Back to back gardens should be defined by rear and side boundary walls or fences should be no less than 1.8 metres tall.

Back to back rear gardens

This type is defined by houses which face apart and have private gardens in between the rear of the building. Such block organisation is suitable and common for terraced, semi-detached and detached houses.

This typology is the most common in residential areas as it provides secure rear garden spaces and it avoids creating back gardens along streets.

There should be a minimum of 20 metres depth between the back of dwellings to avoid overlooking issues from properties behind. Back alleys within blocks should be avoided, with bin storage provided to the front or side of homes.



Buildings positioned at street junctions should avoid blank walls on both sides of the façade.

Continuous length of block frontage should not exceed 30 metres.

Back to back gardens should be defined by rear and side boundary walls or fences no less than 1.8 metres in height.

Side walls or hedges rather than fences should define the boundary between public and private space.

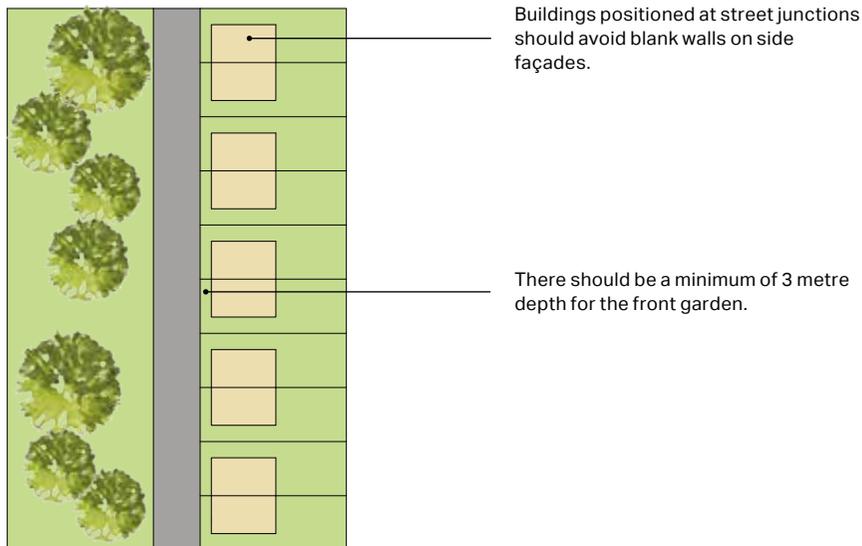
Development edge

As a town's public face, the treatment of the edge of development is particularly important when facing open countryside, country parks and other open space.

Regardless of dwelling type (for example terraced, semi-detached or detached house), buildings should face outwards, with a front garden and a street or footpath/cycleway between the home and the open space.

Planting can soften the edge between town and countryside.

See also section 3.3 below.

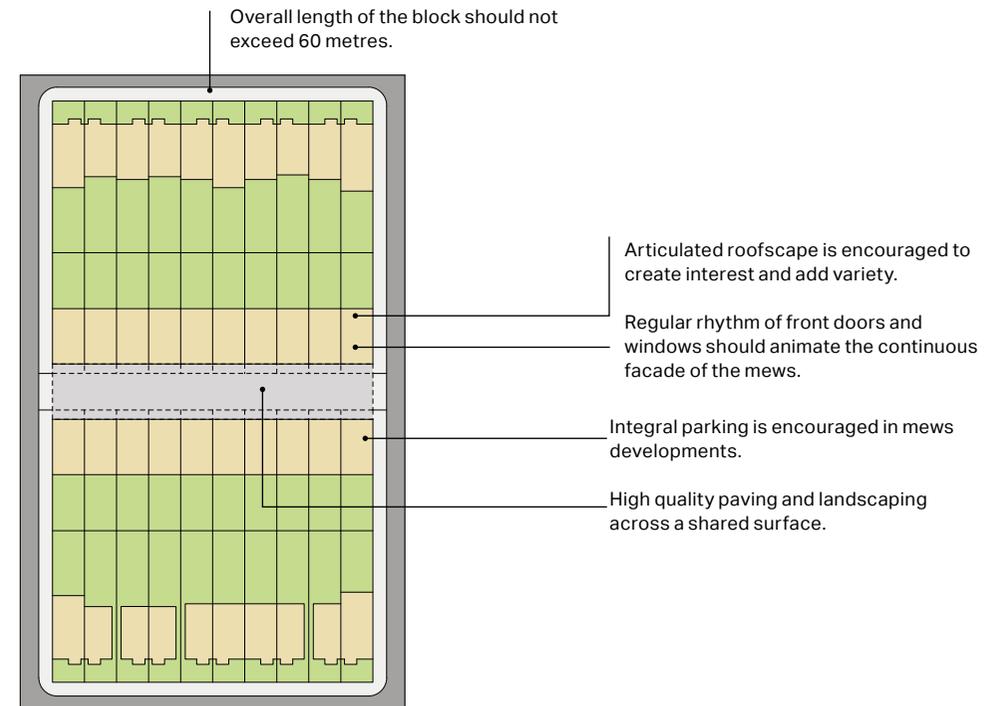


Mews

The space within development blocks can be used more efficiently with the introduction of mews or short cul-de-sac typologies.

Mews should be designed with the very low traffic flows in mind, meaning as pedestrian- and play-friendly environments, not car dominant.

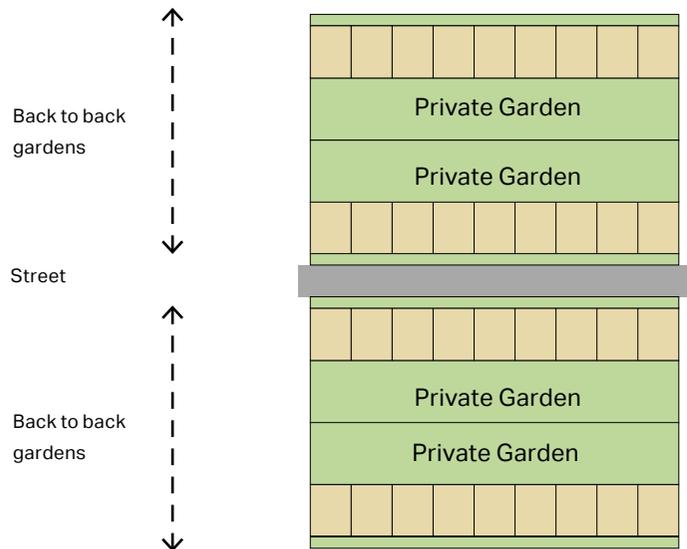
A width of 8 metres from building to building, perhaps across a level surface, will usually be adequate in a mews.



Fronts and backs

Buildings should usually front onto the street to provide activity, overlooking and interest. Long blank façades or excessive runs of garage doors should be avoided.

The rear of dwellings are vulnerable if exposed to public paths and spaces. Back gardens are more secure and private if they adjoin other back gardens.



Building lines

The way buildings sit in relation to the street can affect the feel and popularity of a development.

The building line should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but should generally form a unified whole.

Local examples of building lines:



Activity and frontage

Successful spaces and streets are created where activity and movement occur. These areas should be designed in a way that they are accessible not only to people living in the community but also to people passing by. In order to achieve this a good mix of land uses and provision of well designed public realm is key.

