

# Growing Baldock

Environmental Statement Volume 1: Text  
Chapter 1: Introduction



October 2025

Urban&Civic

Hertfordshire

## **CONTENTS**

|            |                                                       |           |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1.1</b> | <b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>                             | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>1.2</b> | <b>BACKGROUND .....</b>                               | <b>2</b>  |
|            | Outline Planning Application .....                    | 2         |
|            | Summary Policy Context.....                           | 2         |
|            | Timing of this Application.....                       | 4         |
| <b>1.3</b> | <b>NEED FOR AN EIA, METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE .....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
|            | Rationale for the EIA .....                           | 5         |
|            | Competence .....                                      | 8         |
|            | Approach to the Impact Assessment.....                | 8         |
|            | Scope of the Assessment .....                         | 9         |
|            | Topics to be Scoped Out .....                         | 9         |
|            | Format of the Assessment .....                        | 10        |
|            | EIA Methodology and Terminology .....                 | 10        |
|            | Study Area .....                                      | 11        |
|            | Parameter Plan .....                                  | 12        |
| <b>1.4</b> | <b>STRUCTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT .....</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <b>1.5</b> | <b>AVAILABILITY OF THE DOCUMENT.....</b>              | <b>16</b> |

## **APPENDICES**

|              |                                           |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Appendix 1.1 | Site Boundary Plan                        |
| Appendix 1.2 | Technical Competencies of Chapter Authors |
| Appendix 1.3 | North Herts Council Scoping Opinion       |

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1.1 Urban&Civic and Hertfordshire County Council are submitting an Outline Planning Application (OPA) for mixed-use development (the 'Proposed Development') at land known as "Growing Baldock", to the north and east of the town of Baldock. The formal description of the Proposed Development is set out in Chapter 2.
- 1.1.2 The Application Site lies within the administrative boundary of North Herts Council. The location of the Site and extent of the OPA boundary is shown in **Appendix 1.1**.
- 1.1.3 This Environmental Statement (ES) reports the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Proposed Development. EIA is a process whereby the environmental effects of a proposed development are rigorously assessed. It enables potentially 'significant' environmental effects to be identified and appropriate mitigation measures to be proposed, removing or minimising potential adverse effects.
- 1.1.4 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared on behalf of Urban&Civic and Hertfordshire County Council by David Lock Associates Ltd with input from Integrated Transport Planning, Bradley Murphy Design, RPS (Tetrattech), HCUK Group, Oxford Archaeology, Turleys, Shadbolt Group and Utilities Connections Management Limited.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of this opening chapter of the ES is to outline the background to the Proposed Development, explain the scope of the ES and set out its structure.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

### **Outline Planning Application**

1.2.1 This ES forms part of the outline planning application (OPA) for the Proposed Development, which includes the following items:

- Covering Letter
- Application Form

#### **Formal Documents:**

- Development Specification
- Formal Drawings:
  - Application Site Plan
  - Parameter Plan
  - Detailed Access Plans:
    - Development Access: North Road (vehicular and bus only)
    - Development Access: Royston Road/A505
    - Development Access: BA2

#### **Supporting Documents:**

- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement incorporating:
  - Affordable Housing Strategy
  - Stewardship Approach
  - Town Centre Assessment
  - Section 106 Heads of Terms
- Employment Strategy;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment ;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Metric;
- Ecological Mitigation Plan
- Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan;
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Planning Statement; and
- Sustainability & Energy Strategy.

