

Growing Baldock

Environmental Statement Volume 1: Text
Chapter 8: Built Heritage



October 2025

Urban&Civic

Hertfordshire

CONTENTS

8.1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
8.2	RELEVANT POLICY.....	2
	National Policy	2
	Local Policy.....	3
	Any Other Relevant Policy, Legislation or Guidance.....	3
8.3	ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY.....	4
	Scope	4
	Data Sources	4
	Assessment Approach	4
	Significance Criteria	5
	Uncertainties and Limitations	8
8.4	BASELINE CONDITIONS.....	10
	The Current Baseline.....	10
	The Projected Future Baseline	13
8.5	POTENTIAL EFFECTS.....	14
	Construction Stage	14
	Post-Completion Stage	14
8.6	MITIGATION MEASURES.....	17
	Construction Stage	17
	Post-Completion Stage	17
8.7	RESIDUAL EFFECTS.....	18
	Construction Stage	18
	Post-Completion Stage	18
	Summary of Effects	18
8.8	CUMULATIVE EFFECTS	19
8.9	REFERENCE LIST.....	20

APPENDICES

Appendix 8.1	Heritage Impact Assessment
--------------	----------------------------

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1.1 This chapter of the ES has been prepared by HCUK Group and presents an assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on built heritage. Mitigation measures are identified, where appropriate, to avoid, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects identified and/or enhance likely beneficial effects. The nature and significance of the likely residual effects are then reported.
- 8.1.2 The author of this chapter is Dr. Paula Jones, Director at HCUK. Dr Jones has over 20 years of undertaking and writing Heritage Impact Assessments and ES Chapters. She has provided expert evidence at public inquiries and many other appeals involving heritage assets and has given expert evidence on heritage.
- 8.1.3 A Heritage Impact Assessment relating to the Proposed Development has been prepared by HCUK Group Ltd. The full report is enclosed in **Appendix 8.1** to this report. The findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment are considered below.

8.2 RELEVANT POLICY

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.2.1 The decision maker is required by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting when exercising planning functions. The decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed building, and there is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm its heritage significance.
- 8.2.2 Measures being implemented as a consequence of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2024 will have the effect of making the desirability of preserving or enhancing other types of designated heritage asset a statutory consideration.
- 8.2.3 The setting of a heritage asset can contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:
- "The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*
- 8.2.4 The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset to be considered in terms of either "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" as described within paragraphs 214 and 215 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.
- 8.2.5 Paragraphs 214 and 215 of the NPPF refer to two different balancing exercises in which harm to significance, if any, is to be balanced with public benefit. Paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) online makes it clear that some heritage-specific benefits can be public benefits. Paragraph 18a-018-20190723 of the same NPPG makes it clear that it is important to be explicit about the category of harm (that is, whether paragraph 214 or 215 of the NPPF applies, if at all), and the extent of harm, when dealing with decisions affecting designated heritage assets, as follows:
- 8.2.6 Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.
- 8.2.7 Paragraphs 212 and 213 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

- 8.2.8 One of the overarching objectives of sustainable development, as expressed in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, is mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy. Historic England has a Climate Change Strategy, and has published Mitigation, Adaptation and Energy Measures. More specifically, Historic England has published a Heritage and Climate Change Carbon Reduction Plan (March 2022). These and similar strategies run in parallel with heritage-specific methodologies relating to the assessment of significance, and the effect of change on significance.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 8.2.9 National Planning Practice Guidance provides further information on decision-making in relation to impacts on heritage assets, and on the definition of “significance” and what is “the setting of a heritage asset”.

Local Policy**North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2022)**

- 8.2.10 A full review of local policy contained within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan has been undertaken. Of specific relevance are Policy SP13 ‘Historic Environment’ and Policy SP14 ‘Policy SP14: Site BA1 – North of Baldock’ of the North Herts Local Plan 2011 – 2031.
- 8.2.11 Policy G5 (Baldock conservation area) and G6 (Local heritage assets) within the Baldock, Bygrave & Clothall Neighbourhood Plan (2021) are also relevant.