Frontages should be 'active' wherever possible. In residential areas, this means front doors and windows of habitable rooms facing the street. In centres, this usually means shopfronts, although uses will not necessarily be retail - food and drink, community uses and services can also provide activity and strong frontages. Shopfront proportions should harmonise with the main building and its neighbouring buildings.

A coordinated, uncluttered approach which is visually cohesive should be a leading design principle in the case of new shopfront design.

Ground floor units should be flexible and adaptable to respond to future changing needs of customers and help reduce the likelihood of vacant units.



Active ground floor along the High Street.



Active ground floor along the High Street.



Public space to the north of the High Street.
AECOM



Active ground floor along the High Street.

Employment

The design of large employment buildings needs to be treated with care to avoid the creation of unattractive, sterile and mono-functional environments.

Where industrial and warehouse buildings have offices or glazed areas, these should be sites on the public facing side to help to animate the street.

For similar reasons, parking and servicing should be arranged at the rear of the buildings.

Where practical, designs should allow natural light to flow into the building. This has the advantage of adding interest to the buildings elevation as well as improving internal conditions.

Large footprint employment buildings provide opportunities for photovoltaic panels, green roofs and other sustainable approaches. These should be pursued wherever possible.



CoStar UK, Cambridge.



Manufacturing facility and headquarters designed by APIC UK, Solihull, Birmingham.

2.2.4. Parking and servicing

At the time of writing, the demand for private cars remains high and they have to be carefully integrated into neighbourhoods. There is no single best approach to domestic car parking - a good mix of parking typologies should be deployed, depending on and influenced by location, topography and market demand.

Generally, arrangements for car parking should be safe and convenient and should not undermine the quality and amenity of our streets. Where possible, the predominant parking mode should be on plot, to the side or in front parking bays. In some cases, when adjoining existing development, on street parking could be considered as an option. However, it should be designed to minimise the visual impact of the car and hard surfaced areas.

On plot parking

On plot parking can be either in garages or car ports and/or on the driveway at the front or the side of the building.

As a form of parking it can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well designed soft landscaping. Boundary treatment is the key element in getting attractive results, which can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls and high quality paving materials between the private and public space.



On plot parking



On plot parking to the front



On plot parking to the side



On plot parking to the front

Garages

Garages should be designed either as free standing structures or as additional forms to the main building. In both situations, it should reflect the architectural style of the main building, looking an integral part of it rather than a mismatched unit.

Often, garages can be used as a design element to create a link between buildings, ensuring continuity of the building line. However, it should be considered that garages are not prominent elements and should be designed accordingly.



Garage parking



Garage parking



Garage parking integral to a bungalow.



Garage parking

Front parking courtyards

This parking arrangement can be appropriate for a wide range of land use and for most locations within the town. It is particularly suitable for apartments and town houses fronting busier roads where it is possible to provide direct access to individual parking spaces.

Parking courts should usually be placed at the front of the development so that they can benefit from natural surveillance and ensure a good amount of activity on the street throughout the day, but must not be allowed to fracture or detract from the street scene. As shown below, soft landscaping and planting is a common feature of successful examples.

Rear courtyards are designed to remove vehicles from the street scene and retain established building lines, but must be designed with care because there can be issues of security leading to under-occupation.



Front parking courtyard



Parking courtyard



Front parking along the High Street, Baldock.



Front parking in Poundbury, Dorset

On street parking

Consultation suggests that on street parking is not favoured by the residents of Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall. It can, however, be appropriate in places, such as more urban locations where terraced housing predominates.

Potential negative impacts on the street scene can be ameliorated by the use of recessed parking bays with planting between.

Mews-style parking

Mews-style parking can include:

- flats over garages;
- studios over garages;
- undercroft or integral parking.

Where front parking is appropriate, subtle pockets of landscaping could be provided in order to visually improve and break up areas of parking.



Island on street parking arrangement along Icknield Way, Baldock.



On street parking arrangement in Newhall.



On street parking arrangement in Newhall.



Perpendicular on street parking arrangement in Newhall, Harlow.



Parallel on street parking



On street parking arrangement in Great Kneighton.

Cycle parking

Cycling can be encouraged by providing secured covered cycle parking within all new residential developments and publicly available cycle parking at destinations.

For residential units with no garage on plot, covered and secured cycle parking should be provided within the domestic curtilage.



Cast iron cycle racks. <http://vestre.com>



Steel hot-dip galvanised cycle rack. <http://vestre.com>



Good design for on plot bicycle storage.

Servicing

With modern requirements for waste separation and recycling, the number of household bins that need to be stored has increased. It is important that these are accommodated in ways that allow convenient access, and without increasing street clutter or harming the appearance of new buildings. The pictures show some successful design solutions for accommodating bins within the plot.



Good design for waste collector storage.



Good design for waste collector storage.



Good design for waste collector storage.



Good design for waste collector camouflage.

2.2.5. Sustainability

This section introduces energy efficient technologies and strategies that could be incorporated in buildings and neighbourhoods.

Energy efficient or ecological design combines all around energy efficient construction, appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar water heating and solar electricity.

Starting from the design stage, there are strategies that can be incorporated towards passive solar heating, cooling and energy efficient landscaping which are determined by local climate and site conditions.

The aim of these interventions is to reduce overall domestic energy use and to do so as cost effectively as the circumstances allow for.

Solar roof panels

Solar panels on roofs should be designed to reduce their visual impact.

On new builds, they should be designed in from the start, forming part of the design concept. Some attractive options are solar shingles and photovoltaic slates or tiles. In this way, the solar panels can be used as a roofing material in their own right.

On retrofits:

- Analyse the proportions of the building and roof surface in order to identify the best location and sizing of panels;
- Aim to conceal wiring and other necessary installations;
- Consider introducing other tile or slate colours to integrate with the solar panel materials.



Rainwater harvesting

This refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-situ of grey water. These systems involve pipes and storage devices that could be unsightly if added without an integral vision for design. Therefore some design recommendations would be to:

- a)** Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials;
- b)** Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes;
- c)** Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems;
- d)** Use underground tanks;
- e)** Utilise water bodies for storage.



Green roofs

Green roofs improve drainage and add to biodiversity. Whether the roof is partially or completely covered with vegetation, their design should follow some design principles such as:

- a)** Plan from the start;
- b)** Easy to reach and maintain;
- c)** To complement (where applicable) the surrounding landscape;
- d)** To help integrate the building with the countryside;
- e)** Design comprehensively with other eco designs such as water harvesting and pavements.



Permeable pavements

Pavements add to the composition of the building. Thus permeable pavements should not only perform their primary function which is to let water filter through but also:

a) Respect the material palette; **b)** Help to frame the building; **c)** Create an arrival statement; **d)** Be in harmony with the landscape treatment of the property; **e)** Help define the property boundary.

Below are some examples of permeable pavements:



Wildlife friendly environment

New developments should always aim to strengthen biodiversity and the natural environment. This can be done by the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors, aligning gardens and public spaces and linking with existing ecological assets. Hedges, wild flower meadows, old trees, ponds, hard landscaping features such as rock piles, nest boxes installed at the eaves of the buildings, frog habitat corridors, dry stone walls and bug houses can all make a significant contribution to species diversity.

2.2.6. Building forms and materials

Building form, proportions, roofscape and overall appearance should be considerate towards the local character of Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall and any new addition should positively contribute to this character. Whilst local buildings materials - typically brick and wood - should be considered, responding to character should not result in pastiche replicas. Contemporary interpretations of traditional building forms can often produce attractive results that respect the wider character of a place, while suiting modern living requirements

Building scale and massing

Buildings should be sympathetic in scale to the context and should not normally exceed 3 storeys in central areas and 2-2.5 storeys in residential areas.