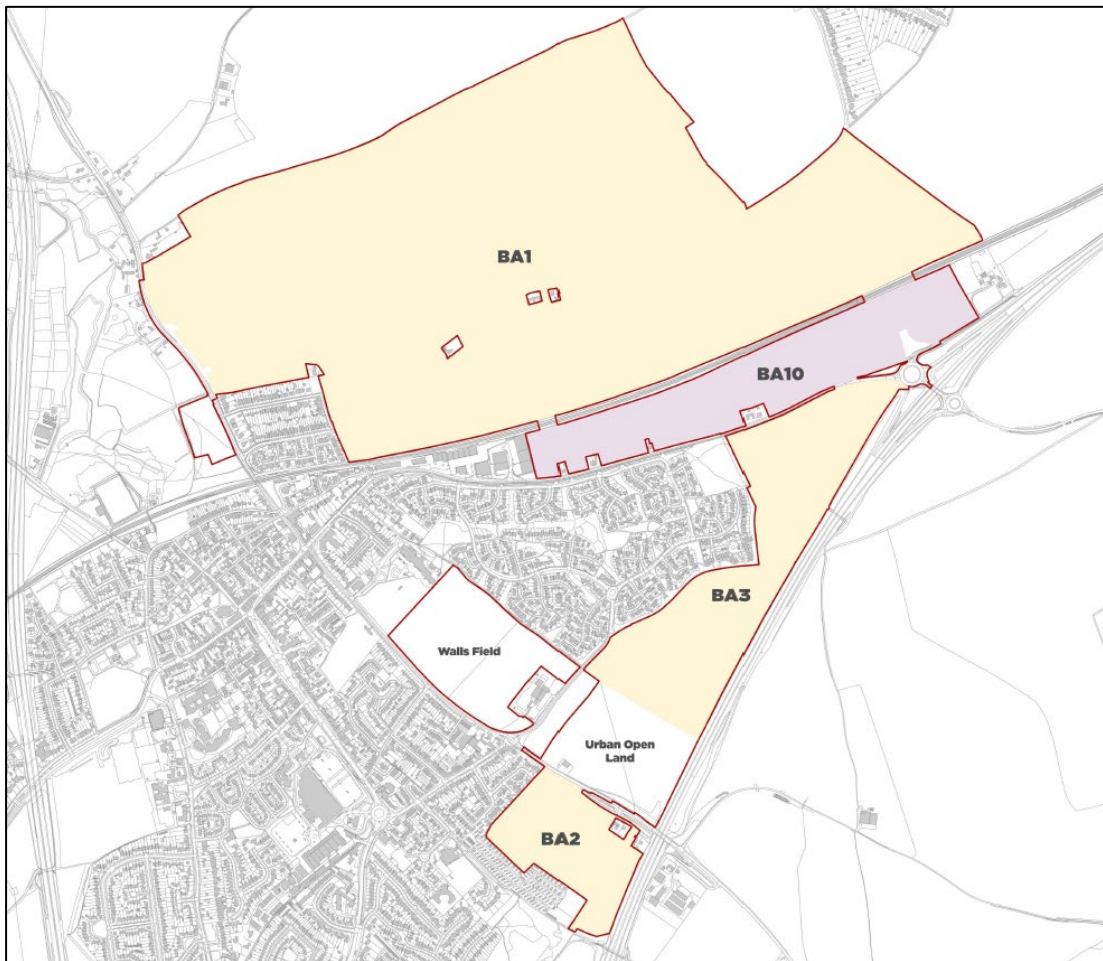
### **Summary Policy Context**

1.2.2 The OPA is submitted in the context of the updated National Planning Policy Framework (2024); the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031) adopted November 2022; and the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan, made in June 2021.