Any Other Relevant Policy, Legislation or Guidance

- 8.2.12 Historic England has issued extensive guidance on development affecting the historic environment. Two guidance documents are discussed further in Appendix 8.1, namely Conservation Principles 2008 (which gives an important definition of “harm” to the significance of heritage assets) and The Setting of Heritage Assets, second edition, December 2017, generally known as GPA 3. The latter document suggests a stepped methodological approach to the assessment of the effect of development within the setting of heritage assets, followed in this Chapter and in Appendix 8.1.
- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition). Historic England (2017 edition)
 - Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England (2008)

8.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Scope

- 8.3.1 This Chapter assesses the effect of the Proposed Development on the setting and significance of “designated” heritage assets, specifically (1) listed buildings, (2) registered parks and gardens, (3) conservation areas, and (4) scheduled monuments, as applicable. The initial desk-based study considered the potential susceptibility of designated heritage assets within a 2km radius of the application site.

Data Sources

- 8.3.2 The Heritage baseline has been compiled using readily available information from documentary and cartographic sources, primarily:
- Maps and documents held by online resources;
 - The British Geological Survey (BGS) onshore digital maps;
 - The National Heritage List for England (Historic England);
 - Aerial photographs held by various online resources;
 - Site visits carried out by the author in October 2021.
- 8.3.3 The assessment was carried out using a combination of fieldwork and documentary research, mainly to inform the Heritage Impact Assessment found at Appendix 8.1.

Assessment Approach

- 8.3.4 The Heritage Impact Assessment has followed the processes set out within Historic England guidance: The Setting of Heritage Assets (second edition, December 2017), better known as GPA3. The guidance encourages the use of a stepped approach to the assessment of effects on setting and significance, namely:
- Step 1: The identification of the relevant assets;
 - Step 2: A statement explaining the significance of those assets, and the contribution made by setting;
 - Step 3: An assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on the setting and significance of the assets; and,
 - Step 4: Consideration of mitigation (if applicable) in those cases where there will be harm to significance.
- 8.3.5 It should be noted that it is not a prescriptive methodology and that it forms the basis of advice given by Historic England when responding to consultations. The assessments of setting and significance (and the assessments of effects) must be made with primary reference to the four main elements of special significance identified in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), but there are other elements of setting which may be relevant to varying degrees. In many cases it is also appropriate to consider aspects such as:

- Landscape and topography: The landscape surrounding the heritage asset, including past changes.
- Routes: Important routes to and from the heritage asset, past and present.
- Character: The character of the heritage asset and its surroundings, including past changes.
- Views in/out/across the asset: An assessment of key views, which are a component of the setting of the heritage asset, including past changes.
- Context: This is described in English Heritage's Conservation Principles 2008 as a concept which embraces any relationship between a place and other places. It is different from setting, which relates to the surroundings of the asset.
- When assessing the effect of the Proposed Development on the setting and significance of the heritage asset it is relevant to consider:
- Cumulative impacts: This may include the cumulative effect of the development in conjunction with other developments which are in the planning system, as well as additional effects to baseline conditions.
- Permanence: The degree to which the proposal will bring about permanent or temporary change. In the case of wind turbines, the Proposed Development is limited and not permanent.
- Diurnal and seasonal change: Whether the development will be more visible or in winter, or whether it would cause light spill.

Significance Criteria

- 8.3.6 The following tabular methodology is a guide adapted from ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) guidance on impacts on World Heritage Properties with reference to comparable approaches in the DMRB (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges) and guidance issued by Historic England in relation to impacts on setting and significance. It intended to be a guide, not a mechanical process, and it is not a substitute for professional judgment.
- 8.3.7 Heritage assets constitute elements (a building, monument, site, place or area) within the wider landscape and may include small components of the wider landscape, such as houses or barns, but may also include larger areas such as areas of parkland or subsurface archaeological deposits. Heritage assets can vary widely in character and include designated sites and areas such as world heritage sites, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and heritage coasts, but also places like new towns, historic orchards and canals that may be recognised for their heritage significance.
- 8.3.8 It is recognised that settings can be multi-layered and combined. Conservation areas containing listed buildings will form part of the setting of those buildings and will have a setting in themselves. Historic towns, which may contain conservation areas are also recognised as having settings (through greenbelt policy).

