

Dear members

After a lot of work over the past few months, we've put together a first draft of what we think the neighbourhood plan could contain.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan reflects a number of things:

- first, what we've heard from yourselves and the wider community about the issues that are important to address, if Baldock grows in the way being proposed by the District and County Councils.
- we also looked in detail at all the research that has already been done on Baldock, to see what that tells us about things like the local environment, the adequacy of open space and local roads.
- finally, we looked at what the emerging Local Plan (which is being produced by the District Council) already says about these issues, to identify where the Neighbourhood Plan can usefully add to it.

It's worth remembering that the Neighbourhood Plan can't block what's being proposed by the District Council, but it is a tool that can help to make the most of whatever development does take place. The policies in the neighbourhood plan also have to be confined to things that can be dealt with through the planning system. Where, however, there are wider ambitions for the new development (such as incorporating some 'green' features in buildings) we will set these out in an annex to the plan. This is something that has yet to be drafted.

What you see here is the 'bare bones' of the plan - it will need to be presented in a more attractive way (with maps etc) and say more about how it has been produced. However we wanted to let you all have an early look at this work in progress.

We will need to consult properly on the draft plan in the autumn, so we're not asking for lots of detailed comments at this stage, but if you do have any views on the overall structure and content - or if you think we've got something wrong or a key thing is missing - then do let us know by replying to this address by 7th September.

In addition we can report that the consultants working for us are making progress in producing some design principles to guide new development. We hope to hold an event to tell you more about this early in the autumn, so watch this space!

Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group Committee

(also see the Summary of the Plan)

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