New development blocks should generally consist of continuous built frontage of terraced houses and semi-detached houses providing a greater sense of enclosure.

Subtle variations in height are encouraged to add visual interest; such as altering eaves and ridge heights. Another way of adding variety could be by variation of frontage widths and plan forms. This can be appropriate in both central and more suburban locations.

Local examples of 2-2.5 storey buildings:



Building detailing

Building detailing refers to a set of architectural tools that can contribute to local distinctiveness.

In the case of new development, buildings should be designed in harmony and proportion with each other and to enhance or complement the overall street character, and care should be taken on the detailed elements of building design.

Local examples reflecting positive building detailing:



Buildings turning a corner

Streets should have strong continuity of frontage not only for being visually attractive and enhancing streetscape, but also for providing high levels of natural surveillance.

Corner buildings should have both side façades animated with doors and/or windows. Exposed, blank gable end buildings with no windows fronting the public realm should be avoided.

Given their prominence, decorative architectural elements should also be considered in treating these building types.

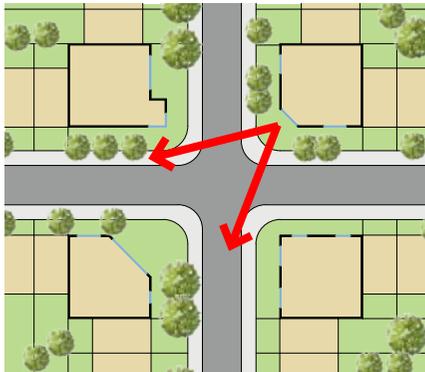


Diagram reflecting design principles for corner buildings.



Detailing on corner building.



Positive corner building treatment.



Fenestration on all façades of the building.

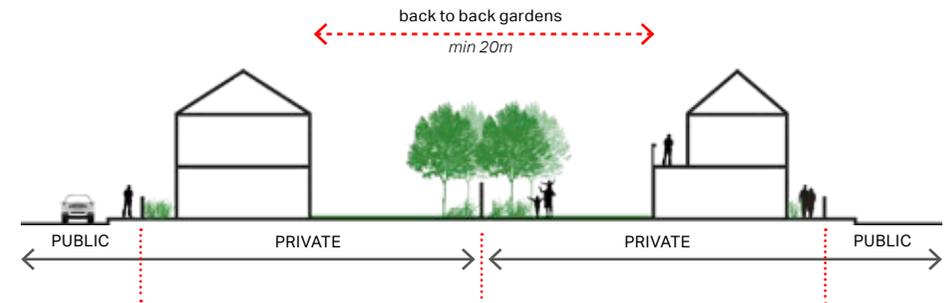
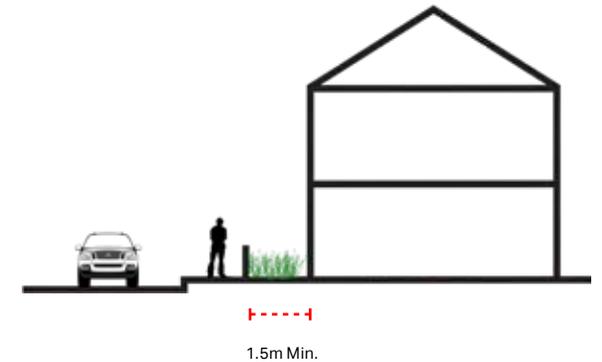
Privacy

In any new development appropriate privacy measures should be taken into account from the early design stage. Issues such as overlooking from streets, private and communal gardens, courtyards and open spaces into private property (particularly homes) should all be considered. Setback from the street, front garden landscaping and detailed architectural design should help in balancing privacy to front living spaces with the need for overlooking of the street.

It is important to clearly distinguish between private and public space. Clear ownership boundaries should be established so that spaces feel safe and are appropriate for the right user group to use.

Setting private-public boundaries:

- landscape barriers using hedging, boundary fences, small walls or setbacks,
- minimum front garden should be 1.5 metres deep.



Roof line

Creating a good variety in the roof line is a significant element of designing attractive places. There are certain elements that serve as guidelines in achieving a good variety of roofs:

- Scale of the roof should always be in proportion with the dimensions of the building itself;
- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, with subtle changes in roof line being promoted during the design process;
- Local traditional roof detailing elements should be considered and implemented where possible.
- Dormers can be used as design element to add variety and interest to roofs.



Materials and architectural details

It is important that the materials used in new developments are of a high quality and reinforce the local distinctiveness of Baldock and the villages.

Development proposals should demonstrate that the palette of materials has been selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment.

It should be noted that these materials are not prescriptive and there is opportunity for innovative and creative material suggestions in new buildings, restorations and extensions that may compliment what already exists. However, when buildings are designed, local heritage of building materials should be taken into consideration.

Materials proposed for use in new development and building extensions should match or be guided by those used in existing buildings or the area and subtle variations by street. (Images on pages 40-43 show typical palettes of traditional bricks, wood, rendering, windows, doors, paving and cornicing).

Architectural detailing shall typically display elements that equate to those on existing traditional buildings which provide interest, scale and texture to form and elevations.



ARCHITECTURAL



Double casement window



Wooden sash window



Window proportions along main facade, white rendering



Window detail with masonry work around the frame



Bow window over passage



Variety of paving materials design (stone and granite)



Sage paint on front door



Gabled dormer



Red brick



Corner building treatment



Front garden with positive boundary treatment



17th Century terraced Almshouses with strong character and high level of architectural detailing.

DETAILS



Coaching arches



Dark green paint on front doors



Front garden with positive boundary treatment



Half timber building



Well kept flower beds and green spaces



Chimney detail in half timber building



Variety in roofline and buing line



Quality surface treatment in two grey granite shades



BLACK TIMBER CLADDING



CONICAL ROOF



DECORATED ROOF GABLE



RED BRICKS



QUOINS



HALF TIMBER/ BAY WINDOW



ARLESEY WHITE BRICKS



DOUBLE PORCH



WOODEN PORCH



PERMEABLE PAVEMENT FOR PARKING



ACTIVE CORNER BUILDING DETAILING



FOOTPATH WITH LIGHTING



FRONT GREEN SPACE



SOLAR PANELS



HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC REALM



WELL KEPT FRONT GARDEN



BAY WINDOW



SKYLIGHT





Urban Extensions

03

3. Urban Extensions

This chapter includes guidance that is specific to the Urban Extension sites identified in the Local Plan. It will also be relevant to any other large sites that may emerge on the edge of the town, although this is not expected to happen in this plan period.