1.2.3 The Local Development Plan includes both the Local and Neighbourhood Plans.

- 1.2.4 This outline planning application comprises mixed used development including up to 3,200 new homes together with highway accesses and provision of employment, waste and leisure infrastructure alongside green infrastructure, open spaces and community facilities including primary and secondary school provision.
- 1.2.5 The site falls within site allocation policies under Policy SP8 (Housing), and its split into four allocation site references.
- 1.2.6 Policy SP14 allocates Site BA1 – North of Baldock for approximately 2,800 homes in addition to a new mixed-use local centre; structural planting for integration with the landscape; road connection between A507 (North Road) and the A505; sustainable transport measures; self-build plots; care home; community hall and GP provision; and up to 6FE primary provision; and up to 8FE secondary education provision (A secondary school larger than 6FE will be supported where: it is located at the south of the allocation site; and safe, sustainable and direct routes to school are provided from Clothall Common).
- 1.2.7 Further, Policy BA2 (dwelling estimate 200 homes), Policy BA3 (dwelling estimate 245 homes) and Policy BA10 (19.6 hectares of new employment land) apply to their respective areas of the Site (figure 1 below).
- 1.2.8 The site boundary also includes an area of green space to the west of North Road; the Scheduled Ancient Monument “Walls Field” and the area defined as “Urban Open Land” under Policy G2 of the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan. The red line and site allocations are depicted in Figure 1 below.
- 1.2.9 The planning application for this site reflects both the local and national policy context for growth and development. Further details of the policy context for the Proposed Development are set out in the Planning Statement accompanying the outline application and are summarised in Chapter 3.

**Figure 1: North Hertfordshire Local Plan Allocation Sites (within the Site)**



### **Timing of this Application**

1.2.10 The submission of the outline application is made at this time for the following reasons:

- (i) Following the allocation of the land in the Local Plan for development. The Proposed Development seeks to deliver homes to contribute towards meeting the Council identified housing needs over the Plan period;
- (ii) The Proposed Development reflects an extended period of stakeholder and public consultation, including preparation of a Strategic Masterplan which was approved by North Herts Council (NHC) in June 2025 and following pre-application advice and extensive meetings held with stakeholders such as Hertfordshire County Council, Network Rail and NHC;
- (iii) The outcomes of the above (ii) have subsequently been embedded in the Parameter Plan (**Appendix 2.1**), Development Specification (**Appendix 2.2**) and application details; and
- (iv) Submission of an outline application will enable a start on site within a timescale to meet the housing delivery trajectory between 2028 and 2043.

### 1.3 NEED FOR AN EIA, METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

#### Rationale for the EIA

- 1.3.1 The *Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017* as amended (the 'EIA Regulations') require that any proposed development falling within the description of a 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the Regulations will be required to be subject to EIA where such development is likely to have 'significant' effects on the environment.
- 1.3.2 The Proposed Development is deemed to be EIA development under part 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and falls within the 'urban development projects' category. An EIA to consider the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development has therefore been undertaken. **Table 1.1** below identifies where specifically within the ES chapters, all the requirement information by the EIA regulations is located for ease of reference.

**Table 1.1 ES Information as Required by the 2017 EIA Regulations Schedule 4**

| Specified Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Location within this ES                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Description of the development, including in particular –                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                         |
| (a) a description of the location of the development;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development)                                               |
| (b) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases;                                                                               | Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development)<br>All topic chapters (4-17) where applicable |
| (c) a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production process), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used; | Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development)<br>All topic chapters (4-17) where applicable |
| (d) an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise vibration light heat, radiation and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases.                                      | All topic chapters (4-17) where applicable                                              |

| <b>Specified Information</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Location within this ES</b>                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development, design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the applicant which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development)                                                                                                                                           |
| 3. A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed without reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.                                                                                                                                                                      | Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development)<br>All topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                              |
| 4. A description of the factors specified in regulation 4(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development: population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaption), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape. | All topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5. A description of the likely significant effect of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects, and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects resulting from inter alia:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | All topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                                                                           |
| (a) the construction and existence of the development, including where relevant, demolition works;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | All topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                                                                           |
| (b) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual), 11 (Ecology and Biodiversity), 10 (Hydrology and Flooding) and 12 (Ground Conditions and Soils).                                                  |
| (c) the emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Chapter 4 (Transport), Chapter 5 (Noise and Vibration), Chapter 6 (Air Quality), Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual), 10 (Hydrology and Flooding), 12 (Ground Conditions), 14 (Waste). |