-
- 8.3.9 Assets were visited to ascertain an understanding of the topography, condition, views, landscape surroundings and key features of the setting of the designated assets, including visiting areas overlooking historic settlements and conservation areas and gaining views from and toward any scheduled monuments and listed buildings.
- 8.3.10 The methodology looks first at the heritage significance (= value/sensitivity) of the heritage assets, then at sources of effects, then at factors in the assessment of magnitude of change, and finally at the significance of the effects in EIA terms. Heritage significance, as defined in the NPPF, lies in the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. However, in the context of EIA, in general terms, the term heritage 'significance' is used to denote the relative scale of an environmental effect according to the sensitivity / importance / value of a receptor and the magnitude of the effect.
- 8.3.11 **Table 8.1** describes the criteria used in this assessment to determine the magnitude of impact and was adapted from the ICOMOS guidance. The table sets out factors to be used in the assessment together with the application of professional judgement. It should be noted that not all change is harmful, and that the extent of change should be equated to the terminology relating to harm in paragraphs 214 and 215 of the NPPF for the purposes of comparison.
- 8.3.12 **Table 8.2** is adapted from the ICOMOS guidance sets out a guide for the first stage in this assessment, namely an assessment of the sensitivity of receptors (designated heritage assets).
- 8.3.13 **Table 8.3** contains a significance of effects matrix, which assesses the magnitude of the change in relation to the significance (= value/sensitivity) of the heritage asset. Like the other tables, it requires professional judgement in order to make the assessment, and the matrix is a tool, not a mechanical system in itself.
- 8.3.14 Any effect falling within the Very Large/Large or Medium categories within this matrix would be capable of being considered to be a Significant Effect within the EIA definition. Whilst a different heritage methodology has been applied for Chapter 8, this is the equivalent of Major / Moderate as outlined in other ES Chapters.
- 8.3.15 Those identified as medium/low may or may not be significant EIA effects (equivalent of Minor significance of effect). Where the matrix offers more than one significance option, professional judgment is used to decide which option is most appropriate.

Table 8.1 - Magnitude of Impacts

Magnitude of Impact	Description
Large	Total alteration or comprehensive change to setting. Change to most or all key elements or attributes, or major changes that affect associations, visual links and cultural appreciation. Total loss or considerable physical change to a heritage asset.
Moderate	Change to many key elements or considerable change to setting that affects the character of the asset or which causes significant change to the setting. Considerable change to cultural appreciation. A physical change or difference to a key element or characteristic.
Small	Slight alteration to fabric or slight change to setting, including change to key elements leading to noticeable change. Limited change to noise levels, sound quality and access. Change that affects cultural appreciation. A physical change or difference to a key element or characteristic.
Negligible	Very minor change to key physical components or to setting that hardly affects the asset. Very slight change to noise levels, sound quality and access. Slight physical change that does not erode the heritage significance of the heritage asset
No Change	No change to the heritage asset or its setting.

Table 8.2 – Sensitivity of Receptors

Sensitivity of Receptors	Description
Very High	World Heritage Sites including buildings, urban landscapes or historic landscapes of international value whether designated or not. Extremely well preserved historic landscapes with exceptional coherence and time depth, and areas associated with cultural heritage innovations of global importance.
High	Nationally designated archaeological areas including buildings that have exceptional qualities (typically listed grade I or II*), conservation areas containing very important buildings and spaces, and structures of clear national importance. Nationally designated historic landscapes and designated areas associated with globally important activities, innovations or people.
Medium	Designated or non-designated heritage assets and buildings (typically listed grade II) that have exceptional qualities or associations. Conservation areas that contain buildings that contribute significantly to historic character. Historic townscapes with important historic integrity. Designated special historic landscapes and areas on local registers for their regional or local significance.

Low	Designated or non-designated heritage assets and buildings (typically listed grade II) that have exceptional qualities or associations. Conservation areas that contain buildings that contribute significantly to historic character. Historic townscapes with important historic integrity. Designated special historic landscapes and areas on local registers for their regional or local significance.
Negligible	Assets with little or no surviving archaeological interest, buildings or urban landscapes of no architectural interest, intrusive buildings, and landscapes with little or no significance or historic interest.