3.1. The sites

Urban Extensions

BA1 Land at North of Baldock

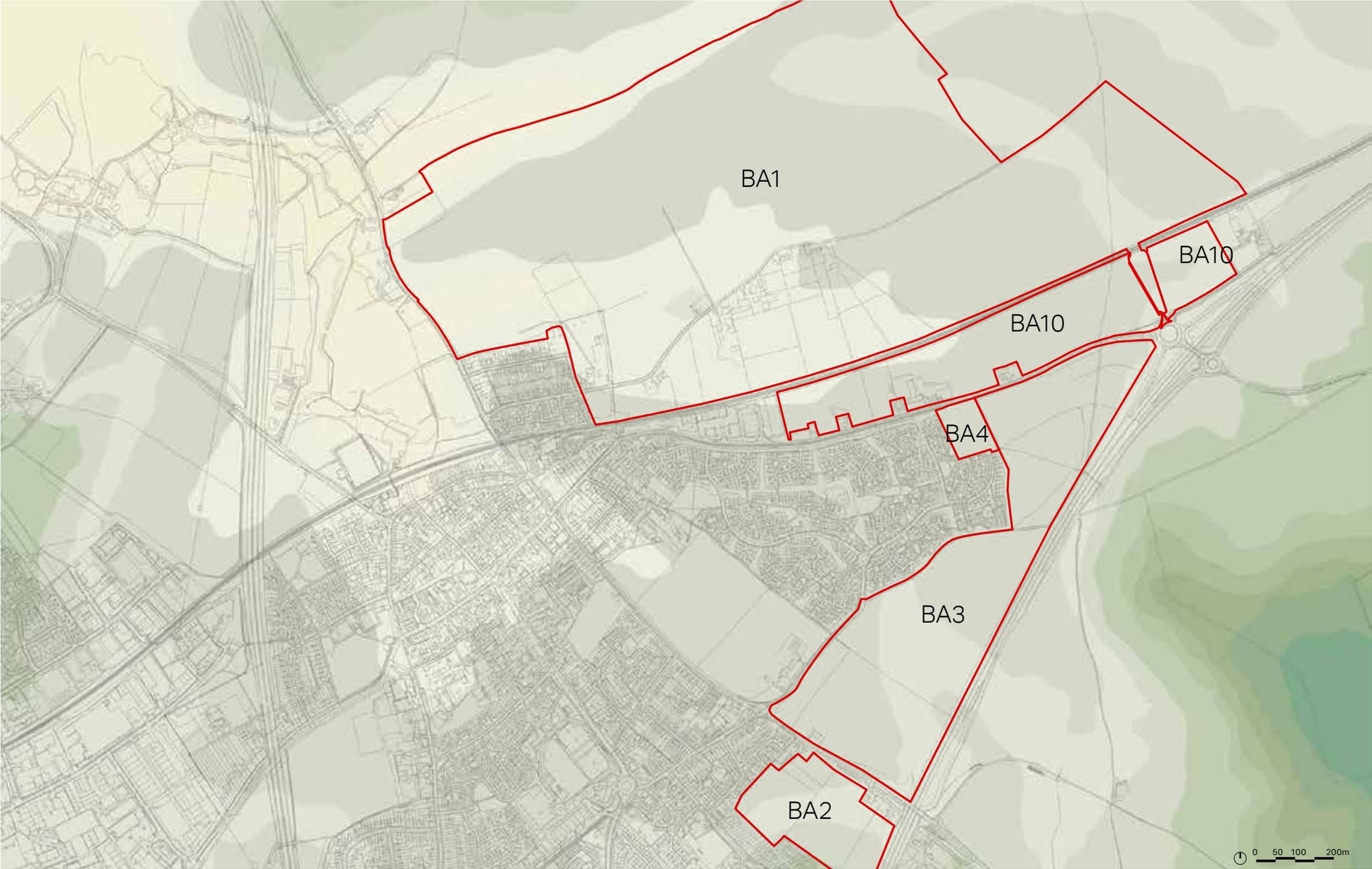
BA2 Land at west of Clothall Road

BA3 Land at south of Clothall Common

BA4 Land at east of Clothall Common

BA10 Royston Road (designated for employment)





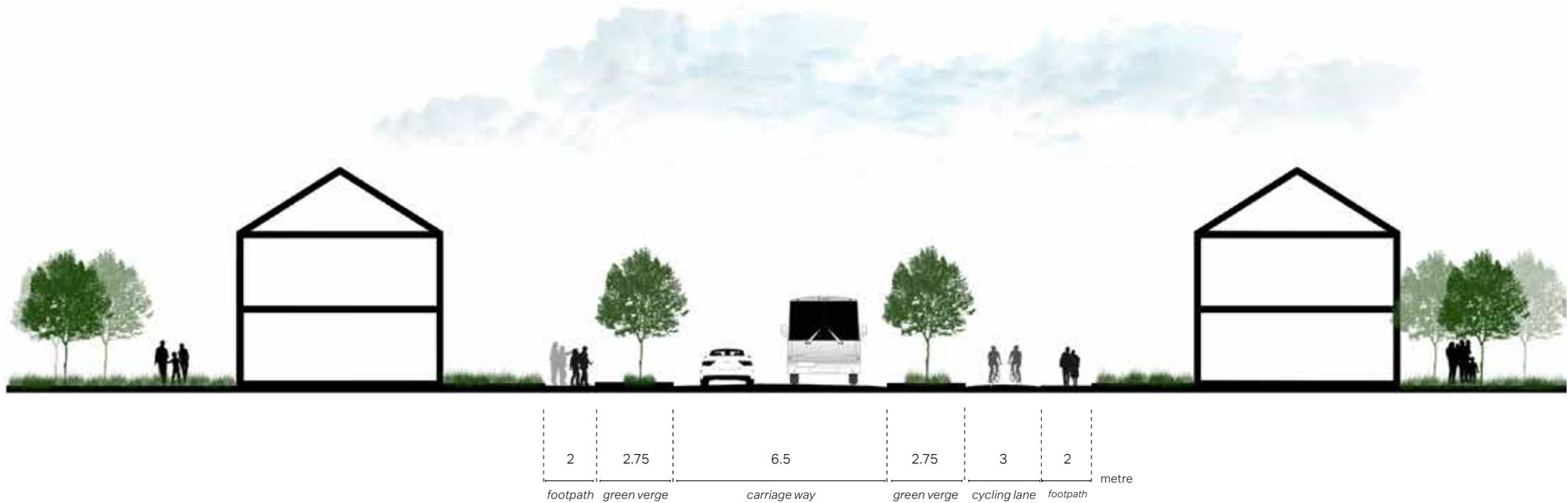
3.2. Streets

The movement network should have a clear hierarchy of streets that lead directly between homes and public transport, shops, parks, schools or any other local facilities. Streets should be designed and generously proportioned whilst providing an attractive setting for new homes. They should be fronted by development to provide overlooking and activity at street level.

Streets are public spaces that serve many functions. They are not only movement corridors for vehicles, but they serve as spaces where people walk, cycle, play and integrate at a social level. As such streets should not be led by engineering solutions or dominated by vehicle movement but instead there should be a strong emphasis on place-making and pedestrian movement.

This section presents design expectations for three street types.





The boulevard

The Boulevard is what we call the main spine through the area. It therefore needs to accommodate relatively high levels of all types of traffic, but like a traditional high street needs to be truly multi-functional - so much more than just a highway.