| <b>Specified Information</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Location within this ES</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (d) the risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Chapter 13 (Socio-Economics and Health), Chapter 5 (Noise and Vibration), Chapter 6 (Air Quality), Chapter 8 (Historic Environment), Chapter 12 (Ground Conditions) and Chapter 18 (Conclusion) |
| (e) the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Chapters 2 (Site and the Proposed Development) and all topic chapters (4-17). Chapter 18 (Conclusion)                                                                                           |
| (f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Chapter 6 (Air Quality)<br>Chapter 10 (Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage)<br>Chapter 17 (Climate Change)<br>Chapter 18 (Conclusion)                                                            |
| (g) the technologies and the substances used.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | All topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 6. A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment including details of difficulties (for example the technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.                                                                                                                                                                       | Chapter 2 (The Site and the Proposed Development) and all topic chapters (4-17). Chapter 16 (Conclusion)                                                                                        |
| 7. A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant effects on the environment, and where appropriate of any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post -project analysis). That description should explain the extent to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases. | Chapter 2 (The Site and the Proposed Development) and all topic chapters (4-17)                                                                                                                 |
| 8. A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | See paragraph 1.3.12                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 9. A non-technical summary of the information provided under points 1-8 above.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | ES – Non-Technical Summary                                                                                                                                                                      |

| Specified Information                                                                                                         | Location within this ES                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 10. A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the environmental statement. | All chapters where applicable.             |
| 11. A statement outlining the relevant expertise or qualification of such experts.                                            | Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Appendix 1.2. |

### Competence

- 1.3.3 David Lock Associates (DLA) is the editor-in-chief of this document and authors of specific chapters, as identified below. DLA are accredited members of the Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals (ISEP), formally the 'Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)'. DLA hold ISEP's EIA Quality Mark; this is a not-for-profit membership organisation established to promote best practice standards in environmental management, auditing and assessment. As the premier body in this field, the Institute offers unrivalled ongoing support to environmental professionals and aims to promote sustainability through improved environmental practice and performance.
- 1.3.4 The relevant technical competencies of the authors of each technical assessment are set out in the introduction to the chapter in question and within **Appendix 1.2**.

### Approach to the Impact Assessment

- 1.3.5 In line with ISEP best practice, the EIA has been an integral part of the design of the Proposed Development, with the principal aim to reduce the severity of significant adverse environmental effects or even, wherever possible, to remove them through the design process. Such mitigation is referred to as '**embedded**' or '**design mitigation**'. In assessing the environmental impacts of the Proposed Development, full account has been taken of both the construction and operational/post completion stages.
- 1.3.6 The outline application and EIA process has included:
- data search for site designations and constraints;
  - environmental work conducted during the process of selection of the land uses within the Proposed Development;
  - review of environmental work conducted as part of the LDP preparation;
  - discussions with landowners;
  - study of the relevant Ordnance Survey mapping, including historical mapping;
  - identification of sensitive receptors and resources;
  - liaison with utility providers;
  - liaison with statutory consultees;
  - impact identification;
  - liaison with North Herts and Hertfordshire County Councils;
  - liaison with Parish Councils;

- liaison with other stakeholders as identified in the application Statement of Community Involvement (contained within the Planning Statement);
- refinement of development proposals and resultant mitigation refinement; and
- identification and reporting of any residual significant effects.

### **Scope of the Assessment**

- 1.3.7 During 2024 the applicants entered into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with North Herts Council (NHC) for development management purposes associated with the preparation of the Baldock OPA. Prior to this, extensive work was undertaken to produce a Strategic Masterplan (SMP), required by the Local Plan and agreed by NHC in June 2025. A PPA was entered into in 2022 to support the preparation of the SMP alongside NHC and other stakeholders and this supported significant baseline studies across a number of technical disciplines at an early stage in the process.
- 1.3.8 The PPA was prepared to shape the planning application but also, early in the process, to facilitate scoping discussions with NHC and other stakeholders in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment. A formal EIA Scoping request was submitted in April 2024, and following further discussions and evolution of the Proposed Development and planning strategy an updated submission followed in February 2025. In particular this reflected allowance for flexibility in secondary school provision. This is discussed further in Chapter 2 (Site and Proposed Development).
- 1.3.9 The PPA continues to provide a tool for supporting continuing discussions regarding the planning application and its infrastructure requirements relative to the wider policy context that guides the allocation sites.
- 1.3.10 The Council provided a Scoping Opinion (**see Appendix 1.3** to the ES) in September 2025 confirming the Council's satisfaction with the general approach proposed and the issues and topics identified. Specific comments and additions were provided on a number of topics. Additional comments from statutory consultees and other relevant organisations in respect of matters to be addressed in the ES or within supporting documents to the planning application were also provided. Where each technical consultant has undertaken consultation specific to their discipline this is included within the relevant technical chapter of the ES.

