

Growing Baldock

Environmental Statement Volume 2: Figures & Appendices

Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual

Appendix 7.8 Schedule of Likely Landscape Effects

APPENDIX 7.8 SCHEDULE OF LIKELY LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

BOROUGH / DISTRICT		
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (2011) LCA 224: North Baldock Chalk Uplands		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The Site lies wholly within LCA 224 North Baldock Chalk Uplands, which is described as: <i>“rolling chalk landform, eroded by a complex network of shallow dry valleys. Small rounded chalk knolls common. Large scale arable fields often with remnant field boundaries, mainly well trimmed hawthorn hedges. The core has a pattern of regular rectilinear fields often with curving boundaries. Boundaries often based on older more organic pattern of lanes and primary boundaries”</i>. Key characteristics of relevance to the Site and immediate study are: - Rolling chalk landform; - Small rounded chalk knolls; - Large rectilinear fields in arable; - Nucleated settlements; - A1(M), A505, railway; - Lower Icknield Way; - Abuts suburban edge of Baldock; - Pylons crossing the western edge; and - Ivel valley; Management objectives to conserve and restore the character of North Baldock Chalk Uplands are: - Promote creation of new woodland and for existing woodlands encourage a diverse woodland flora. - Promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and areas of semi-natural habitat and the creation of links between habitat areas. - Promote hedgerow restoration to create visual links between existing woodland areas. - Promote the diversity of hedgerow species and planting of standard hedgerow trees. - Maintain and extend the rights of way network. Built development guidelines to conserve and enhance character of North Baldock Chalk Uplands are: - Maintain the open character of North Baldock Chalk Uplands. - Retain the rural character of the area ensuring any new development is appropriately sited and of a scale, form and style appropriate to the character area. - Planting mitigation should be appropriate to local character and not necessarily fully enclose development.	Value The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) considers the landscape condition and strength of the character for LCA 224 to be overall of <i>“moderate sensitivity”</i> due to the <i>“relatively intact landscape being influenced by built development around the edges of the Character Area, but retains a largely rural character”</i>. In the context of the Site and immediate Study Area, the LCA 224 North Baldock Chalk Uplands is typically characterised by an open rolling chalk landform, with a mix of arable farmland, pasture fields, farmsteads, nucleated settlements (Lower Bygrave and Bygrave), directly abutting and heavily influenced by the suburban edge of Baldock. The level of tranquillity is also considered as moderate, despite the linear network of busy roads (A505 & A1M) and railway infrastructure and existing visual intrusion from overhead pylons and the suburban edges of Baldock and Clothall Common. The landscape is, at most, valued locally, the Site area is designated a housing site under Policy SP8 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, whilst the surrounding landscape in the immediate Study Area is designated Green Belt. The area features Bygrave Road District Wildlife Site an ecological linear designation along Bygrave Road. Most of the heritage assets (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) are located over 1km from the Site, within the villages of Bygrave and Newnham. Overall, the landscape value is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility The Site is located directly adjacent to the existing settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common, where the urban fringe and suburbanising elements are already a key characteristic of LCA 224. The Site is allocated for housing and employment within the North Hertfordshire Council Local Plan 2011-2031. The combination of existing built form in Baldock and Clothall Common (both residential and commercial), undulating landform, highway and railway infrastructure, along with tree and hedgerow field boundaries, provides a moderate level of containment around the Site and would assist with the assimilation of potential development into the existing landscape. Existing features within the Site and the immediate study area are detracting and have an obvious influence on the character and experience of the landscape (suburban settlement edge of Baldock, the A505 bypass, railway line, industrial units in Baldock and Letchworth and electricity pylons along the skyline). With the LCA location directly adjacent to Baldock and the many references within LCA to the type of development proposed, it is considered the landscape receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed. Therefore, overall the landscape susceptibility of this receptor is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION) Construction Phase During construction, there would be temporary limited alteration to the landscape resources of LCA 224, with the majority of the existing boundary vegetation retained as part of the Proposed Development, with the exception of vegetation clearance works associated with internal parts of the Site. There would be alterations to landform associated with earthworks, particularly to accommodate building platforms and the access roads. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the local area, which would only affect proportionally a small part of the LCA, with the wider character area remaining unaffected. Therefore, the scale of change is considered low due to the minor loss and alteration of existing landscape features, with the landscape change restricted to and influencing the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, resulting in a negative effect that would be indiscernible to the wider landscape. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse.	EFFECT Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 0) At completion, the Proposed Development would result in the permanent change of the open arable and pastoral farmland on the settlement edge of Baldock, to both residential built form (BA1 & BA2), employment built form (BA10) and either residential or education built form (BA3), associated infrastructure and strategic green infrastructure as open space. The character will shift to a more structured settlement urban edge and form an extension to the existing urban character of Baldock and Clothall Common. The scale of change is considered low, due to the minor loss and alteration of existing landscape features and introduction of the Proposed Development, resulting in a negative effect that would only influence the Site and immediate setting of the Proposed Development – with the influence of built form perceptible in isolated parts of the LCA immediately to the north and north east (given the influence of the undulating topography, ridgeline to the north, settlement of Bygrave and A505 bypass), set alongside a similar form of development on the existing settlement edge of Baldock. The outer parts of the Site, in the north as part of BA1 and as part of the Urban Open Land next to BA3, will be transformed into strategic green infrastructure, developed as parkland open spaces (Bygrave Common, Eastern Park and Sports Hub), where the Green Space east of Clothall Common and Walls Field will be retained as natural and semi natural open spaces managed for biodiversity. These significant areas of strategic green infrastructure would assist in the transition out to the wider rural countryside. Therefore, the magnitude of change, pre-mitigation establishment, is considered Small Adverse.	Short Term Minor Adverse (Not Significant)

• <i>Ensure that new development does not necessitate the removal of existing woodland blocks or hedgerow.</i> • <i>Protect and preserve the pattern of narrow open lanes and occasional rows or avenues of trees.</i> • <i>Ensure lighting necessitated by new development minimises the impact on the Character Area.</i>	Operation Phase (Year 15) At year 15, the proposed green infrastructure framework, including structural landscape and buffer planting (on the Site boundaries, within the areas of strategic green infrastructure and the development areas) will have matured and established. This, combined with management of the existing landscape features, will have suitably assimilated the Proposed Development into the landscape, enhancing the transition from the settlement edge of Baldock to the rural countryside and improving the sense of place at a local level. The strategic open spaces would contribute heavily to the restoring the tree and woodland cover, hedgerow restoration and links between habitat areas across the LCA. However, the fundamental change in land use and the settlement expansion will remain locally influential, with the wider LCA 224 remaining largely unaffected due to the level of containment by intervening landform, resulting in a barely perceptible degree of change across most of the LCA. Therefore, on balance, the magnitude of change is considered Negligible Adverse.	Long Term Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