Along the Boulevard there should be:

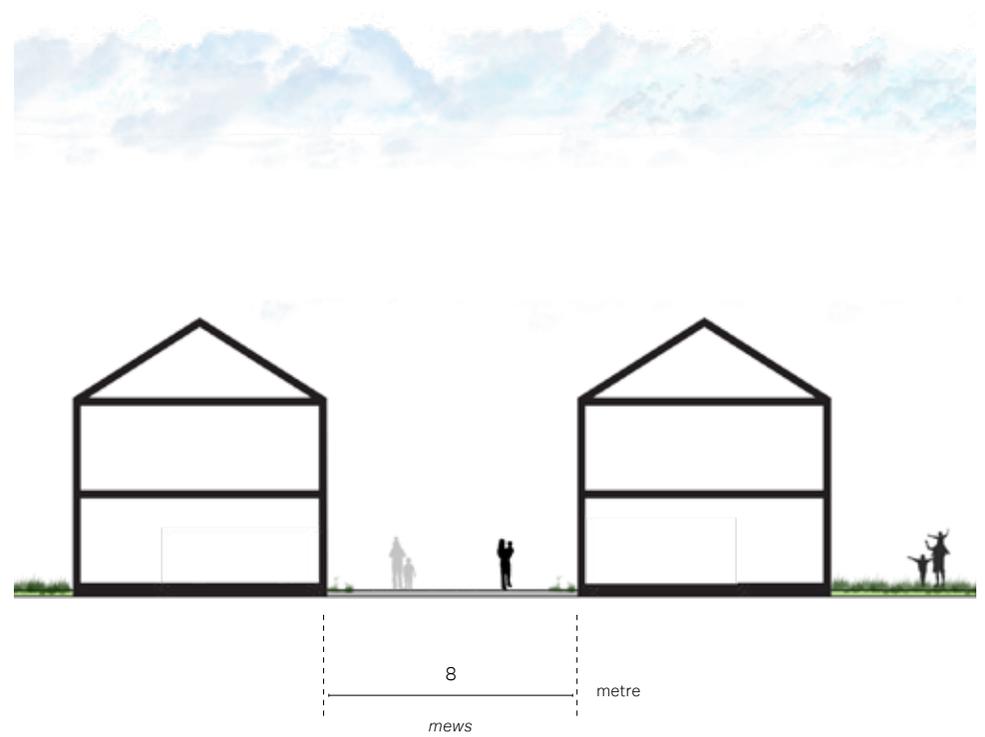
- A dedicated cycle lane, separated from motor vehicles and pedestrians, part of a network that includes cycle-only routes through greenways;
- Dedicated pedestrian footways;
- One lane of traffic each way, which will also serve public transport;
- Verges including trees to provide shade and character.





Residential streets

Standard residential streets should be well connected with local centres, schools and facilities whilst ensuring good legibility along their routes. The width shown in the diagram above is adequate to allow a car and lorry to pass one another.



Mews

In mews streets, it should be clear that priority is given to pedestrian movement, with a design speed of 5-10mph. Designers should consider shared surface treatments and a different surface from the other streets.

A narrow 'semi-private' space can act as a front garden with low vegetation to soften the streetscape.

3.3. Edges

The urban extensions will be new neighbourhoods of Baldock. They may be distinct from the existing town, as waves of development have been throughout the centuries, but they will need to gel coherently. In the case of BA1, the relationship with Bygrave also needs to be handled very sensitively.

As shown in the plan below, there are three types of edge:

- With open countryside or other green space, including the sensitive semi-rural condition of the Ivel Springs Nature Reserve;
- With existing residential areas; and
- With the busy bypass/A505.

There are some general guidelines that should be considered in each case:

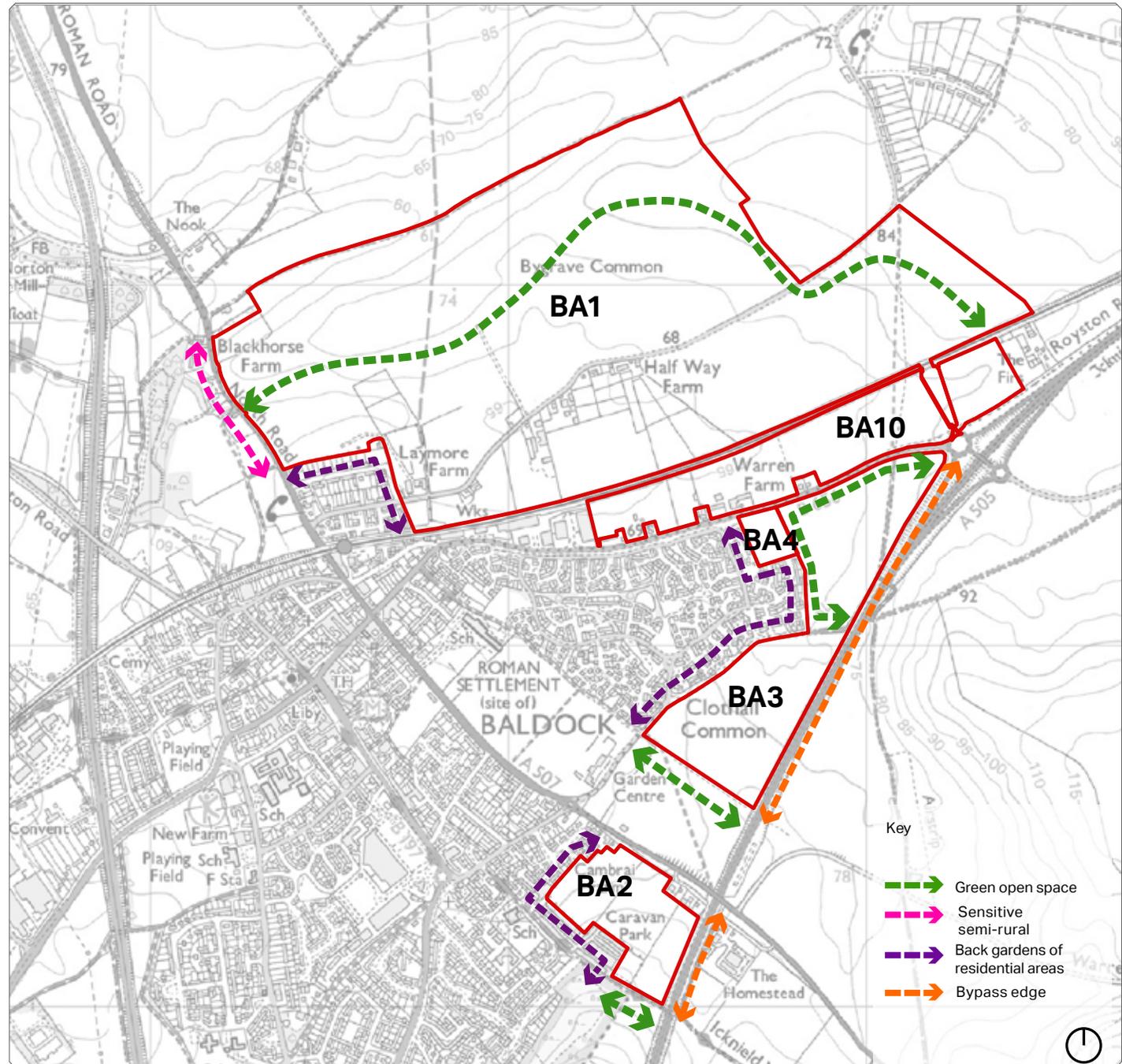
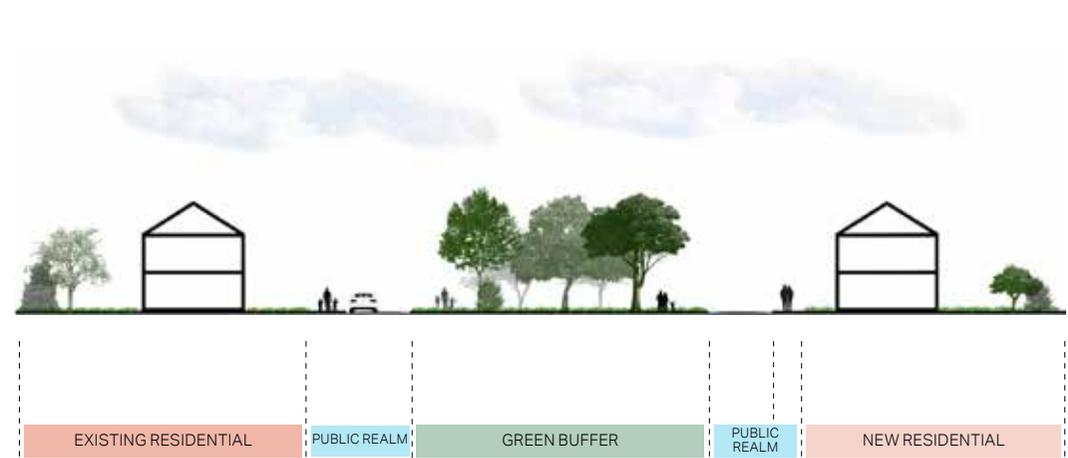
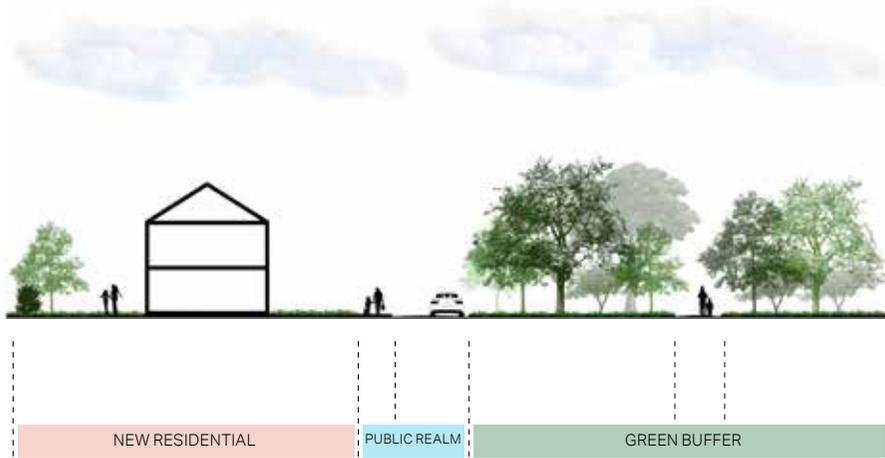