Table 8.3 - Significance of Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Change				
	Large	Moderate	Small	Negligible	No change
Very High	Very large (significant)	Large/ Very Large (significant)	Medium/ Large (significant)	Small (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)
High	Large/ Very Large (significant)	Medium/ Large (significant)	Small/ Medium (significant)	Small (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)
Medium	Medium/ Large (significant)	Medium (significant)	Small (not significant)	Neutral/ Small (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)
Low	Small/ Medium (significant)	Small (not significant)	Neutral/ Small (not significant)	Neutral/ Small (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)
Negligible	Small (not significant)	Neutral/Small (not significant)	Neutral/ Small (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)	Neutral (not significant)

Uncertainties and Limitations

- 8.3.16 This chapter forms an assessment based on the available information at the time of writing. There are no notable limitations to this assessment.

Flexible Land Use

- 8.3.17 The heritage effects have been considered in relation to the parameters set out within the Parameter Plan (**Appendix 2.1**) and Development Specification (**Appendix 2.2**). This includes a flexible land use parcel on BA3, with three potential development 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); or
- 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).

8.3.18 The spatial extent and types of land uses on the parameter plan for BA3 has been considered for all options, noting that there will be no difference in the heritage effects posed by the three options.

8.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

The Current Baseline

- 8.4.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the areas of the Site proposed for development, however there is one scheduled monument which falls partially within the red line boundary, and there are a number of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and a conservation area within close proximity of the site boundaries. No non-designated heritage assets have been identified by the Local Planning Authority during pre-application consultations or during the course of this Heritage Impact Assessment.
- 8.4.2 The Proposed Development has the potential to affect the setting of a number of designated heritage assets and consequently their significance, and they are therefore the subject of the HIA (**Appendix 8.1**) and are considered further below.
- 8.4.3 The heritage assets identified as being potentially susceptible to impacts and therefore addressed further comprise:
- The Baldock conservation area;
 - Two scheduled monuments: The Romano-British small town and Late Iron Age settlement off Clothall Road and the Settlement site south of Blackhorse Farm;
 - Four Grade II listed dwellings along North Road (The Nook, Long Bailey, Blackhorse Farmhouse and The Compasses);
 - The Grade I Church of St Mary, Baldock.
- 8.4.4 Each of the assets listed above is discussed below in terms of their potential susceptibility (Step 1) and the contribution made by the application site (as existing) to their setting, and the contribution that setting makes to their significance (Step 2). In each instance, the asset is then identified as requiring further consideration under Step 3 (addressing the effects of the proposals) and/or Step 4 (mitigation measures, if applicable), or is scoped out of further assessment.

The Baldock Conservation Area

- 8.4.5 The application site is located beyond the boundaries of the conservation area, and is separated from the historic core by the built form which surrounds it, however given its still relatively close proximity any effects on the setting of the conservation area and its character and appearance require further consideration.
- 8.4.6 The Baldock conservation area is characterised by a diverse range of historic buildings, however it is principally comprised of 18th Century buildings, including large Georgian Town Houses, such as Clare House, The Manor House and Holford House, as well as older buildings which were re-fronted in brick during this period, such as The George Inn. The conservation area also contains examples of 16th and 17th Century timber-framed buildings, such as 'The Gates' and No.41 High Street and No.1 Church Street (all of which

have been rendered) and the Old Bull Public House, Church Street (where the timber-framing is visible).

- 8.4.7 North Herts Council produced a 'Character Statement for the Baldock Conservation Area' in 2003, and provides an assessment of its location and setting as follows:

Baldock is situated in the centre of North Hertfordshire, set within chalk hills, close to the Garden City of Letchworth. Baldock is set just above the head of the River Ivel in a bowl, which is created by the slopes of the steep chalk scarp to the south and the slightly more undulating chalk slopes to the north and east. This is an open arable landscape with sparse woodland cover. The only prominent view from within the Conservation Area is from the southern end of the High Street to open countryside. All other views to the surrounding landscape are distant, or in the approach to the settlement. The main approaches are highlighted by informal groups of ornamental trees. (2003, 7).

- 8.4.8 As noted above, and during the site visits undertaken as part of this assessment, outward views from within the conservation area are prevented by the local topography, as well as the intervening built form which surrounds the historic core. Indeed, even views from the southern end of the High Street which are highlighted in the statement above, are no longer attested.
- 8.4.9 The application site therefore forms part of the open landscape setting which physically surrounds the settlement of Baldock (and contained within that is the conservation area), however it is not appreciable from within it. The settlement of Baldock is visible from the application site to the north, however the distinctive character and appearance of the area is not appreciable from this distance, and with the exception of the Church of St Mary, none of the individual historic buildings are discernible.
- 8.4.10 Given the above observations, the Site, and the setting of the Baldock conservation area makes a very limited contribution to its significance, character and appearance, and its distinctive architectural and historic interest is best appreciated from within the town centre and in close proximity.