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BOROUGH		
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (2011) LCA 216 : Arlesey / Great Wymondley		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The north western boundary of BA1, along North Road, lies directly adjacent to LCA 216 – Arlesey / Great Wymondley. There is a very small part of the Site, off North Road and adjacent to North Road Allotments, within LCA 216. This part of the LCA, adjacent to the Site, features the River Ivel corridor - which has mature woodland setting and has been developed in part for recreational purposes. The LCA identifies this as a rolling arable landscape characterised by large scale fields with occasional scattered plantations and copses. It covers an area surrounding Letchworth Garden City. Key characteristics of relevance to the immediate Site and study area are: • <i>Large flat expansive arable landscape in the north</i> • <i>Rolling arable landscape of large scale fields and with relatively few trees in the south</i> • <i>Core defined by the urban development of Letchworth and Hitchin</i> • <i>Well wooded valley landscape of the Ivel valley</i> • <i>A1(M) runs parallel to eastern boundary</i> Management objectives to improve and conserve the character of Arlesey / Great Wymondley are: • <i>Promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and areas of seminatural habitat and the creation of links between habitat areas</i> • <i>Promote hedgerow restoration along the lines of historic field boundaries and for the creation of visual links between existing woodland areas</i> • <i>Protect and preserve the pattern of narrow winding lanes and associated hedge banks, sunken lanes, verges and hedges</i> • <i>Promote the diversity of hedgerow species and the planting of standard hedgerow trees</i> • <i>Maintain and extend the rights of way network</i> • <i>Encourage and develop the diversity of tree planting along the River Ivel</i> • <i>In the south encourage the development of species-rich calcareous grassland habitats</i> • <i>Encourage woodland planting, in small copses, around the fringes of sub-urban settlements</i> • <i>Encourage small blocks of woodland planting along the A1(M) corridor and especially around Junction 9</i>	Value The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) considers the landscape condition and strength of the character for LCA 216 to be <i>“moderate”</i>. In the context of the Site and immediate Study Area, LCA 216 – Arlesey / Great Wymondley is typically characterised by Ivel Springs Local Nature Reserve (LNR), River Ivel and Scheduled Monument on the LNR, on the settlement edge of Baldock. The level of tranquillity is also considered as <i>“moderate”</i>, despite the linear network of busy roads (North Road and A1M) and railway infrastructure and existing visual intrusion from overhead pylons and the suburban edges of Baldock. The landscape is, at most, valued locally - due to the recreational access to Ivel Springs and North Road allotments. Overall, the landscape value is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility There is a very small part of the Site (off North Road and adjacent to North Road Allotments) within LCA 216, which is proposed to remain as strategic open space, in the form of allotments - and BA1 of the Site is located directly east of LCA 216. The nature of the development being proposed in BA1, as residential built form, would be in keeping with the current surrounding land uses also abutting the LCA in Baldock. The combination of existing built form in Baldock, highway and railway infrastructure, along with tree and hedgerow field boundaries and the woodland coverage in Ivel Springs LNR, provides a moderate level of visual enclosure to the LCA and would assist with the assimilation of potential development into the existing landscape. Existing features within the immediate study area are detracting and have an obvious influence on the character and experience of the landscape (suburban settlement edges of Baldock and Letchworth, electricity pylons, the A1M and railway line). Given the location of the LCA, directly adjacent to Baldock and Letchworth, along with the many references within LCA to the type of development proposed - it is considered the landscape receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed. Therefore, the susceptibility in this part of the landscape is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION) Construction Phase During construction, there would be temporary alteration to the landscape resources of LCA 216, limited to the boundary where it interfaces with North Road, with the majority of the existing boundary vegetation retained as part of the Proposed Development, with the exception of vegetation clearance works associated with the access junction points off North Road into BA1. The hedgerow boundaries associated with the small part of the Site adjacent to North Road Allotments would be retained and enhanced - affording a high level of containment - which, for the most part, will screen activities on the Site. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the local area, which would only affect proportionally a very small part of the LCA, with the wider character area remaining unaffected. Therefore, the scale of change is considered very low - due to the barely discernible loss and alteration of existing landscape features, with the landscape change restricted to and influencing the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, resulting in a negative effect that would be indiscernible to the wider landscape. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Adverse.	EFFECT Temporary Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 0) At year 0 the BA1 part of the Site, adjacent to the LCA, will include permanent features that would tie into the context of Baldock, forming a continuation of the surrounding residential built form. A very small part of the Site, off North Road and adjacent to North Road Allotments, will be transformed into additional allotment provision to form an extension to the existing land use. The geographical extent of change would influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, maintaining the existing character of the landscape and blending with the characteristics of LCA 216 – Arlesey / Great Wymondley. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Adverse.	Short Term Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 15) At year 15, the proposed green infrastructure and structural planting within the Site (BA1) will have matured and established. This, combined with management of the existing landscape features, would provide an improvement to public realm and increase in biodiversity within the local area. As the main built element of the Site (BA1) lies outside and adjacent to the LCA, with a small part of the Site within the LCA and adjacent to North Road allotments (however proposed as public open space in the form of allotments), overall the enhancements to sense of place implemented by the Proposed Development will only have a limited improvement on the facing edge of the neighbouring LCA. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Beneficial.	Long Term Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)

BOROUGH		
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (2011) LCA 219: Baldock Gap		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The southern boundary of BA2, separated by the Icknield Trail long distance footpath, lies directly adjacent to LCA 219 – Baldock Gap, which is described as: <i>“Steeply sloping chalk scarp, eroded by local valleys, mostly dry, to form an undulating landform. Two deeply incised valleys southwest of Weston still carry streams, which feed a number of water features”</i>. Located to the east of the A1(M) and crossing the 505 stretching in a narrow band from the north of Stevenage to a point southeast of Baldock. Key characteristics of relevance to the immediate Site and study area are: • <i>Undulating chalk scarp with local steep sided valleys</i> • <i>Large arable fields</i> • <i>Small, occasional plantations, or shelter belts</i> • <i>Small sunken lanes and footpaths climbing up the slope</i> • <i>Abuts suburban edge to Baldock in the north and Stevenage in the south</i> Management objectives to improve and conserve the character of Baldock Gap are: • <i>Encourage development of chalk grassland habitat</i> • <i>Promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and areas of seminatural habitat and the creation of links between habitat areas</i> • <i>Promote hedgerow restoration along the lines of historic field boundaries and for the creation of visual links between existing woodland areas</i> • <i>Promote the use of traditional field hedges in place of post and wire enclosures to new grazing areas</i> • <i>Promote the diversity of hedgerow species and the planting of standard hedgerow trees</i> • <i>Maintain and extend the rights of way network</i>	Value The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) considers the landscape condition and strength of the character for LCA 219 to be <i>“good”</i>. In the context of the Site and immediate Study Area, LCA 219 – Baldock Gap is typically characterised by Weston Hills Local Nature Reserve (LNR), on the settlement edge of