



**Hertfordshire &
North Middlesex**

13 Dirty Lane, London SE1 9PA

hnmramblers.org.uk

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Planning Office
North Herts Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6DW

33 Sale Drive
Baldock
Herts
SG7 6NS

17 April 2026

Dear Mr Greaves

25/02571/OP: BALDOCK –AMENDED PLANS

I am responding in my capacity as Ramblers Footpath Secretary for Baldock, Weston and Clothall parishes; I regularly walk in these parishes and also the parishes of Bygrave and Radwell. Ramblers is a national charity which works to protect the countryside and to safeguard and enhance the places where people walk. We believe it is important for any developments in the countryside to be located and designed in a way that protects and enhances precious landscapes, improves access to the outdoors, works with nature, and supports local communities and sustainable development.

These comments are made in respect of the new documents added in February/ March 2026 to update the plan and are therefore in addition to my earlier response made in November 2025.

The ES Addendum Non-Technical para 2.2 refers to additional crossing and links on North Road. It is essential a good quality foot and cycle path extends as far as Norton Mill Lane and there is a lights crossing installed. It is difficult to understand the planned facilities from the parameter plan I would reiterate points made previously, which have also been made by the British Horse Society, that paths etc within the proposed development and that link the area to the wider Rights of way network and other routes for walkers, cyclists and equestrians are designated Public Rights of Way rather than permissive or other forms of route. An example is the Kingfisher Way within Ivel Springs, the section joining Norton Mill Lane is not currently a Right of Way.

The new document “Green Infrastructure Strategy” makes general references to local greenways and walking routes in section 5.8 but says nothing about ensuring good quality and safe links to these routes, nor does it refer to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This is an omission that needs to be rectified, along with some specific plans to action some improvements. I would be happy to meet and discuss these issues and make clear suggestions.

Without further changes that undertake to deliver better paths and safe links to wider networks, I consider the plans are not fully compliant with the NPPF or Hertfordshire County Council’s Green Plan.

Para 105 of the 2024 NPPF states that “planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including national trails”. This surely means developers and local authorities adopting a positive and delivery-focussed approach to enhancement, rather than the passive approach taken by Urban and Civic in their response to points made by Ramblers in 2025; they say “in terms of other routes suggested, the proposed development is not reliant on these routes for mode shift, nor is it likely to generate a significant increase in trips along these routes”. People are unlikely to attempt to change their travel habits if they cannot use a safe and preferably pleasant way to do so. This is recognised in para 109 of the NPPF which requires “a vision led approach to transport solutions....this should involve identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling etc...” Para 111 states planning policies should provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks, (which surely means improving the connections between paths and trails such as the Icknield Way and not simply focussing on the curtilage of the development plan and its immediate area) and mentions drawing on local walking and cycling infrastructure plans.

Hertfordshire County Council’s Local Transport Plan (LTP4 2018-31) section on Active Travel supports the implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan/ LCWIP.

A would make a final point regarding the Bygrave rail crossing mentioned in the Network rail submission. I assume Bygrave footpath 015 will end up being diverted to cross the railway at the proposed new bridge. As the routes are close together, this would seem acceptable provided the diverted section is short and there is an adequate footway on the rail crossing.

Yours faithfully

Roger Tester