

Bygrave Parish Council

Introduction

Bygrave Parish Council (BPC) has carefully considered the submitted application and wishes to confirm its **strong objection** to the current proposals, particularly in relation to **transportation**, **green space**, and the **lack of clarity** concerning the phasing.

BPC acknowledges the allocations within the current Local Plan for the expansion of Baldock to the north-east, including allocations BA1, BA2, BA3, and BA10. BPC recognises the significance of these allocations and accepts that development of these sites is likely to proceed in one form or another.

Accordingly, the objections set out below do not relate to the principle of development, but to the details and implications of the submitted application and their impact on residents of Bygrave and neighbouring villages to the north-east of Baldock.

BPC is disappointed that, despite its proactive engagement in pre-application discussions with the developer, the submitted proposal fails to address our genuine planning concerns, particularly those relating to transportation and amenity impacts.

1. Transportation

BPC considers that the transportation strategy proposed is based on unrealistic and unachievable assumptions. As such, its conclusions cannot be considered reliable, but we set out our key observations below:

- The fact that the proposed transport and traffic interventions have not been tested using the County Council's transport model is a major concern. Without robust and detailed modelling work being undertaken, there can be no confidence in the assumptions being adopted or in the effectiveness of the proposed interventions. Consequently, the transportation strategy cannot be relied upon. We have set out our more detailed comments on the transport modelling work in our note entitled "Baldock Expansion Committee – BPC Comments on the Transport Plan and associated Modelling Work".
- The proposed changes will adversely affect the ability of Bygrave residents to access services and facilities in Baldock. The severance of existing routes, without viable alternatives, will force longer and more convoluted journeys into the town.
- Access to Baldock and its railway station will become more difficult for residents of Bygrave and other villages to the north-east who currently use Bygrave Road. In addition, there would be a risk of congestion at peak times where Ashwell Road meets the road cutting through the development from the A507 to the A505.
- The proposed Bygrave/Ashwell Road to A505 link, combined with the reduced accessibility to Baldock, is likely to substantially increase traffic along the Ashwell Road, as residents of Ashwell and other surrounding villages would be expected to utilise this route to the A505 so as to avoid the existing dangerous junctions at Odsey and Slip End. In short, the road through Bygrave would become a "rat run". Furthermore, the link would undoubtedly encourage many Bygrave residents to commute via Stevenage Railway Station rather than Baldock or Ashwell. This would

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increase car use, directly contradicting the stated aims of the Transport Assessment (TA), which is to reduce reliance on private vehicles.

- The creation of a new road linking the A1(M) to the A505 via the A507 will inevitably attract through-traffic seeking a shorter route. The existing journey via the Junction 9 roundabout is approximately 10 km, whereas the route through the proposed development would be around 3 km. This substantial reduction in distance would draw increasing volumes of traffic until the new road reaches its effective capacity, resulting in significant delays within the internal road network of the development. The convoluted internal route of the new road through the development will inevitably lead to increased congestion and poorer living conditions for residents along its route.
- The apparent strategy of introducing “choke points” on the A507 to disperse traffic assumes the existence of convenient alternative viable routes, which do not exist.

In the interests of traffic flow along the A507 within Baldock, and to safeguard residential amenity within BA1 and Bygrave, it is strongly suggested that an alternative approach to the transport strategy be explored.

2. Green Space

The proposed Eastern Park playing fields are too close to Lower Bygrave, raising legitimate concerns about noise, lighting, and disturbance.

- The planned pavilion, to be located at the top (Bygrave) end of the fields, would inevitably be used for evening functions, leading to light pollution and noise intrusion. Its current positioning would have a significant adverse impact on the visual and acoustic amenity of Lower Bygrave residents, particularly in what is otherwise a quiet, rural area.
- In addition, organised team sporting events will bring increased traffic from players and spectators, generating congestion, noise, parked cars and frequent vehicle movements. On busy match days such as Sundays the edge of Bygrave would become a crowded, traffic-dominated zone, entirely at odds with the character of the local countryside.

BPC believes there should be a clear green buffer and natural screening (for example, trees and hedgerows) between Baldock and Bygrave. This would create a visual transition between the urban character of BA1 (as part of Baldock) and the rural identity of Bygrave.

3. Phasing and Infrastructure

The development will clearly be delivered over a long period and is therefore phased. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding the timing and trigger points for key infrastructure, which must be supported by robust and realistic modelling rather than vision-based projections.

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The prolonged construction period, especially during initial phases, raises concerns about traffic and environmental impacts. The submission and accompanying modelling do not adequately explain how the site will function phase by phase, or what the traffic implications will be during the years before the road bridge and other key elements are completed.

There is also insufficient clarity regarding education provision, particularly for secondary school options. This is a major driver of transport flows, and long-term modelling must account for these effects.

BPC requests that Bygrave Common, at the northern edge of the development, be landscaped at an early stage to provide tangible benefits for Bygrave residents. Given the long timescales required for trees and vegetation to mature, early implementation is essential. As the landscaping area is not designated for other uses within the development, there appears to be no reason why this could not proceed early in the phasing.

4. Other Requests and Clarifications

- The proposed circular bus route within the BA1 site does not extend to Bygrave, providing no public transport benefit for village residents. Can this route be extended to offer sustainable, reliable and regular access between Bygrave and Baldock?
 - BPC requests a financial contribution (via S106) towards the provision of a parish hall for Bygrave.
 - Clarification is needed on the nature of the waste transfer station proposed within BA10, particularly regarding the purpose and justification for the 15-metre stack shown in plans.
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Closing Comments

Bygrave Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to discuss these objections directly with the case officer, including the issues raised, the questions posed, and the request for a Section 106 contribution towards a new parish hall.

Should modifications be made to the application, BPC reserves the right to submit additional comments or objections as information becomes available.

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28 November 2025