Baldock. The level of tranquillity is also considered as moderate, despite the linear network of busy roads (A505 and A1M) and existing visual intrusion from the suburban edges of Baldock. The landscape is, at most, valued locally - due to the recreational access to the Weston Hills. Overall, the landscape value is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility There is a very small part of the Site, on the southern edge of BA2, located directly adjacent and to the north of LCA 219. The nature of the development proposed in the main part of BA2 (as residential built form) and the south eastern edge, adjacent to the A505 (as strategic green infrastructure), would be in keeping with the current surrounding land uses also abutting the LCA in Baldock. The combination of existing built form in Baldock, highway infrastructure and tree and hedgerow field boundaries, along with the woodland coverage in the Weston Hills LNR, provides a moderate level of visual enclosure to the LCA and would assist with the assimilation of potential development into the existing landscape. Existing features within the immediate study area are detracting and have an obvious influence on the character and experience of the landscape (suburban settlement edge of Baldock, Weston Hills tunnels and the A505 bypass). Given the location of the LCA (directly adjacent to Baldock) and many visual references within the LCA to the type of development proposed, it is considered the landscape receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed. Therefore, the susceptibility in this part of the landscape is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	Construction Phase During construction, there would be temporary limited alteration to the landscape resources of LCA 219, limited to the boundary where it interfaces with BA2 to provide a recreational link (as part of the Baldock Greenway) for pedestrians and cyclists to link with the Icknield Trail long distance footpath, with the majority of the existing boundary vegetation retained as part of the Proposed Development. Existing scrub and woodland vegetation within the Weston Hills would provide a high level of containment - which, for the most part, will screen activities of construction. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the local area, which would only affect proportionally a very small part of the LCA, with the wider character area remaining unaffected. Therefore, the scale of change is considered very low due to the barely discernible loss and alteration of existing landscape features, with the landscape change restricted to and influencing the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, resulting in a negative effect that would be indiscernible to the wider landscape. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Adverse.	Temporary Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 0) At year 0, the BA2 part of the Site (adjacent to the LCA) will include permanent features that would tie into the context of Baldock, forming a continuation of the surrounding residential built form. The south eastern edge (adjacent to the A505) of BA2 and the Urban Open Land is proposed as strategic green infrastructure, which would be in keeping with the current surrounding land uses also abutting the LCA in Baldock and would assist in the transition out to the wider rural countryside. The geographical extent of change would influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development, maintaining the existing character of the landscape and blending with the characteristics of LCA 219. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Adverse.	Short Term Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation Phase (Year 15) At year 15, the proposed green infrastructure and structural planting within the Site will have matured and established. This, combined with management of the existing landscape features, would provide an improvement to public realm and increase in biodiversity within the local area. As the main built element of the Site lies outside and adjacent to the LCA, overall the enhancements to sense of place implemented by the Proposed Development will only have a limited improvement on the landscape connectivity to the neighbouring LCA. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Negligible Beneficial.	Long Term Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Parcel BA1 - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The BA1 part of the Site is situated to the north east of Baldock and to the west of Lower Bygrave. The boundaries are defined by a combination of roads, rail, farmsteads, PRow's and open farmland, including: North Road to the west, Bygrave Road running east / west through the middle, field boundaries defined by hedgerow to the north and east, the railway line to the south and the settlement edge of Baldock to the south west. The area lies within the North Baldock Chalk Uplands where the key landscape features for this character area include 'rolling chalk landform' and 'large rectilinear fields in arable use'. The land use is a combination of grazing horse paddocks to the south of Bygrave Road and open arable farmland to the north and north east. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES, identifies six separate 'Areas of Archaeology' within BA1 (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – including a Roman Roadside settlement at North Road, Bronze age Barrow Cemetery in land to the south of Bygrave Road, Roman high status ritual site and Bronze age barrows in the eastern part of the Site and a medieval hamlet and iron age enclosures to the northern part of BA1. These are all buried monuments and findspots and are not visually tangible historic features. - Ivel Spring Scheduled Monument is located immediately to the west beyond North Road, however it is an open green space where there are no visible tangible historic features. - Public bridleway Bygrave 001, along the northern boundary, is shown on old maps as a historic trackway referred to as 'Mill Way' in 1822 and later 'Millers Way' in 1912. - The historic landscape character for this area is defined as 'Pre 18th century unenclosed common arable'. The 1847 OS map shows this area as part of Bygrave Common, characterised by strip fields, being the vestigial remains of a Medieval agricultural system. - BA1 features a historic winterbourne channel. Landscape Condition: - The area features large open, arable farmland with very limited semi-natural habitat coverage, which is concentrated on the northern boundary in the form of hedgerows and semi-improved grassland along Bygrave Road associated with the Bygrave Road District Wildlife Site. - Topographically this is a landscape of rounded saddleback ridges and valleys that run in a generally east-west direction. Closer to the edge of Bygrave Road, the landform becomes flatter. - Due to this the overall landscape condition is considered to be low. Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - BA1 Site and surrounding LCAs show signs of degraded distinctiveness, due to the combination of the location adjacent to the settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common and intensive arable and pastoral farming - The Landscape Sensitivity Study for land north of Baldock (2013) described this landscape as <i>"relatively large scale, homogeneous and simple"</i>. Recreational: - BA1 location directly adjacent to the northern settlement edge of Baldock and Ivel Spring LNR, results in a well used public right of way network, which form part of Balock circular northern route. - Public bridleway Bygrave 001 runs east / west along the northern boundary - Public bridleway Bygrave 002 runs north / south from Bygrave Road - Public footpath Bygrave 015 runs from Bygrave Road south, across the railway line, through BA10 to Royston Road.	Value The landscape is, at most, valued locally, featuring Bygrave Road District Wildlife Site an ecological linear designation along Bygrave Road. The landscape has limited amenity value, due to public access restricted to the PRow network. The Landscape Sensitivity Study for land north of Baldock (2013) described this landscape as <i>"relatively large scale, homogeneous and simple"</i>. Whilst archaeology features are present these are buried monuments and are not visually tangible historic features. The area becomes more open and rural in character moving further north away from the settlement of Baldock, providing a moderate level of remoteness. The rolling chalk landform and large open fields create a relatively moderate sense of tranquillity, and the PRow network offers accessibility to appreciate this quality. Overall, the landscape value of this parcel is considered to be Medium. Susceptibility The Site area is designated a housing site under Policies SP8 & SP14 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, with the land from the settlement edge of Baldock running to the ridgeline and towards Lower Bygrave proposed as residential development and the northern and eastern parts of BA1 proposed as strategic green infrastructure. BA1 has some perception of movement and noise from the immediate surrounding transport network (North Road, Bygrave Road and the railway), which create linear visual and aural detractors There are also opportunities to enhance the currently fragmented and degraded form, features and character of the local landscape, assimilating new built form into a more sympathetic transitional edge between the urban settlement and the wider rural landscape. The open nature of this area, lacking in semi-natural vegetation within and on its boundaries - combined with the rising, undulating landform featuring an east / west ridgeline - result in limited screening and enclosure and therefore increase sensitivity to development. The susceptibility of the landscape on this parcel of the Site is considered to be Low to Medium.	Medium