Diagram reflecting boundary lines along the edges of the Urban Extension sites in Baldock.

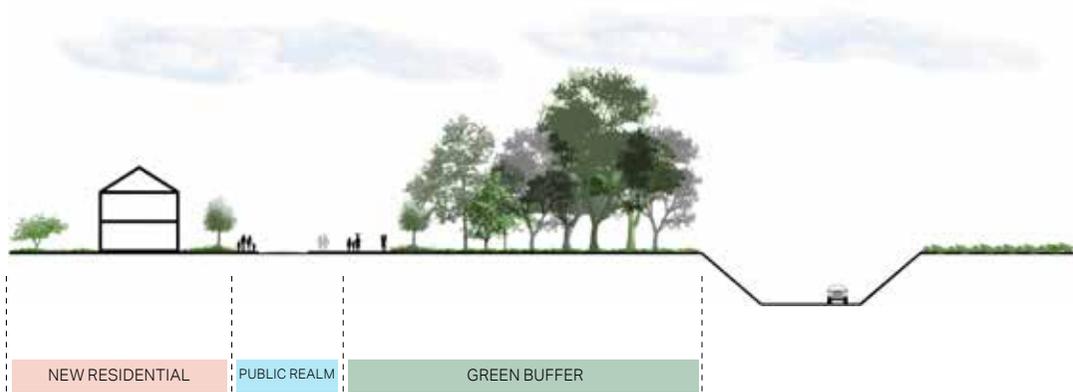


Edges facing green open space

- Back fences should not border the countryside -in order to avoid a harsh and unattractive edge to new development.
- New development should provide a positive edge which has a clear and well defined external image;
- Frontages should have strong architectural forms and careful detailing, in view of their prominence;
- Planting should be used to soften the mass of the built form. For example, a 'semi-natural' strip of planting of around 50 metres would be adequate for 2 rows of trees with a woodland footpath between;
- Any development fronting North Road, adjacent to the Ivel Springs Nature Reserve, will need to be treated particularly sensitively. It may be appropriate for homes to overlook the reserve but the transition from urban to rural will need to be gradual and green.

Edges facing existing residential areas

- New buildings should be no higher than existing (in 2018) homes where they are adjacent. This will be particularly relevant for Salisbury Road and Walnut Avenue, amongst others;
- Green buffers can be a satisfactory transition between old and new neighbourhoods. This could take the form of a 'semi-natural' woodland strip, as above, or more formal open space like playing fields, including those belonging to schools.
- However, the urban extensions are planned to be part of and not separate from Baldock, so it may be appropriate for the back gardens of new homes to back onto existing ones. In these cases, there should be a minimum distance of 20 metres between the back wall of dwellings;
- Bygrave needs to be recognised as a separate community with its own character. A field left undeveloped between the village and the edge of BA1 would help to maintain this character and avoid it being subsumed into Baldock.



Edges facing the bypass

- The impact of traffic noise will need to be addressed in development proposals, ensuring there will be not be an observed adverse effect after mitigation;
- Site promoters will be expected to provide suitable noise mitigation, which could include, for example, barriers, bunds, planting or non-residential buildings;
- The edge should be softened with planting, avoiding a harsh fence, given that this edge will be so prominent.





Regeneration Sites

04



4. Regeneration Sites

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides illustrations of how the two regeneration sites identified in the Local Plan might be designed. The Local Plan estimates a capacity of 26 new homes on site BA6 and 20 on BA11, both of which are 'brownfield' sites in the built up area of Baldock.

The following pages summarise opportunities and constraints for each site and provide illustrative design layouts.

The design exercises are based on the following assumptions:

- The sites will be developed for housing and will achieve the capacities suggested in the Local Plan;
- Predominantly 2 and 3 bedroom homes, which takes account of the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment but increases the average proportion of smaller homes because of the tight urban sites;
- Parking at or close to the minimum level in the North Hertfordshire Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document, at 2 spaces per dwelling (1 space per 1-bed flat).



Diagram highlighting the location for the regeneration sites from the Local Plan.

4.2. BA6: Land at Ickniel Way

4.2.1. Opportunities and constraints

The BA6 regeneration site is located between Ickniel Way and the railway, with housing to the east and employment and housing to the west. The site is currently in employment use, although largely vacant.

Along the northern edge of site, mature trees provide a buffer to the railway, which is on an embankment.

A public footpath runs past the site's western edge, running to a pedestrian tunnel under the railway.

The building line along the north side of Ickniel Way is broadly continuous. To the south, there are setbacks, resulting in a more fragmented building line.

There is a number of listed buildings and some locally important buildings in close proximity.



Diagram showing opportunities and constraints for the BA6 regeneration site.

4.2.2. Illustrative plan

Layout

The layout sets out to give a possible solution in achieving a satisfactory proportion between built up space, private garden and parking space.

The illustrative masterplan suggests that the preferred building typology should have a good mix between terraced and semi-detached houses and that the building height should be limited to 2 and 2.5 storey.

