

Dear Members

It has been a while since we provided an update on the planning process for Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall. There are now some updates you may be interested in.

Local Plan for North Hertfordshire

Some of you will be aware that the examination of the Local Plan had been due to reconvene starting on 28th September to deal with a limited number of issues where the Inspector felt that further information was needed. This has now been postponed. Details can be found on the NHDC website:

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-examination> .

The Local Plan is not expected to be finalised until late summer next year.

Neighbourhood Plan for Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall

The draft neighbourhood plan was submitted to NHDC on 18th December 2019 and was accepted by the Cabinet on 28th January 2020. Consultation on this 'submission version' took place from 12th February through to 25th March 2020. NHDC have published the relevant documents on their website:

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/baldock-bygrave-and-clothall-neighbourhood-plan>

An independent examiner was appointed by the District Council to review the document and he has now completed his report. While he has endorsed the vast majority of the plan, he has also recommended a few changes. Unfortunately, some of these recommendations are not considered to be appropriate by ourselves or the District Council's officers. NHDC has agreed to work with us to make suitable amendments to the plan, and where these depart from the examiner's findings these will need to be subject to further consultation. This was considered cabinet during their meeting on Tuesday 15th September 2020. Details of the inspector's report and the cabinet conclusion can be found at item 46 in the cabinet minutes.

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2403&Ver=4>

It is expected that the consultation will be able to take place during the autumn, following which a final version of the plan will be put to a local referendum, hopefully in the spring (as a result of the current COVID restrictions, all referendums of neighbourhood plans have been put on hold by the Government until May 2021).

Plans for the North of Baldock Site

In the meantime, Hertfordshire County Council are advertising for a new development partner to work with it in preparing new proposals for the land which it holds around Baldock, and which is proposed for development in the Local Plan. The master developer will be expected to evolve the previous master plan that had been prepared by the council, so this could mean significant changes to the detailed proposals which HCC had put forward previously.

The committee hope to have the Neighbourhood Plan adopted by the time the new Local Plan is in place and any planning applications made by HCC are ready to be decided, to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan has maximum influence over the development proposals.

The Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Planning Group Committee

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