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction During construction, there would be a direct, permanent loss of very minimal areas of hedgerow boundary vegetation to allow for access to construction haul roads and vehicular access points, with the majority of existing boundary vegetation retained as part of the Proposed Development (aside from vegetation clearance works associated with internal parts of the Site). There would be alterations to landform associated with earthworks, particularly to accommodate building platforms and the access roads. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the BA1 Site, which would affect the immediate setting of the Proposed Development. The construction traffic would introduce a temporary uncharacteristic feature into the local landscape, however hoarding will be erected to provide another layer of containment. Mitigation measures would be put into place to safeguard and protect ecological and heritage designations, refer to Chapter 11 Ecology and Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES for more information. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse. Operation (Year 0) On completion of the works, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the arable and grazing land use within the Site, replaced with a high-quality residential development and new strategic green infrastructure. The built form and residential land use would form an extension to the existing settlement edge of Baldock, with the strategic green infrastructure proposed on the northern and eastern extents to transition out to the wider landscape and countryside. At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally, on the boundaries and within the large areas of strategic green infrastructure, using locally prevalent and native species that accord with relevant landscape guidance and in planting arrangements to reflect local character, helping to integrate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape setting. The scale of change would result in a Small Adverse magnitude of change at year 0. Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established, offering stronger coverage with extensively more features than currently exists on the Site at present, responding appropriately to local landscape character and contributing to the regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small Beneficial.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant) Short Term Minor Adverse (Not Significant) Long Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)

• The majority of the Site comprises intensely farmed arable fields with little or no amenity value. Perceptual: • BA1 has some perception of movement and noise from the immediate surrounding transport network (North Road, Bygrave Road and the railway), which create linear visual and aural detractors • The area becomes more open and rural in character moving further north away from the settlement of Baldock, providing a moderate level of remoteness. • The rolling chalk landform and large open fields create a relatively strong sense of tranquillity, and the strong footpath network offers accessibility to appreciate this quality. • From within the northern valley, where the landform drops, the ridges create a sense of separation from Baldock and - whilst there are still views westwards to the A1(M), pylon line and Letchworth - the rural landscape and long views to the east create a sense of remoteness. • The panoramic ridge crest views partly encompass the urban landscape but also provide, through elevation, a sense of detachment from these influences - and thus an increased sense of remoteness. Function: • The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.		
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SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Parcel BA2 - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
BA2 is situated to the south east of Baldock. The boundaries are defined by a combination of roads and settlement: Clothall Road (A507) to the north east, A505 Baldock bypass to the south east, the settlement edge of Baldock to the north west and Hillside Park mobile home site to the south west. The land use is a combination of grazing horse paddock associated with Cambrai Farm and arable farmland. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES, identifies an 'Areas of Archaeology' within BA2 (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – Iron Age Pit alignment and Roman settlement. These are buried monuments and findspots and are not visually tangible historic features. - The historic landscape character for this area is defined as 'Later Enclosure' piecemeal by agreement. The southernmost area of the Site appears on the AD 1633 map. At this time, this area is largely depicted as open rectilinear fields or strips within 'Baldock Field'. Landscape Condition: - The gently sloping landform falls from south to the north, from 85m to 70m AOD, featuring open grazing pastures and arable farmland. The topography is uniform lacking any distinct landform features. - The area features regular field patterns that are small to medium in size, bound by some intact hedgerow, fencing and occasional hedgerow trees (one category A tree on boundary with settlement edge), providing a modest density of small-scale landscape features. Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - The gently sloping landform, surrounding human and infrastructure influences (which are typical of the urban fringe), limited coverage of semi-natural habitats and semi-enclosed character degrades the level of distinctiveness to BA2. Recreational: - The whole of BA2 comprises a combination of arable and pastoral fields as private land with no public access and therefore with little or no amenity value. Perceptual: - The area is influenced by existing development and human activity - bound by the existing settlement edge of Baldock, Hillside Park mobile home site and infrastructure (in the form of Clothall Road A507 and Baldock Bypass A505), in combination, overall these elements reduce and limit the level of tranquillity. - The northern part of this area, adjacent to the Baldock settlement edge, is visually enclosed as a result of lower lying landform and presence of built form and vegetation on its boundaries. The land rises to the south and the boundary adjacent to the A505 Baldock Bypass is open to views from the surrounding countryside and Icknield Way long distance footpath where it crosses the A505. Function: - The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.	Value The area is designated a housing site under Policy SP8 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. The southern part of this area is designated 'Green Belt'. The south western boundary lies directly adjacent to Weston Hills Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Icknield Way Long Distance footpath. The area is used as working farmland for grazing and arable uses, therefore the landscape has little to no amenity value. Whilst archaeology features are present these are buried monuments and are not visually tangible historic features. The landscape has limited tranquillity due to its location directly adjacent to A505 bypass, Hillside Park mobile homes and the urban settlement edge of Baldock. Overall, the landscape value of this parcel is considered to be Low.	Low
