

North Walsham East – PF/25/2503 – Replacement of 8 garages/storage sheds with 5 shipping storage containers (part retrospective) – Land rear of 1 Nelson Road, North Walsham, Norfolk
Applicant: Mr G Payne

Minor Development

Target Date: 20th January 2026

Extension of Time: 24 March 2026

Case Officer: Joseph Barrow

Full Planning Permission

PREFACE

This application is referred to this meeting of Development Committee following deferral of the item during the meeting of Development Committee on 19th March 2026. The item was deferred to enable a site visit by members of the committee. The site visit was completed on Thursday 2nd April 2026. There are no new material considerations to bring to the attention of members, the same report is therefore found below. The application should be heard in an unfettered manner without prejudice or reference to earlier representations or debate.

RELEVANT CONSTRAINTS

Civil Parish – North Walsham
District Ward – North Walsham East
North Walsham Residential Area
North Walsham Settlement Boundary

THE APPLICATION

Seeks part-retrospective planning consent for the demolition of 8no. garages on the site, and the installation of 5no. shipping containers for domestic storage purposes.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

At the request of Local Ward Cllr Kate Leith on the basis that there are currently two (of the proposed five) large, industrial metal units standing on concrete blocks on this tight residential back-land plot, directly behind people's homes, secured behind industrial metal fencing. Their bulk, height and utilitarian appearance are wholly out of keeping with the small-scale domestic garages, gardens and traditional rooflines around them.

CONSULTATIONS

Norfolk County Council Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions

North Norfolk District Council Environmental Protection Officer – No objection subject

to condition

REPRESENTATIONS

5 letters of objection have been received during the course of the application. The main concerns are summarised (full public comments can be viewed on the public website):

Objections:

- Concerns the site could be commercial in nature with increased traffic and amenity disturbance.
- Design and amenity concerns caused by the change in design.
- Reported land contamination.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS:

Art. 8: The right to respect for private and family life.

Art. 1 of the First Protocol: The right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions

Having considered the above matters, APPROVAL of this application as recommended is considered to be justified, proportionate and in accordance with planning law.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 - SECTION 17

The application raises no significant crime and disorder issues.

LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are not considered to be material to this case.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

Adopted North Norfolk Local Plan:

CC1 – Delivering Climate Resilient Sustainable Growth

CC9 – Sustainable Transport

CC13 – Protecting Environmental Quality

SS1 – Spatial Strategy

HC7 – Parking Provision

ENV6 – Protection of Amenity

ENV8 – High Quality Design

Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024):

Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Documents:

North Norfolk Design Guidance (2011)

**OFFICER ASSESSMENT:
MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

- 1. Principle of development**
- 2. Design**
- 3. Amenity**
- 4. Highway Impacts**
- 5. Land Contamination**
- 6. Planning Balance and Conclusion**

1. Principle of Development

The site is located within the settlement boundary of a North Walsham, a large growth town, as determined by Local Plan Policy SS1.

The purpose of Local Plan Policy SS1 is to set out the distribution of development (spatial strategy) and provide the framework to deliver sustainable growth to meet the existing and future needs for all types of development. The spatial strategy establishes a settlement hierarchy of identified Large Growth Towns, Small Growth Towns, Large Growth Villages, Small Growth Villages and Countryside Policy Area. Development will be permitted within the defined Settlement Boundaries of the Selected Settlements subject to compliance with the policies of the Local Plan.

The application is part retrospective as removal of some of the garages has already taken place. In total the proposal details the loss of 8no. garages / storage sheds (including two which have already been removed) and the siting of 5no. shipping containers.

Officers understand that the existing garages are separate from dwellings on Nelson Road and have been used for general storage purposes through being rented out. There are currently no planning restrictions in respect of the use of the existing garages.

There are concerns within the local community that permitting this application could result in a commercial use, and an intensification of use compared to existing. Whilst the proposal would be regarded as a single commercial operation letting out five containers for storage purposes, the granting of permission with conditions can control the way in which those containers are used.

Subject to conditions and subject to compliance with other relevant Local Plan policies, the principle of development is in accordance with Policy SS1 of the Adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy.

2. Design

The application site sits between Nos. 1-9 Nelson Road to the south, and Bloom Court to the north. It is accessed via a narrow gravel track on the west side of the site, connecting to Nelson Road to the south. The existing structures to be removed are various single storey sheds / garages, mostly with dual-pitch roofs. These are simple structures constructed of timber and/or sheet metal of limited design quality.

The proposal seeks removal of all 8 of the garage structures, to be replaced by five shipping containers in the south-west corner of the site.

