**Key Issues:**
The issues with developing a large residential development adjacent to Baldock were:

**Landscape Character** – Baldock is a market town with a small population number of c.10,000 people and a semi-rural character. In this case, the new residential development had to ensure that the sensitivity of the existing landscape was respected.

**Transport** – a new link road had to be provided to reduce the pressure on the existing transport links in Baldock town. The link road is connecting North Road in the west with Royston Road to the south, and bridging over the London-Cambridge railway line.

**Land Topography** – An existing ridgeline which crossed east-west across the northern portion of the site meant that the new residential estate had to be screened using Strategic Landscape Planting to reduce the views from the rural north.

**Historical monuments** – The development had to be designed in such way that any adverse impacts on the setting of the scheduled monuments and their significance is minimised through woodland screening.

**Purpose of the project:**
WYG worked to provide multi-disciplinary consultancy to support an outline planning application for a new mixed-use residential development. The final Environmental Statement was submitted to the Hertfordshire County Council for consideration in January 2018: mixed-use development of up to 3,295 residential units, a new local centre, new primary schools, one secondary school, 18.3ha of Use Class ‘B’ employment land use, open space and allotments.

**Description of the project:**
The development site is divided into two distinctive areas: Baldock North and Baldock South East.

**Baldock North** - comprising up to 2,800 dwellings, a new local centre, primary and secondary schools, a healthcare hub, up to 1,900sqm of ‘A’ Class land uses including a supermarket, open space, nature conservation, recreation, landscaping and associated facilities.

**Baldock South East** - comprising up to 495 dwellings, up to 18.3 ha of Use Class ‘B’ Employment land uses, open space, nature conservation, education provision, recreation, landscaping and associated facilities.
EIA Learning Outcomes

Lessons learnt:

It is important to emphasise the significance of communication between consultants, the planning authority and the client during the EIA process to ensure that all potential effects are identified and mitigated.

If the Planning Authority has been more insistent on a collaborative working agreement for the two Sites being brought forward in Baldock, then greater certainty could have been achieved at the start of the EIA process in respect to the assessment of the potential baseline and cumulative effects. This would also have helped the Design and Landscape teams to produce a more comprehensive masterplan of the two sites at the early stages of the EIA, for these to be communicated and shared between the EIA consultants.

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Lessons learnt continued:

This case study demonstrates the value of EIA being included at the earliest stages of site selection and master planning, and the significance of this being consistent throughout all design stages.

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