### **Topics to be Scoped Out**

- 1.3.11 The Scoping Report sought to scope out the topics of vulnerability to risks of major accidents or disasters and Daylight, Sunlight, Overshadowing and Wind.
- 1.3.12 Consideration has been given to any adverse effects of the development arising from its vulnerability to risks of major accidents and or disasters. No such major risks have been identified that are considered likely to cause any significant adverse effects for the topics considered in this ES. No significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or

disasters which are relevant to the proposed development concerned are anticipated. NHC agreed to scope out such major accidents and disasters in their formal Scoping Opinion.

1.3.13 No major risks have been identified by the consultant team nor statutory consultees which are considered likely to cause significant adverse effects on human health. As such it was concluded in the NHC Scoping Opinion that a standalone Health Impact Assessment would not be essential for this development, if justified as part of this ES. Potential effects in relation to health have been thoroughly assessed as part of the socio-economic and health chapter (see Chapter 13).

1.3.14 In addition, the technical disciplines have considered any potential for effects on human health as an integral part of the assessment, and where relevant this has been reported within individual topic chapters.

### **Format of the Assessment**

1.3.15 The format of the Environmental Statement is set out below:

- a) *Non-Technical Summary*: published separately and free of charge, providing a concise and non-technical explanation of the contents and conclusions of the Environmental Statement;
- b) *Environmental Statement Volume 1: Main Text* (this document): setting out the assessment methodology and likely impacts for each topic and setting out proposed mitigation for any impacts identified;
- c) *Environmental Statement Volume 2: Figures and Appendices*: comprising the plans and technical appendices comprising baseline material and technical data that are associated with the relevant chapters and specialist information detailed in Volume 1.

### **EIA Methodology and Terminology**

1.3.16 The significance of particular effects of the Proposed Development is determined by the interaction between the magnitude of those effects and the sensitivity of the receptors affected. Four levels of significance are identified across the ES: “**major**”, “**moderate**”, “**minor**” and “**negligible**”. Any beneficial effects are noted, as well as adverse ones. Where any temporary, short or medium-term, indirect, secondary or interactive effects are predicted, these too are recorded. All assessments of the significance of effects take account of proposed mitigation measures, although any significant potential effects in the absence of such measures are also identified. The terms “effect” and “impact” are used interchangeably. “Major” or “moderate” effects generally are considered “significant” in EIA terms, with any variations from this categorisation being set out in relevant topic chapters.

## **Study Area**

- 1.3.17 Study Areas for EIA testing purposes are bespoke to the geographical coverage required for each technical discipline and, for some EIA topics, are wider than the application site. The extent and nature of study areas is set out in the relevant technical chapter.

## **Assumptions, Uncertainties and Limitations**

### *Assumptions*

- 1.3.18 There are a number of elements which form part of, or are related to, the Proposed Development where certain assumptions have been made for environmental assessment purposes. These are set out for clarity below, and are reproduced in each chapter where relevant to the topic under consideration:

### Secondary School Provision

- 1.3.19 For environmental assessment purposes, the assessment has considered the inclusion of a flexible land use parcel on BA3 (identified on the Parameter Plan). The parcel will comprise one of following three options:
- **Option 1 – Knights Templar expansion and relocation to BA3**  
Relocation and expansion (up to 12FE) of Knights Templar school to BA3. BA3 to accommodate SEND school and secondary school
  - **Option 2 – Knights Templar expansion**  
Expansion of Knights Templar on existing site (up to 10FE). BA3 to accommodate SEND school and residential (c. 250 units)
  - **Option 3 – Additional secondary school on BA3**  
Provision of additional secondary school (up to 5FE) on BA3. BA3 to accommodate SEND school, secondary school and residential (c.90 units)
- 1.3.20 Each EIA topic will consider the three scenarios, and either test each scenario or test the worst-case scenario(s). This may differ dependent on the technical discipline and therefore professional judgement has been exercised in this respect and the approach taken is set out within each respective chapter.