Scheduled Monuments

- 8.4.11 There are two scheduled monuments one which is partially located within the Site and another which is within close proximity of the Site. Both of which adjoin the existing settlement of Baldock. These comprise the Romano-British small town and Late Iron Age settlement off Clothall Road and the Settlement site south of Blackhorse Farm. Both scheduled monuments are currently experienced as areas of open greenspace on the edges of Baldock but are not visually tangible historic features (i.e. there is no visible built form or clear earthworks which give them prominence).
- 8.4.12 The significance of these monuments stems principally from their archaeological (evidential value), and this will not be altered by the proposals. Their settings are

currently characterised by the surrounding settlement of Baldock, particularly at Clothall Road where built form and roads lie to the north, east, south and west of the scheduled area. The Proposed Development would not have any effect on the current setting of the scheduled monument off Clothall Road and will not pose any harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset.

- 8.4.13 By their very nature, both monuments are 'settlements' and thus their current setting is an 'evolved' version of their original siting. The monument south of Blackhorse Farm is currently situated at the edge of the Baldock settlement, and the masterplan would see a greater amount of built form sited in its vicinity. However, the masterplan has been designed to include sufficient green space to mitigate this effect along North Road, and no consequential harm is posed to its significance as a designated heritage asset by the change within its setting.

Listed buildings outside the conservation area

- 8.4.14 There are four listed buildings located outside the conservation area which, given their proximity to the Site, have been afforded consideration. These include four Grade II listed dwellings which are all located along North Road, The Nook, Long Bailey, Blackhorse Farmhouse and The Compasses.
- 8.4.15 The significance of these assets stems principally from their architectural and historic interests.
- 8.4.16 The Nook Cottage dates to the late 17th century and is a (much altered) timber-framed and thatched cottage, exemplifying traditional building techniques and is a small roadside dwelling. Long Bailey was formerly 2 cottages, constructed of red brick, timber frame, and a tiled roof, dating to the mid to late 18th century and with 20th century extensions. The Compasses was formerly a public house, dating to the 17th century (or earlier in the western block) and with an 18th century east wing. Blackhorse farmhouse is an 18th century farmhouse constructed of red and grey brick on its ground floor and colour washed pebble dash on the first floor with a hipped tiled roof.
- 8.4.17 The site visits confirmed that while the proposals would alter one aspect of the current setting of these assets (which currently is characterised by rural/agricultural surrounds and the roadside), any consequential impact on significance would be negligible.
- 8.4.18 Blackhorse farmhouse, which is located to the west of North Road, possesses no historic link to the land comprising the Site, and views from its location across North Road are limited by the substantial hedgerow on the eastern side of the road.
- 8.4.19 None of these assets is considered to be particularly susceptible to the level of change posed, and the masterplan has further mitigated this potential negligible effect on setting through the inclusion of a very substantial area of green space (Bygrave Common)

(including landscaping, parkland and open space) which would intervene between these assets and the new residential areas.

- 8.4.20 The Proposed Development is therefore not considered to pose any harm to the significance of these assets.

Parish Church of St Mary (Grade I)

- 8.4.21 The Church of St Mary is in the centre of Baldock, and within the conservation area.
- 8.4.22 The significance of the church stems principally from its considerable architectural and historic interest, as well as its communal value as a religious centre, place of worship and memorial. The list description provides the following information regarding its phasing:

Church of Saint Mary (Formerly listed under Hitchin Street) C13 east end of chancel, C14 west end. C14 nave, aisles, north and south chapels, west tower and 2 storey south porch with C15 turret. C15 windows and nave clerestorey. North porch added 1836. C19 spire. C13 double piscina in chancel, south chapel C14 piscina and double sedilia. C15 north chapel brasses and restored screen to chapels and chancel. Octagonal C13 font. Fine C18 and C19 marble wall tablets including Caldecott memorial with carved figures, 1846 by E H Baily. North aisle window 1881 by C E Kempe.