	Susceptibility The northern part of this area, adjacent to the Baldock settlement edge, is visually enclosed as a result of lower lying landform and presence of built form and vegetation on its boundaries. The land rises to the south and the boundary adjacent to the A505 Baldock Bypass is open to views from the surrounding countryside and Icknield Way long distance footpath where it crosses the A505. The gently sloping landform, surrounding human and infrastructure influences (which are typical of the urban fringe), limited coverage of semi-natural habitats and semi-enclosed character reduces susceptibility to residential development. The receptor has a high level of ability to accept the type of development proposed and there are good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement. The susceptibility of the landscape on this parcel of the Site is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction During construction, there would be a minor loss of vegetation, to allow for access and creation of a development platform, with the majority of existing features retained. Protective fencing would be installed to the outer edge of the root protection area of all retained trees and hedgerows, as required by an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, in accordance with BS5837:2012. The geographical extent of change would influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development only. Therefore, the size and scale of change is considered to be Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) On completion of the works, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the arable and grazing land use within the Site, replaced with a high-quality residential development and new strategic green infrastructure. The built form and residential land use would form an extension to the existing settlement edge of Baldock, with the strategic green infrastructure proposed on the southern boundary (part of the Green Belt) transitioning out to the wider landscape and countryside. At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally, on the boundaries and within the area of strategic green infrastructure, helping to integrate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape setting. The scale of change would result in a Small Adverse magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established, offering stronger coverage with extensively more features than currently exists on the Site at present, responding appropriately to local landscape character and contributing to the regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small Beneficial.	Long Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Parcel BA3 (the central and southern part)- individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The central and southern parts of BA3 are situated to the east of Baldock, south of Clothall Common and is currently used as arable farmland. The boundaries are defined by a combination of existing settlement, roads and farmland, including: Wallington Road and the settlement edge of Clothall Common to the north and west and the A505 Baldock bypass to the east. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES identifies an 'Areas of Archaeology' within BA3 (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – Iron Age Pit alignment and Roman settlement. These are buried monuments and findspots and are not visually tangible historic features. - The Clothall Tithe Map of 1842 incorporates much of the southern area of the Site and this area is referred to as 'Baldock Field' defined by rectilinear strip-type fields with dashed divisions. The historic landscape character for this area is defined as 'Pre 18th century unenclosed common arable'. Landscape Condition: - An intensively farmed arable field lacking in any semi-natural habitat coverage and unvegetated boundaries Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - The landform is uniform lacking distinct landform features. - The area features a medium to large scale, open, arable field, intensively managed with no semi-natural habitats, which degrades the level of distinctiveness to BA3. Recreational: - The whole of BA3 comprises intensively manged arable farmland, which is private land with no public access and therefore with little or no amenity value. - There is a permissive path along the northern edge of BA3 – which once formed the old Wallington Road and is used locally by the public. Perceptual: - The combination of rising landform to the east, an open arable landscape, unvegetated boundaries and a landscape beyond the settled and developed edge of Baldock results in minimal landscape enclosure to the east - This area is open and visually exposed to views from the east and the elevated Wallington scarp slopes. The Wallington scarp slopes to the east provide elevated views across the undulating arable landscape, down towards Baldock (which lies in a bowl in the distance). Views towards the area are seen in the context of Clothall Common settlement edge - This area is a rural agricultural landscape partly influenced by existing infrastructure and human activity - bound by residential settlement of Clothall Common and the A505 Baldock Bypass, which overall reduces and limits the level of tranquillity. The A505 Baldock Bypass is within cutting, giving the visual perception the rural landscape continues east to the open undulating arable landscape of the Wallington scarp slopes, increasing the perceived level of tranquillity in areas beyond close proximity to the bypass. Function: - The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.	Value The current land use is arable farmland with restricted public access, limiting the recreational value of the area. The landscape has few features due to the arable land use and is of limited tranquillity due to the presence of Clothall Common 20th century residential development to the north and west and surrounding human and infrastructure influences (typical of the urban fringe). Overall, the landscape value of this parcel is considered to be Low.	Low
	Susceptibility This area is identified as a future housing site under Policy SP8 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and is directly adjacent to the settlement urban edge of Clothall Common and Baldock, therefore the nature of development would be in keeping with the land uses surrounding and planned for the Site. The gently sloping landform and lack of semi-natural habitats, due to intensively managed arable land use, results in the area being visually exposed to views from the Wallington scarp slopes, however these are distant views, seen in the context of Clothall Common and Baldock. The susceptibility of the landscape on this parcel of the Site is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction During construction, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the arable farmland to allow for on-site construction works, haul roads and earthworks. There would be alterations to landform associated with earthworks, particularly to accommodate building platforms and the access roads. Construction would introduce a temporary level of activity into the BA3 Site, which would affect the immediate setting of the Proposed Development. The construction traffic would introduce a temporary uncharacteristic feature into the local landscape, however hoarding will be erected to provide another layer of containment. Mitigation measures would be put into place to safeguard heritage designations, refer to Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES for more information. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) On completion of the works, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the arable farmland within parcel BA3, replaced with a high-quality residential or education (flexible land use) and new green infrastructure. The built form and residential or educational land use would form an extension to the existing settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common out to the A505 bypass, with strategic green infrastructure proposed on the northern and eastern boundaries to allow for structural planting to transition sympathetically out to the wider landscape and countryside. At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally and on the boundaries, using locally prevalent and native species that accord with relevant landscape guidance and in planting arrangements to reflect local character, helping to assimilate the Proposed Development with the wider landscape setting. The scale of change would result in a Small Adverse magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established, offering stronger coverage with extensively more features than currently exists on the Site at present, responding appropriately to local landscape character and contributing to the regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small Beneficial.	Long Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Parcel BA10 - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
BA10 is a linear piece of landscape bound to the north by the Cambridge railway line and to the south by Royston Road. The land use is predominantly arable farmland with a few grazing pastures to the west and interspersed with small farmsteads and industrial uses along Royston Road. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES identifies an 'Areas of Archaeology' within BA10 (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – Roman High Status Ritual Site. These are buried monuments and findspots and are not visually tangible historic features. - The Clothall Tithe Map of 1842 incorporates much of the southern area of the Site and this area is referred to as 'Baldock Field' defined by rectilinear strip-type fields with dashed divisions. The historic landscape character for this area is defined as 'Pre 18th century unenclosed common arable'. - The historic landscape character for this area is defined by a combination of piecemeal post 1950's enclosure, formal parliamentary style – 18th century and later enclosure and areas of land built over. - The 1884 OS map shows the area as largely occupying open farmland within Clothall Common. The remnants of strip fields remain, suggesting that some may have still been in use. The course of the Icknield Way, an ancient routeway possibly dating from as early as the Neolithic period, is on map regression and modern day this is Royston Road bordering the southern boundary. Landscape Condition: - The eastern part of this area features medium to large scale, open, arable fields, with limited semi-natural habitats restricted to its boundaries, whereas the western parts feature small to medium sized grazing paddocks, overgrown with scrub and ruderal vegetation. - There is already a presence of employment development and built form located along Royston Road and enclosed by the railway line. Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - The area is predominantly flat uniform landform on the urban settlement edge of Baldock, lacking in distinctiveness. Recreational: - Public footpath Bygrave 015 runs north / south through BA10, from Royston Road, across the railway line, and onwards through BA1 to Bygrave Road. All other parts of BA10 are private and not publicly accessible. Perceptual: - The western part of this area is visually enclosed due to the flat landform, existing vegetation and built form. Views towards this area from the north / north west are distant and seen in the context of existing commercial development along Royston Road and the settlement of Clothall Common, indicating a lower degree of sensitivity. However, the eastern part of this area, beyond the settlement extent of Clothall Common, is open and more rural – and where vegetation coverage is low, this results in intervisibility with the surrounding rising agricultural land to the north and east. - This area has high levels of movement and noise from the immediate surrounding transport network (railway line, Royston Road and the junction with Baldock Bypass A505), which create visual and aural detractors, therefore decreasing the sensitivity to development. There are existing large employment warehouses and operations immediately to the west and a large roofing company centrally within the area itself, which all detract from the sense of tranquillity.	Value The landscape area lacks distinctiveness and has limited amenity value, due to access restricted to one short section of public footpath (Bygrave 015). Whilst archaeology features are present, these are buried monuments and are not visually tangible historic features. The landscape is of limited tranquillity due to its location directly adjacent to Ashville Trading Estate, railway line and settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common. Overall, the landscape value of this parcel is considered to be Low.	Low
	Susceptibility The area is designated for employment under Policy SP3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan. The areas location directly adjacent to Ashville Trading Estate and on the settlement edge of Baldock there are many existing references to the type of development proposed in this part of the Site, with very limited landscape elements within the area, restricted to the boundary edges. The location of the area adjacent to Royston Road and the railway has an obvious influence on the area. The susceptibility of the landscape on this parcel of the Site is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction During construction, there would clearance of vegetation on Site (albeit low value), to allow for Site access and creation of development platforms. Protective fencing would be installed to the outer edge of the root protection area of all retained trees and hedgerows, as required by an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, in accordance with BS5837:2012. The geographical extent of change would influence the immediate setting of the Proposed Development only. The construction traffic would introduce a temporary uncharacteristic feature into the local landscape. Therefore, the size and scale of change is considered to be Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) On completion of the works, there would be a direct, permanent loss of the arable land use within the Site, replaced with employment development. The built form and employment land use would form an extension to the existing settlement edge of Baldock and Ashville Trading Estate. At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures, in the form of structural planting would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally, on the boundaries, helping to integrate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape setting. The combination of the proximity of BA10 Site to the urban edge of Baldock and the existing adjacent employment land uses, result in a barely perceptible deterioration of the landscape / townscape character. The scale of change would result in a Negligible Adverse magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established, offering stronger coverage with extensively more features than currently exists on the Site at present, responding appropriately to local landscape / townscape character on the urban settlement edge of Baldock. The character of BA10 would form an extension of the employment land uses and blend in with the townscape character along Royston Road, creating a positive frontage and arrival into Baldock from the east. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Neutral	Long Term Neutral (Not Significant)

Function: The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.		
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SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Walls Field - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
Walls Field is situated to the south east of Baldock and is currently used as arable farmland. The boundaries are defined by a combination of roads, settlement and hedgerow field boundaries with: Clothall Road (A507) to the south west, Tapps Garden Centre and Wallington Road to the south east, the settlement edge of Clothall Common to the north east and Hartsfield Primary School to the north west. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES identifies the whole area is designated Scheduled Monument, referred to as Walls Field (Romano-British Small Town and Late Iron Age Settlement) (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) - This scheduled monument is experienced as an area of open greenspace on the edge of Baldock but is not a visually tangible historic feature (i.e. there is no visible built form or clear earthworks which give it prominence). The significance of this monument stems principally from its archaeology. Landscape Condition: - An intensively farmed arable field with flat uniform landform, around 65m AOD, similar in elevation to the surrounding settlement context. The area features a medium scale, open, arable field, with any semi-natural habitats restricted to its boundaries - The BMD Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and supporting Phase 1 habitat survey identified a native defunct species rich hedgerow with trees (ref: H28) on this unit's north eastern boundary, considered to be 'important' under The Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Associations: - Baldock has an important history as a Roman settlement, which was centred on Walls Field. Distinctiveness: - The area is predominantly flat uniform landform on the urban settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common, lacking in distinctiveness. Recreational: - Public footpath Baldock 037 runs through the centre of Walls Field, from Clothall Road to Clothall Common. All other parts of Walls Field are private and not publicly accessible. Perceptual: - The presence of existing settlement, Tapps Garden Centre and field boundary vegetation provides a strong sense of enclosure, albeit the south eastern boundary along Wallington Road is open and visually exposed due to the lack of vegetation, raising the sensitivity to development in this area. - The area is influenced by existing development and human activity - bound by the existing settlement edge of Baldock, Tapps Garden Centre, Hartsfield School and infrastructure in the form of Clothall Road A507 and Wallington Road, which overall reduces and limits the level of tranquillity. - The northern and central parts of this area are visually enclosed and contained by the existing settlement of Baldock. The south eastern boundary adjacent to Wallington Road, either side of Tapps Garden Centre, is open to views from the surrounding countryside. The Wallington scarp slopes to the east provide elevated views across the undulating arable landscape, down towards Baldock, which lies in a bowl in the distance. Function: - The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.	Value This area is referred to as Walls Field, a designated Scheduled Monument (Romano-British Small Town and Late Iron Age Settlement), but is not a visually tangible feature (i.e. there is no visible built form or clear earthworks which would give it prominence). Baldock has an important history as a Roman settlement, which was centred on Walls Field. The current land use is arable farmland with public access restricted to public footpath Baldock 037 which runs through the centre, with limited amenity value and lacking in distinctiveness. Overall, the landscape value in this parcel is considered to be High	Medium