### Highways

- 1.3.21 The outline application for the Proposed Development has all matters reserved for subsequent approval, except access, for which four accesses are proposed off the existing highway network.
- 1.3.22 The Proposed Development also identifies a number of potential links that support the wider objectives of the sustainable transport strategy that includes the provision of new bus-transit corridors / bus gates through the site, in addition to future links off-site to adjacent land parcels.

#### *Phasing Plan*

- 1.3.23 For environmental assessment purposes, assumptions have been made in respect of the potential phasing of the development and the sequencing of the delivery of land uses.
- 1.3.24 The site will be phased, with development commencing in site BA2 (Phase 1) and thereafter progressing in BA1 from a west to easterly direction (from North Road) alongside the build out of BA10. The final phase will comprise BA3 (dependent on the decision regarding secondary school provision). Infrastructure will be delivered at appropriate triggers throughout the development, to be agreed as part of the S106 agreement. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2027 with the first completions (in BA2) in 2028. The Proposed Development completion date is envisaged to be approximately 2043 with an average annual housing completion rate of 200 dwellings per annum.

#### *Uncertainties and Limitations*

- 1.3.25 The EIA considers the likely effects of the Proposed Development using a combination of current knowledge of the Site and its context, and desktop and survey investigations. Requests for information have been made to other parties who may hold relevant data pertinent to the assessment. Appropriate regard has been had to relevant national and local development plan policy, relevant legislation, and guidance and best practice.
- 1.3.26 Every reasonable effort has been made to obtain data concerning the existing baseline conditions and to accurately predict the effects of the Proposed Development. Known deficiencies, or where it has been necessary to make assumptions, are documented within individual topic chapters. For some topics, there are no commonly accepted methodologies for assessing impacts (such as in the case of socio-economic effects). In these cases, professional judgement and experience have been applied to inform the EIA.
- 1.3.27 Assumptions adopted are often of importance to environmental assessments. Typically, these assumptions are implicit, being largely dependent upon expert judgement. The approach adopted in the EIA is one of making assumptions explicit wherever possible in order that they may be understood and critically evaluated by external parties. This is particularly true of construction impacts, where assessments are based on broad assumptions made in advance of agreement and approval of specific construction programmes and methods. In such cases, the worst-case scenario has generally been tested.

#### **Parameter Plan**

- 1.3.28 The spatial elements of the Proposed Development are set out in the Parameter Plan (PP) which is a formal plan submitted for approval as part of the OPA. The purpose of the PP is to provide sufficient spatial information to fix key 'parameters' for an outline application and to provide sufficient detail to allow full consideration of the Proposed Development in its

context and is the basis upon which the environmental assessment work has been undertaken.

1.3.29 The PP for the Proposed Development has evolved over the preparation period of the application as a result of the following:

- (i) Design evolution in response to more detailed technical knowledge of the site and its surroundings;
- (ii) Results, feedback and suggested mitigation measures arising from the environmental assessments undertaken by the consultant team; and
- (iii) Results and feedback from stakeholder and public engagement activity.

1.3.30 The environmental assessment has been undertaken based on the **Parameter Plan [UAC092-002 Rev Q]** (referenced throughout the ES as the '**Parameter Plan**' or **PP**) and the Development Specification (including Design Principles) which further sets out the components of the Proposed Development. The PP is reproduced at **Appendix 2.1**.