- 8.4.23 Its 19th century spire is visible from several vantage points both within the settlement and beyond it, although views outward from the church are entirely prohibited by the immediate surrounding built form of the town. The setting of the church is characterised by its town centre location, and by the prominence of its spire throughout the settlement. In views back towards Baldock from the application site the spire remains a visible feature within the town, although pylons compete with the spire and exceed its height in these long-range views.
- 8.4.24 The Site does not form a contributory part of the setting of this asset, beyond being a component of the rural surrounds of the town. The proposals will not alter the context within which the church is appreciated, or appear in any views with, from towards or alongside it. No harm is posed to the significance of this heritage asset and it is scoped out of further consideration.

The Projected Future Baseline

- 8.4.25 Climate change has the potential to impact built heritage assets through more extreme weather events, for example increased and prolonged heavy rainfall may increase the frequency or severity of flood events, resulting in damage to historic buildings and places. Prolonged periods of drought or rain also have the potential to change ground conditions where historic buildings with already limited foundations may be damaged or collapse.

8.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Construction Stage

- 8.5.1 The construction phase poses effects for those assets in closest proximity (scheduled monuments, and the Listed Buildings along North Road). These effects would potentially include increased levels of traffic, noise and dust associated with construction. However, the effects would be temporary, and the construction would be phased, which would reduce the overall effect. It is not considered that the construction stage poses any significant adverse impact on the identified receptors.

Post-Completion Stage

- 8.5.2 As part of the GPA3 settings assessment eight designated heritage assets were initially identified as being potentially susceptible to impacts by the Proposed Development due to either their close proximity or the potential extents of their settings. These assets included the Baldock conservation area, two scheduled monuments, four Grade II listed buildings along North Road (Blackhorse Farmhouse, The Nook, Long Bailey and The Compasses) and the Grade I Listed Church of St Mary within Baldock centre.
- 8.5.3 The site visits and further consideration under Steps 2 and 3 of the GPA3 (see also **Appendix 8.1**) indicate that while the Proposed Development will increase the amount of built form in the broader vicinity of these assets, and extend the current settlement area of Baldock, any potential adverse impacts are to be mitigated through the design and layout of the scheme.
- 8.5.4 The effects on each susceptible asset are discussed further below.

Baldock Conservation Area

- 8.5.5 The Site is located well beyond the boundaries of the conservation area, however given its still relatively close proximity and in acknowledgment that settings may be particularly spatially extensive, any effects on the setting of the conservation area and its character and appearance have been fully considered.
- 8.5.6 There is a sufficient 'buffer' of existing built form around the conservation area and the listed buildings within it, that separates the Site from the heritage asset visually, and more broadly experientially. Therefore, while the Proposed Development would increase the overall settlement area of Baldock, and would reduce the agricultural surrounds which are currently experienced along North Road and Bygrave Road, it is not considered that this effect would consequently pose any harm to the character and appearance or the significance of the conservation area as a heritage asset. The proposed layout includes substantial areas of greenspace within these areas, and this would serve to retain the open character of the settlement's broader rural surrounds.

- 8.5.7 In EIA terms, the magnitude of impact on this medium sensitivity receptor is negligible, meaning that the overall effect is **neutral/small** and not significant.

Scheduled Monuments

- 8.5.8 The scheduled monuments comprise the Romano-British small town and Late Iron Age settlement off Clothall Road and the Settlement site south of Blackhorse Farm. Both of these scheduled monuments are currently experienced as areas of open greenspace on the edges of Baldock but are not visually tangible historic features (i.e. there is no visible built form or clear earthworks which give them prominence).
- 8.5.9 As discussed in the preceding section, the significance of these monuments stems principally from their archaeological (evidential value), and this will not be altered by the Proposed Development.
- 8.5.10 Their settings are currently characterised by the surrounding settlement of Baldock, particularly at Clothall Road, and by their very nature, both are 'settlements' sites. The layout has been designed to include sufficient green space to mitigate any effects caused by the growth of the settlement off North Road and south of Clothall Common, and while there would be a change in the character of these assets wider settings, it is not considered that this would pose any consequential harm to their significance.
- 8.5.11 In EIA terms, the magnitude of impact on this high sensitivity receptor is negligible, meaning that the overall effect is **small** and not significant.