	Susceptibility The Neighbourhood Plan policies CGB5 and G2 highlight the scheduled monument presents the opportunity for a new neighbourhood community green and as a 'common ground' for existing and new communities. The nature of development proposed is strategic green infrastructure, taking Walls Field out of arable farming practices which currently compromises and is negatively affecting the underlying archaeology. The proposed land use of open space and meadow grassland is in keeping with the land use of the Site currently, retaining Walls Field as open Green Infrastructure. Therefore, overall the susceptibility of the landscape in this parcel of the Site is considered to be Very Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction It is anticipated there would be no intensive construction activity associated with Walls Field Scheduled Monument, as the proposals are for it to be taken out of agricultural use and provided as informal open space with ecological enhancements, therefore less intensive activity would include planting and seeding of grassland. The geographical extent of change would influence the Site only, introducing elements into the landscape associated and typical of the farming regimes currently being undertaken at Walls Field. The size and scale of change is considered to be barely discernible, with impacts considered to be Neutral.	Temporary Neutral (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) At completion, Walls Field will be taken out of arable land use and transformed into a key open space destination as part of the strategic green infrastructure. There will be ecological enhancements that respect the archaeological sensitivity of the Scheduled Monument, whilst increasing the amenity value of Walls Field, through species-rich wildflower meadow creation, light recreational access, and non-invasive native shrub and hedgerow planting on the boundaries (albeit at an immature stage). The line of the existing public footpath will be retained and informal recreational routes created indicated with mown paths through meadow grassland. There will be seating and wayfinding/interpretation boards (as part of the heritage trail), situated at key locations to reference the cultural heritage of Baldock and the existing Scheduled Monument. The scale of change would result in a Small Beneficial magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established on Walls Field, offering stronger coverage with extensively more ecological features than currently exists on the Site at present, responding appropriately to local landscape character and contributing to the regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and LNRS initiatives. The long term land use, green infrastructure and management will preserve the archeological underground elements. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small / Medium Beneficial.	Long Term Moderate Beneficial (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site - Urban Open Land - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
This Urban Open Land is situated to the south east of Baldock and is currently used as arable farmland. The boundaries are defined by a combination of roads, farmland and allotments, including: Clothall Road (A507) to the south, Clothall Road allotments and Wallington Road to the west and Baldock Bypass A505 to the east. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES identifies an 'Areas of Archaeology' within the Urban Open Land (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – Iron Age Pit and Roman Settlement. These are buried monuments and findspots and are not visually tangible historic features. - The Clothall Tithe Map of 1842 incorporates much of the southern area of the Site and this area is referred to as 'Baldock Field' defined by rectilinear strip-type fields with dashed divisions. The historic landscape character for this area is defined as 'Pre 18th century unenclosed common arable. Landscape Condition: - The gently sloping landform falls from east to the west, from 80m to 70m AOD, featuring open arable farmland. The landform is uniform lacking distinct landform features. The area features a medium scale, open, arable field, with limited semi-natural habitats restricted to its southern boundary. Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - The area is predominantly gently sloping landform on the urban settlement edge of Baldock and Clothall Common, lacking in distinctiveness. Recreational: - The Urban Open Land lies directly adjacent to Clothall Road Allotments. - Public footpath Clothall 001 runs diagonally through the centre of the Urban Open Land from Wallington Road to Clothall Road. All other parts of the Urban Open Land are private and not publicly accessible. Perceptual: - The combination of rising landform to the east, an open arable landscape, unvegetated boundaries and a landscape beyond the settled and developed edge of Baldock results in minimal landscape enclosure. Tapps Garden Centre and Clothall Road allotments provide a degree of enclosure to the west. - Although this area is a largely rural landscape it is partly influenced by existing infrastructure and human activity - bound by the Clothall Road, A505 Baldock Bypass and Clothall Road allotments, which overall reduces and limits the level of tranquillity. - The A505 Baldock Bypass is within cutting, giving the perception the landscape flows east to the open undulating arable landscape of the Wallington scarp slopes, increasing the perceived level of tranquillity in areas beyond close proximity to the bypass. - This area is open and visually exposed to views from the east and the elevated Wallington scarp slopes. The Wallington scarp slopes to the east provide elevated views across the undulating arable landscape, down towards Baldock (which lies in a bowl in the distance), where there are distant views towards this area. Function: - The Site lies within North Hertfordshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.	Value This area is identified as an <i>"important green lung"</i> where development should maintain the open character of the landscape, together with views from this area out to the countryside, where planning permission will only be granted for development in the form of outdoor sport, recreation, rural land uses, landscaping – which would maintain the openness and respect the transition from the urban to rural – as part of Policy CGB5 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Policy G2 of the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan. Use of the Urban Open Land is currently limited to the local community, with public access restricted to public footpath Clothall 001. It is considered at most the Urban Open Land is valued locally, therefore the landscape value of this parcel is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility The Urban Open Land is on the urban edge of Baldock and Clothall Common, where the landscape is influenced visually and audibly by existing highway infrastructure (A505 / Clothall Road) and human activity (Clothall Road allotments and existing development). The open nature of this area, lacking in semi-natural vegetation within and on its boundaries - combined with the rising, undulating landform - result in limited screening and enclosure and therefore increase sensitivity to development. The nature of development proposed is strategic green infrastructure, transforming the arable farmland into a publicly accessible open space for sport, children's play and community allotments. Therefore, overall the landscape susceptibility in this parcel of the Site is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION) During Construction Construction activity associated with the Urban Open Land would comprise the creation of sports pitches (either grassed of 3G all weather, depending on flexible land use and options for BA3), supported by a sports pavilion and car park. The construction activities are anticipated to include earthworks, access roads and on-site construction vehicles. Construction would introduce a temporary level of construction activity which would influence the immediate setting of the Urban Open Land, due to its open nature to the east, albeit less intensive than main development works in other parcels of the Site, therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) At completion, there will be the permanent loss of open arable farmland, changed to sports and recreational facilities, with the presence of ancillary facilities including a sports pavilion and car parking. At completion, mitigation and enhancement measures would have introduced extensive tree, shrub and hedgerow planting (albeit at an immature stage), internally and on the boundaries, using locally prevalent and native species that accord with relevant landscape guidance and in planting arrangements to reflect local character, helping to integrate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape setting. There would be sensitively designed sports provision, landscaped mounds and other enhancements for ecological benefits, whilst retaining openness between Baldock and the surrounding landscape to the east. The line of the existing public footpath will be diverted to avoid the sports pitches to the perimeter of the Urban Open Land, and form part of the Baldock Greenway – a new multi-user leisure route. There will be seating and wayfinding/interpretation boards (as part of heritage trail), situated at key locations to reference the cultural heritage of Baldock. The scale of change would result in a Small Beneficial magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) Landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals will have matured to provide adequate screening and softening of the sports pitches and ancillary facilities, helping to further assimilate the Proposed Development into the wider landscape. New tree, scrub and hedgerow planting will be well established, offering a stronger coverage to further enhance the local treed landscape character in Baldock, particularly on the south eastern boundary with the A505. The landscape proposals will provide a well-established landscape setting which complements and links to Walls Field – maintaining an open landscape character through from Baldock settlement out to the Wallington Scarp slopes and wider countryside. The targeted green infrastructure enhancements, as part of the new parkland / playing fields - including the provision of public open space, community growing areas, play areas, access network and recreational facilities - are considered beneficial to the character of the Site, amenity and recreational value. The integration of structural boundary planting and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features will also contribute to a more diverse range of habitats, improving the ecological quality and character of the Site over time. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small / Medium Beneficial.	Long Term Moderate Beneficial (Not Significant)