## 1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

1.4.1 As noted above, this ES has been compiled by David Lock Associates, drawing together contributions from a number of specialist consultancies as relevant to each topic chapter.

1.4.2 Volume 1 of the ES (this document) is structured as set out below:

**Table 1.2 ES chapters and authors**

| Chapter    | Topic                                                           | Author                |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chapter 1  | Introduction                                                    | David Lock Associates |
| Chapter 2  | The Site and the Proposed Development                           | David Lock Associates |
| Chapter 3  | Planning Policy                                                 | David Lock Associates |
| Chapter 4  | Transport                                                       | ITP                   |
| Chapter 5  | Noise & Vibration                                               | RPS                   |
| Chapter 6  | Air Quality                                                     | RPS                   |
| Chapter 7  | Landscape & Visual Impact (including Arboricultural Assessment) | BMD                   |
| Chapter 8  | Built Heritage                                                  | HCUK                  |
| Chapter 9  | Archaeology                                                     | Oxford Archaeology    |
| Chapter 10 | Hydrology and Flood Risk                                        | AKTII                 |
| Chapter 11 | Ecology                                                         | BMD                   |
| Chapter 12 | Ground Conditions & Soils                                       | Shadbolt              |
| Chapter 13 | Socio-Economic & Health Effects                                 | David Lock Associates |
| Chapter 14 | Waste                                                           | RPS                   |
| Chapter 15 | Lighting                                                        | RPS                   |
| Chapter 16 | Utilities                                                       | UCML                  |
| Chapter 17 | Climate Change                                                  | Turleys               |
| Chapter 18 | Conclusion                                                      | David Lock Associates |

1.4.3 The individual topic chapters in Volume 1 (chapters 4 to 17 specifically) are structured as follows:

- **Introduction** – identifying the topic under consideration and setting out the competency of the assessor/author;
- **Assessment Methodology** – description of the scope and method of the assessment with reference to best practice. Description of the extent of the Study Area and data sources. Explanation of the significance criteria including how these have been derived with reference to the interaction between “magnitude” of “impacts” and the “sensitivity” of “receptors” for the purposes of assessing the significance of the effects of the Proposed Development;
- **Relevant Policy** – summarising policy, legislation and guidance relating specifically to the topic under consideration;
- **Assumptions, Uncertainties and Limitations**– records these for each topic and state how they have been addressed within the assessment;
- **Baseline Conditions** – providing a description of the baseline conditions pertinent to that topic for both the current baseline and projected future baseline conditions;
- **Potential Effects** – identifying likely significant effects in the absence of mitigation measures, during both the construction and post-completion stages of the Proposed Development;

- **Mitigation Measures** – proposing any measures which are necessary beyond the measures inherent within the Proposed Development - either 'inbuilt' during the design process, during construction or post-completion - to avoid or reduce any significant potential adverse effects;
- **Residual Effects** – identifying any residual effects of the Proposed Development either during construction or post-completion, taking account of the mitigation measures proposed and assessing the significance of those residual effects. This section includes a table summarising the assessed effects;
- **Cumulative Effects** – identification of any likely significant cumulative effects arising from the Proposed Development in combination with other defined development proposals.

## **1.5 AVAILABILITY OF THE DOCUMENT**

1.5.1 The timetable for consultation on the OPA including the ES will be determined by North Herts Council (NHC). Further information on the consultation can be obtained from the Council.

1.5.2 Once the application is registered and validated, the ES and Appendices will be available to view on the Planning section of the NHC website ([www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk))

1.5.3 Copies of the ES can be purchased from David Lock Associates at the address below:

David Lock Associates  
50 North Thirteenth Street  
Central Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK9 3BP  
Email: [mail@davidlock.com](mailto:mail@davidlock.com)  
Tel: 01908 666276

1.5.4 The Non-Technical Summary may be provided free of charge (and is downloadable from the NHC website).

1.5.5 **Written comments on the Environmental Statement should be made direct to NHC in order that comments can be formally lodged and considered as part of the consultation on the outline planning application.**