

Development Management
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire

11 June 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Reference : 3/25/0834/FUL

Address : Bockings 12 Church End Walkern Hertfordshire SG2 7PB

Proposal : Demolition of garages and erection of detached dwelling.

In considering this application the Parish Council would point out that the housing increase target for the village as set out in the East Herts District Plan has already been well exceeded. However, the Parish Council supports development proposals that align with sustainable development principles in the NPPF, East Herts District Plan, and Walkern Neighbourhood Plan. **In this case, for the reasons outlined the Council supports the application, subject to the conditions set out below.**

Considerations

The site consists of redundant garages, identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as having a negative impact. The appraisal encourages their replacement, and the proposed design uses materials carefully chosen to reflect the village's historic character. Furthermore, The appraisal acknowledges the garages' negative impact and welcomes their replacement with a higher-quality design. The site is not prominent in wider views but fits the area's varied dwelling styles, generally detached with space around them. The proposed development would integrate with the local character, sitting lower than most surrounding properties and nestled into higher ground at the rear.

Policy WLK12 of the Neighbourhood Plan supports small-scale infill development within the village boundary, prioritising brownfield sites such as this. This policy also requires that

- appropriate access, car parking provision and turning arrangements are provided
- important views and open spaces that contribute to the enjoyment of residents of the village and are important to the character or appearance of the conservation area are retained, and
- redevelopment sites should respect existing building lines, scale and massing of surrounding buildings

It is considered that the proposed development does satisfy these requirements.

Policy WLK14 of the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan details the scale and design of all new development should reflect the character of Walkern, and its historic Conservation Area as detailed in the Walkern Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2016. It states specifically that:

- Building materials and detailing should be complementary to the existing character of Walkern as set out in the Walkern Conservation Area Appraisal (2016), and sympathetic to the form, style and materiality of traditional village properties, particularly those that surround the build
- New buildings should respect neighbouring roof profiles, heights and pitches, the characteristic spacing between buildings, historic building lines, density of development in the village and cherished views and vistas.

The developer has made significant efforts to meet these requirements, which is a key strength of the proposal.

Policy GBR2 of the East Herts District Plan which seeks to maintain the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt as a valued countryside resource states that certain types of development will be permitted, provided that they are compatible with the character and appearance of the rural area. This includes:

- the replacement, extension or alteration of a building, provided the size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the site and/or surrounding areas;
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) in sustainable locations, where appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the site and/or surrounding area

It is considered that the proposed development does satisfy these requirements.

Of particular note is that from the outset the developer has held a series of meetings with the Parish Council and local residents to explain the proposals and answer questions and concerns.

Conditions to be put in place and enforced

If the application is approved, we recommend the following conditions are implemented and enforced:

1. **Highway Cleanliness:** Measures must be in place to minimise the deposition of mud, soil, and other materials from the site onto the highway. All construction vehicles leaving the site must undergo wheel cleaning.
2. **Noise and Disruption Management:**
 - a. Workers must not use adjoining roads for overflow parking during construction.

- b. A **Construction Traffic Management Plan** must be established to minimise the impact of construction vehicles on the local road network.
- 3. **Working Hours:**
 - a. Site preparation, demolition, construction, and related activities must be restricted to:
 - i. **Monday–Friday:** 08:00 – 18:00
 - ii. **Saturday:** 08:00 – 13:00
 - iii. **No work on Sundays or Bank/Public Holidays**
 - b. Vehicles arriving or leaving the site must do so within these hours.
- 4. **Traffic Management:** Construction traffic must not obstruct the narrowing section of the road, ensuring pedestrian safety and continuous emergency access to the top house.
- 5. **Resident Access:** Construction must not impede residents' ability to access their properties for work or social purposes. Temporary access arrangements must be provided as needed.
- 6. **Parking Restrictions:** Construction vehicles must not use the church car park, which is designated for church activities, including foodbank services, coffee mornings, and funeral gatherings. Alternative parking must be arranged.
- 7. **Overflow Parking:** If off-site parking for construction vehicles is required, the designated overflow car park owned by the family must be used, preventing informal or obstructive roadside parking.
- 8. **Road Reinstatement:** Upon construction completion, all affected roadways must be restored to a suitable condition. Any damage, including potholes caused by construction traffic, must be repaired to ensure safe infrastructure for local use.

Yours faithfully
on behalf of Walkern Parish Council

Abi Brown
Clerk to Walkern Parish Council