Also, there should be a mix of parking arrangements, again to optimise the ratio between open space and parking space. Therefore, modes of suggested parking include: on plot, garage, on street (in line with the approach along Icknield Way) and front parking courts.

The following pages provide more information on:

- scale and massing,
- building line and boundary treatment
- materials and surface treatment,
- car parking.



Scale and massing

The total amount of units this scheme proposes is 27. A breakdown of the residential unit sizes consists of:

- 7 three bedroom houses;
- 19 two bedroom houses; and
- 1 two bedroom flat.

Throughout the development it is suggested that buildings should not pass the two and a half storey height and the access should be aligned toward the main street or court that the building frontage faces.



Contemporary residential development preserving local character along the B656.



Two storey terraced houses along Icknield Way.



Two storey residential development along Park Street.



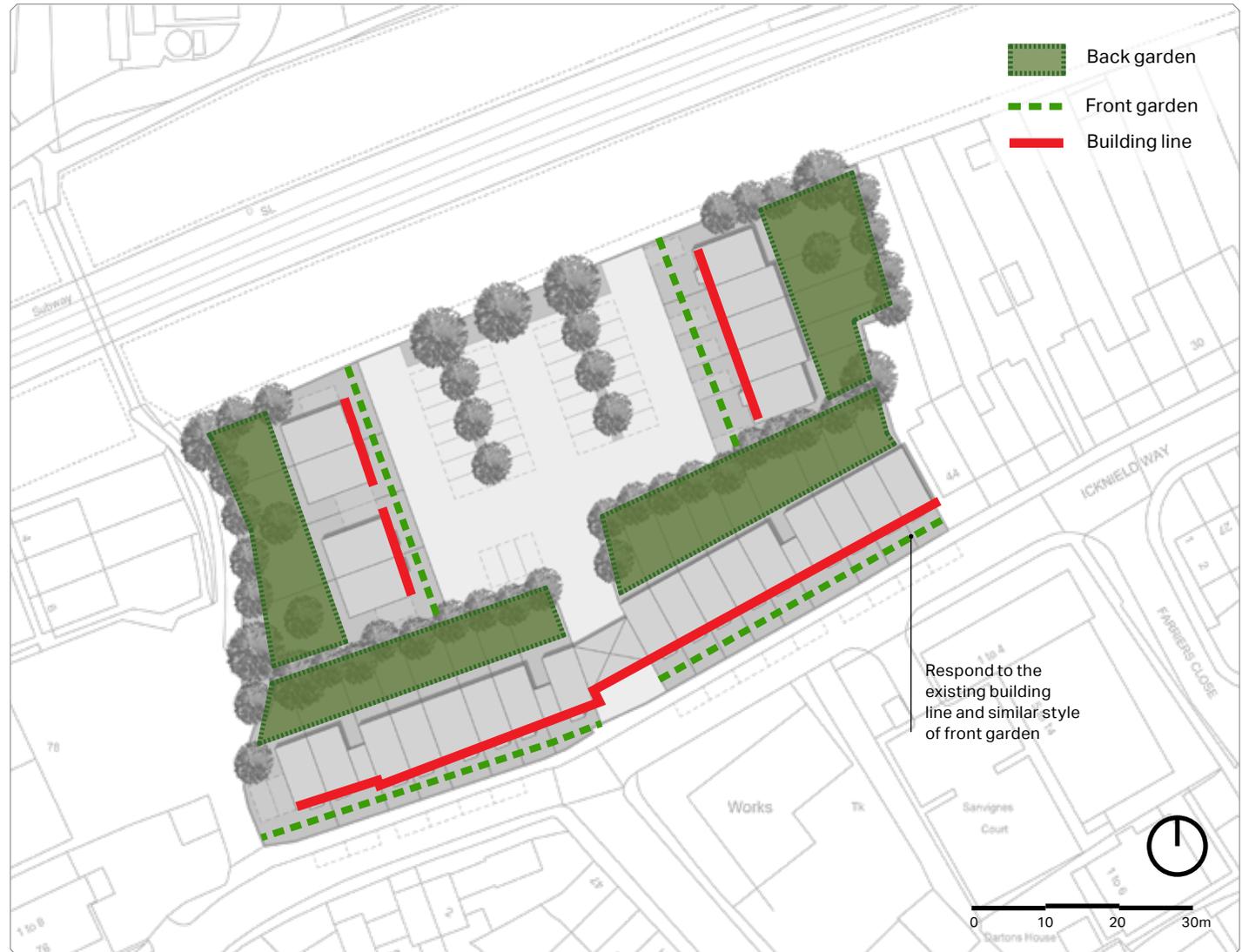
Contemporary family house off Church Street.



Building line and boundary treatment

The proposed scheme responds to the existing building line to the east. The locally distinct building element of the coaching arch is suggested to be used to facilitate connection of the inner part of the site to Icknield Way.

Local examples of good quality boundary treatment and well kept front gardens:



Materials and surface treatments

High quality building and surface materials should be used across the new development. Care should be taken when selecting the materials that will be used for the paved areas. High quality stone, gravel, granite and bricks can provide durable and attractive hard surfaces throughout the public realm.

More expensive materials such as sandstone and limestone could also be used to enhance further the quality of particular spaces. The inner court is suggested to be treated as more significant when it comes to the design of public realm for this scheme.



Pedestrian footpath in new residential development, Baldock.



Quality surface treatment for residential street, Baldock.



Residential development with front garden, Baldock.



Boundary treatment of buildings facing straight onto the street, Baldock.

Newhall, Harlow
Good design and high quality materials & surface treatment in new residential developments.



Car parking

The scheme proposes four different parking arrangements:

- parking court - 31 parking spaces;
- garage parking- 3 parking spaces;
- parking on the street- 15 parking spaces; and
- on plot parking- 11 parking spaces.

The total amount of parking spaces within the development boundary including on street parking is 60.



On plot parking, Baldock



On street parking, Baldock



Parking court, Baldock



Garage parking, Baldock



4.3. BA11: Land at Deans Yard

4.3.1. Opportunities and Constraints

The site is located at the junction of Clothall Road and South Road.

Within the site there is a locally important building, a house which is recorded in the Neighbourhood Plan as an architectural asset. It is a detached, two storey building, facing towards South Road.

The rest of the buildings on the developabale site are architecturally not significant; they are mainly smaller industrial buildings that serve as garages or storage.

The area to the north of the site, on the opposite side of Clothall Road, is open land forming part of the Walls Field Scheduled Monument.

The area south of Clothall Road is an almost entirely built up residential area. There is an even distribution between terraced and semi-detached houses with on site or on street parking. There is a robust building line along local streets that contributes to a clearly defined streetscape and good legibility.



Diagram showing opportunities and constraints for the BA11 regeneration site.

4.3.2. Illustrative plan

Layout

The layout of small houses is conceived to front the streets of Clothall Road and South Road, with parking primarily within the block. The historic house on the corner is retained and provides a lead for the height of the new buildings.