Listed Buildings along North Road

- 8.5.12 These include four Grade II listed dwellings along North Road (The Nook, Long Bailey, Blackhorse farmhouse and The Compasses). While the Proposed Development would alter an aspect of the current setting of these assets (which currently is characterised by agricultural land), following Steps 2 and 3 of the GPA3 assessment it is evident that this would not cause harm to their significance.
- 8.5.13 None of these assets are considered to be particularly susceptible to the level of change posed, and the development will further mitigate this potential effect through the inclusion of substantial areas of green space (including landscaping, parkland and open space) which would intervene between these assets and the new residential areas.
- 8.5.14 In EIA terms, the magnitude of impact on this medium sensitivity receptor is negligible, meaning that the overall effect is **neutral/small** and not significant.

Grade I Church of St Mary

- 8.5.15 The church, which is situated in the centre of the conservation area, is the most prominent asset in the area. There is wide visibility of its spire from surrounding areas, including

from the Site itself (north of Bygrave Road). There are no outward views from the church (i.e. views from the church will not be changed by the Proposed Development).

- 8.5.16 The Proposed Development will take into consideration the wider visibility of the church spire, and there is the potential for some improvement of views towards it and greater accessibility of these views (which are currently from private/ inaccessible agricultural land). Strategic views from the development to Baldock, particularly to St Mary's church, to be reinforced by planting, alignment of streets and routes and parcel and block layout along view corridor (as per Design Principles).
- 8.5.17 The increased levels of built form surrounding the existing settlement, which the Proposed Development will create, is not considered to have any detrimental effect on the setting of the church. The church is clearly sited at the centre of the settlement it serves, and it will remain so should consent be granted. The Proposed Development is not considered to pose any harm to the significance of this asset.
- 8.5.18 In EIA terms, the magnitude of impact on this high sensitivity receptor is negligible, meaning that the overall effect is **small** and not significant.

8.6 MITIGATION MEASURES**Construction Stage**

- 8.6.1 There will be no construction impacts on any of the designated heritage assets and therefore no mitigation measures are required.

Post-Completion Stage

- 8.6.2 Mitigation with regard to the potential impacts on designated heritage assets has been considered throughout the development and design evolution of the Proposed Development. A Design Principle is included in the DAS to protect and enhance strategic views, particularly from the development to St Mary's Church. Through this process, any effects have been reduced or avoided entirely by embedded mitigation forming part of the design and layout.

8.7 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 8.7.1 Mitigation with regard to designated heritage assets has been undertaken through design (i.e. there is no additional mitigation to be implemented). Therefore, no residual effects remain following the implementation of the identified mitigation measures.

Construction Stage

- 8.7.2 No residual effects have been identified during the construction stage.

Post-Completion Stage

- 8.7.3 No residual effects have been identified post-completion.

Summary of Effects

- 8.7.4 In summary, while the Proposed Development will pose various (but very minimal) levels of change within the settings of these assets the carefully developed proposals have effectively mitigated any adverse effects through design and layout, and no harm would therefore be posed to the significance of the designated heritage assets. No significant effects have been identified in EIA terms.
- 8.7.5 Paragraphs 214 to 216 of the NPPF are therefore not engaged by the proposals, and there would be preservation for the purposes of Section 66(1) of the Act.
- 8.7.6 The effects identified are summarised in **Table 8.4** below.

Table 8.4 – Summary of Effects

Potential Effect	Significance (pre-mitigation)	Mitigation Measure	Significance of residual effect
Construction Stage			
Additional traffic/ noise within setting of designated heritage assets	Neutral/Negligible	N/A	Neutral/Negligible
Post-Completion Stage			
Potential change to setting of designated heritage assets	Neutral/small (minor)	Effects mitigated by design/layout	Neutral/Negligible

8.8 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 8.8.1 No significant effects have been identified arising from the Proposed Development, and no cumulative effects have been identified as occurring (effects in combination with those arising from other reasonably foreseeable projects in the environs of the Site as identified in Chapter 2).

8.9 REFERENCE LIST

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England (2008)

Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

Interactive Mapping Tool, MAGiC Map (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>)

Listing, Historic England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>)

Map Images, National Library of Scotland (<https://maps.nls.uk>)

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

National Planning Practice Guidance, 2024

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, Second Edition, Historic England (2017 edition)