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of Site – BA3 (the northern elevated area) - individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
The northern elevated area of BA3 is situated to the east of Baldock at the junction between Royston Road B656 and the Baldock Bypass A505. The boundaries are defined by a combination of roads and settlement, including: Royston Road to the north; Baldock Bypass A505 to the east and the settlement edge of Clothall Common to the west. The land is currently unmanaged and used locally by the community as an area for informal recreation, albeit it is not designated for such use. Historic & Cultural Heritage: - Chapter 9 Archaeology of the ES identifies a historic routeway through the northern part of BA3 (illustrated on Figure 7.9 at Appendix 7.4) – Medieval Routeway from Bygrave to Clothall. - The historic landscape character for this area is defined as ‘Later Enclosure’ piecemeal by agreement. - The Hertfordshire HER records this area as the medieval site of St Mary Magdalene Leper Hospital. Excavation here on the line of the Baldock bypass confirmed this position. Part of the hospital graveyard within an enclosure, pits and post-holes, and a large post-built barn, were recorded. Landscape Condition: - This area has localised elevated and raised landform. The localised elevated landform south of Royston Road and east of Clothall Common (at circa +85m AOD) was artificially created after the construction of the A505 Baldock bypass, using arisings of surplus material. The exception is the landform directly adjacent to Clothall Common (Aleyn Way) and Royston Road, where the landform levels out. - The area is medium scale, open, elevated, unmanaged semi-improved grassland with occasional scrub. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) identified this area to have an ‘elevated’ ecological value compared with the rest of the Site. Associations: - There are no widely known associations between the Site and art, media, scientific or technical achievements, historic events or famous people. Distinctiveness: - The open, highly prominent and distinctive elevated landform in this area is more likely to be susceptible to change arising from development, compared to the flatter areas between Clothall Common (Aleyn Way) and Royston Road. Recreational: - The land is currently unmanaged and used locally by the community as an area for informal recreation, albeit it is not designated for such use. - Public bridleway Clothall 003 and 027 run through this part of the Site – however there is no onward connection for cyclists and horse riders at Royston Road as the onwards travel is a public footpath, resulting in these user groups having to use very busy roads. Perceptual: - The combination of rising open elevated landform to the north and east, unvegetated boundaries and a landscape beyond the settled and developed edge of Baldock and Clothall Common - results in minimal landscape enclosure to the north and east. - Existing residential built form and vegetation within Clothall Common encloses the lower lying parts of this area to the west, which are located at the foot of the slope. - This area is open and elevated and used for recreation purposes, however surrounding development to the west and highway infrastructure to the north (Royston Road) and east (A505 Bypass) disturb the area’s scenic value and create detractors. Function: - The Site lies within North Hertfordshire’s Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025), presenting an opportunity to	Value A very small part (western corner) of this area is designated a housing site under Policy SP8 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. The land is unmanaged, elevated, open, crossed by a public bridleway and is being used locally by the community for recreation, increasing the areas recreational value. It is considered at most the northern elevated area of BA3 is valued locally, therefore the landscape value in this parcel is considered to be Medium.	Medium
	Susceptibility The nature of development proposed to the majority of this area is strategic green infrastructure, retaining and enhancing the existing semi-natural scrub and grassland habitat mosaic, with a very small part in the west proposed as housing, directly adjacent to housing allocation Policy BA4 of the Local Plan. The elevated, open landform, visually exposed in views to the east and north, coverage of semi-natural habitat identified to have ecological value and the important role this landscape provides in terms of local recreation for the community would be susceptible to built development. The lower lying landform between Aleyn Way and Royston Road is more visually contained and connected to the existing settlement edge, and it is considered there is potential for small infill residential development in these parts to improve an existing settlement edge, creating a positive frontage to this land currently used for recreation. Therefore, overall the landscape susceptibility of this parcel is considered to be Low.	
	MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
	During Construction It is anticipated there would be no intensive construction activity associated with the northern elevated area of BA3, where it is proposed as strategic green infrastructure, as the proposals are the existing grassland and scrub habitat mosaic to be retained and enhanced, therefore less intensive construction activity would include planting and seeding grassland. The very small part proposed as residential development, adjacent to Clothall Common, off Royston Road, would require vegetation clearance and earthworks, to accommodate building platforms and access roads. Construction would introduce a temporary level of construction activity which would influence the immediate setting of this Site parcel, therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered Small Adverse.	Temporary Minor Adverse (Not Significant)
	Operation (Year 0) At completion, a very small part of the Site will be permanently changed to residential land use, however this will change and influence the area directly adjacent to the existing settlement edge of Clothall Common and in the lower lying parts of the parcel, which are visually contained, resulting in a small extension to the existing settlement edge. The remaining area of the parcel will be retained and enhanced through species-rich wildflower grasslands, scrub and tree planting (albeit at an immature stage). Informal recreational routes indicated with mown paths located on existing desire lines to control movement, ensuring the preservation as an ecologically rich area. The line of the public bridleway Clothall 003 and 027 will be retained to become part of the proposed Baldock Greenway, which will provide onward travel for all user groups (walkers, cyclists and horse riders) as the design proposes a new multi-modal bridge across the railway line at BA10 and BA1 and new safe crossing points at Royston Road. The scale of change would result in a Small Beneficial magnitude of change at year 0.	Short Term Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)
	Post Mitigation Establishment (Year 15) The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals would have matured and well established on this parcel, offering stronger coverage with extensively more ecological features than currently exists on the parcel at present, responding appropriately to local landscape character and contributing to the regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and LNRS initiatives. The long term land use, green infrastructure and management will preserve and safeguard this area as a public recreational area. Therefore, in the long term, the magnitude of impact is considered to be Small / Medium Beneficial.	Long Term Moderate Beneficial (Not Significant)

contribute to a regional multifunctional Green Infrastructure network and biodiversity core focus areas, however the Site currently provides very limited value to this network.		
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