The following pages summarise an approach to:

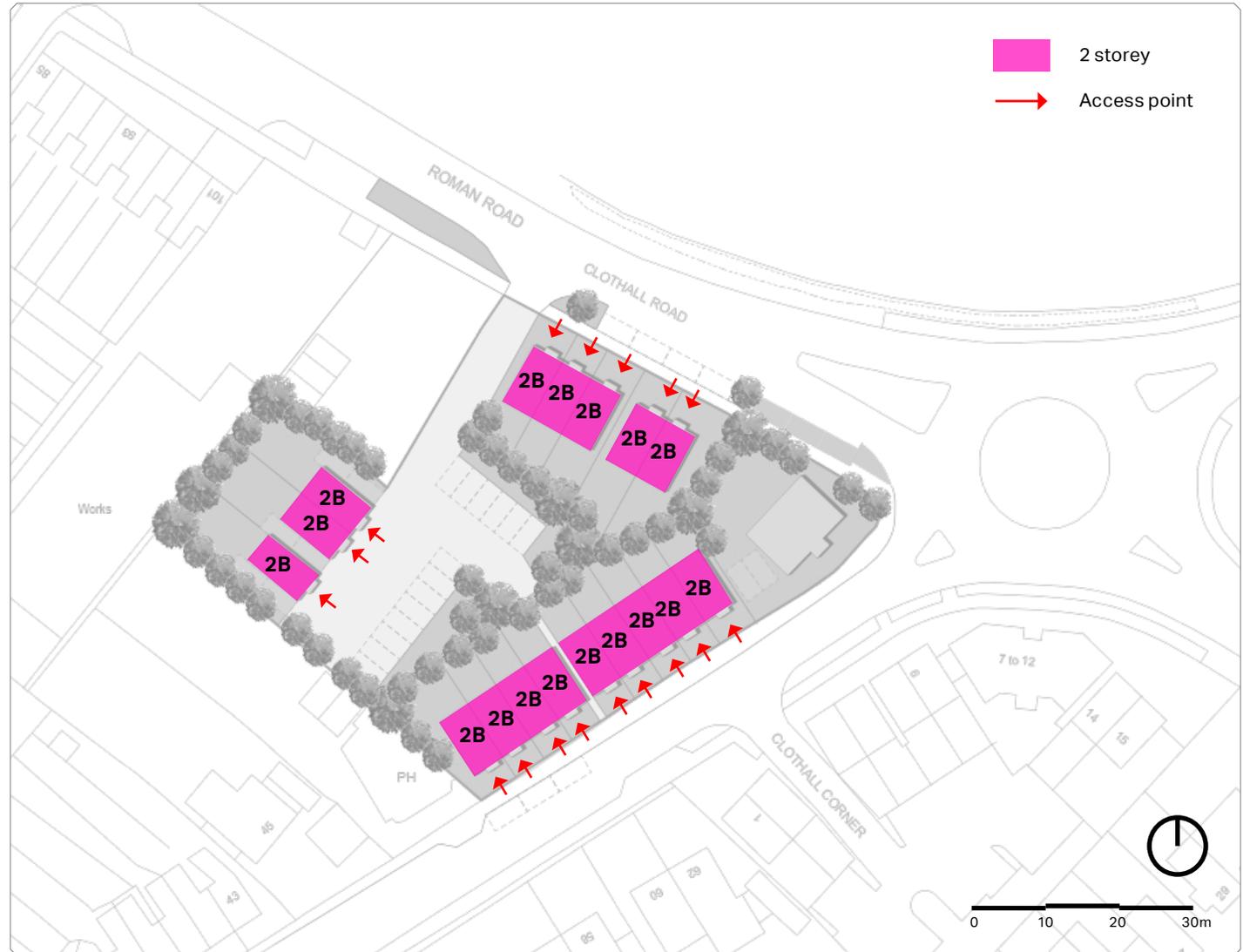
- scale and massing;
- building line and boundary treatment;
- materials and surface treatment; and
- car parking.



Scale and massing

The illustrative scheme comprises 17 2 bedroom houses. It is suggested that the buildings should not exceed two storeys in height, and the access should be aligned toward the main street or court that the building frontage faces.

Local good examples of two storey houses:



Building line and boundary treatment

Buildings facing Clothall Road and South Road would define a robust building line as sets of terraced and semi-detached houses. All houses facing these two roads should have small front gardens and not have designated parking spaces on plot.

The inner part of the development should consist of semi-detached and/or detached houses facing onto the courtyard, which is suggested to feature a high quality shared surface and landscape treatment. The parking court placed inside the block should be an integral part of the design scheme and should provide high quality semi-private space.



Local examples of good quality boundary treatment and well kept front gardens.



Materials and surface treatments

Whilst the primary purpose of the courtyard will be parking, high quality building and surface materials should be used to maximise amenity.

The design and location of street furniture should consider the character of the new development and should ensure that they do not impede movement.

Newhall

Good design and high quality materials and surface treatment in new residential developments.



Pedestrian footpath in Baldock.



Quality surface treatment for residential street, Baldock.



Residential development with front garden, Baldock.



Boundary treatment of buildings facing straight onto the street, Baldock.



Car parking

The scheme proposes three parking approaches:

- parking court - 14 parking spaces;
- parking on the street, in recessed bays- 7 parking spaces; and
- on plot parking- 6 parking space.

The total amount of parking spaces within the development boundary is 27.



On plot parking, Baldock



On street parking, Baldock



Parking court, Baldock



4.3.3. Illustrative plan - larger site

Enlarging the site to incorporate an adjacent garage site would allow for a further three homes and better overlooking of the parking courtyard from house frontages.



4.3.4. Car parking

This larger scheme proposes three parking approaches:

- parking court - 18 parking spaces;
- parking on the street- 6 parking spaces; and
- on plot parking- 11 parking space.

The total amount of parking spaces within the development boundary is 35.



On plot parking, Baldock



On street parking, Baldock



Parking court, Baldock



On street parking, Baldock





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Delivery

05



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5. Delivery

5.1. Delivery Agents

The Design Guidelines will be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality development in Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall on the sites that the Local Plan is allocating. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table below:

ACTOR	HOW THEY WILL USE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES
Applicants, developers and landowners	<p>As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.</p> <p>Where planning applications require a Design and Access Statement, the Statement should explain how the Design Guidelines have been followed.</p>
Local Planning Authority	<p>As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.</p> <p>The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.</p>
Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Planning Group	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are followed.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

5.2. Deliverability

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35) emphasises that a proportionate evidence base should inform plans. Based on 'positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings' (see paragraph 15). Policies should be: 'underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals' (paragraph 31). Crucially planning policies 'should not undermine the deliverability of the plan' (paragraph 34).

The Planning Practice Guidance is clear that viability must be considered when preparing Neighbourhood Plans. This can be achieved utilising existing available evidence. North Hertfordshire District Council's Local Plan viability study found that the values in the district: 'typically support a good level of development viability, accepting that there will always be some more challenging scenarios in any area. This means that in our view we consider the Local Plan policies capable of meeting the requirements of NPPF...the cumulative impact of which are unlikely to undermine viability.'

Neighbourhood Plans need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the corresponding Local Plan. Where new policy requirements are introduced (that carry costs to development) over and above Local Plan and national standards it is necessary to assess whether development will remain deliverable. The principles and guidance set out in this document and within the Neighbourhood Plan's policies are aligned with national policy and non-statutory best practice on design.

The values and costs of construction between new developments and within new developments will vary based on location, situation, product type, design (architecture, placemaking etc.) and finish, and the state of the market at the point of marketing the properties. The guidelines herein constitute place making principles and guidance in order to help interpret and apply the statutory policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. Good design is not an additional cost to development and good placemaking can result in uplifts in value.

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