Each container would measure approximately 2.44 metres in width, 6.1 metres in length and 2.59 metres in height.

Each container would be painted green.

The containers are individually larger than any of the existing on-site garages, both in terms of footprint and height. The proposed layout also focuses the development into the south-west corner of the site with the containers sited immediately adjacent to one another next to the rear boundaries of Nos. 1 and 3 Nelson Road. This means that the built form would read as one of more substantial single mass, with built form to the east removed as part of this application.

The applicant has indicated that the combined floor area of the 8 existing garage structures exceeds the proposed floor area of the shipping containers by 23sqm.

The proposal also includes a 2m high security fence and gate along the length of the western site boundary.

Overall, whilst the containers are taller than the existing structures on site it is considered that the number of containers (five), their layout, and the new fence is, on balance, appropriate for a residential area. Drawing from experience of other container storage proposals in the District, Officers recommend a suite of planning conditions including a limitation that the containers are used for householder storage only to ensure the proposal is of a scale and intensity appropriate for this residential area.

Taking account of the above, the proposal is found to be acceptable in terms of its design, having regard to Local Plan Policy ENV8 as well as Chapter 12 of the NPPF (2024).

3. Amenity

The purpose of Policy ENV6 is to maintain, protect and promote adequate living and working conditions to ensure that all occupants benefit from a good standard of amenity by considering a number of matters including, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy and prevention of disturbance from odour, noise and artificial light pollution. The policy applies to all development proposals, where existing and/or future occupiers may have their standard of amenity affected.

The concentration of the containers in the south-west corner of the site focuses any potential disturbance in this particular location. The containers will be sited next to the rear boundaries of Nos. 1 and 3 Nelson Road.

As existing, the application site contains eight garages, spread along the southern boundary of the site. If used in a similar manner, the change from 8 garages to 5 shipping containers alone is unlikely to result in unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupants.

Local concern about the proposal focuses mostly on amenity disturbance, but with a focus on a perceived intensification of the use. The applicant has agreed to the site being used for household storage purposes only, with no commercial or logistics-based operations taking place. Officers are satisfied that, with appropriate conditions, this can be suitably controlled.

Consequently, and subject to conditions, it is considered that this development is acceptable in terms of its impact upon the standards of amenity for local residents, in accordance with Policy ENV6 of the NNLP, as well as Chapter 12 of the NPPF (2024).

4. Highway Impacts

A key purpose of Local Plan Policy CC9 is to ensure that proposals are served by safe and suitable access without detriment to the amenity and character of the local area.

The purpose of Local Plan Policy HC7 is to ensure the provision of adequate safe and secure vehicle and cycle parking taking account of active travel objectives.

As set out within the report, Officers recommend a suite of planning conditions including a limitation that the containers are used for householder storage only to ensure the proposal is of a scale and intensity appropriate for this residential area.

The imposition of such conditions has benefits in terms of helping reduce amenity impacts and also helping to ensure the scale and intensity of the use remains acceptable in terms of highway safety impacts.

In assessing impacts, Officers note the balance of probability being that any commercial user would visit the site more frequently, even perhaps on a daily basis, and will have a greater turnover of goods within the storage unit/s compared with the storage of household effects.

The access arrangement remains the same, with a new gate across the western site boundary.

The comments of the Highway Authority are also noted, with no objection raised subject to the controls that the Local Planning Authority attaches to this recommendation.

With the imposition of conditions, Officers consider that this application is acceptable in terms of impacts upon highway safety and parking provision, having regard to Policies CC9 and HC7 of the NNLP as well as Chapter 9 of the NPPF (2024).

5. Land Contamination

Representations have raised concern about the potential for contamination associated with buried asbestos at the site. The application has been considered by the Council's Environmental Protection Team with no objection raised subject to a precautionary condition relating to potential ground contamination. Officers recommend inclusion of the recommendation condition.

With the imposition of conditions, Officers consider that the proposal is acceptable in terms of land contamination risk, in accordance with Policies CC13 and ENV6 of the NNLP.

6. Planning Balance and Conclusion

The proposal will see eight existing modest garages used for general storage purposes replaced with five storage containers plus security fencing. The principle of development is considered to be acceptable and, subject to a suite of planning conditions, the proposal would be considered acceptable in relation to design, amenity, highways and contamination matters.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVAL subject to conditions relating to the following matters:

- **Time limit**
- **Plans**
- **Extent of permission (max number of containers, size, colour, no stacking)**
- **Use of containers limited to storage of household effects only (i.e. not commercial)**
- **Hours of Use**
- **No outside storage beyond the containers**
- **No storage of perishable items or temperature-controlled items inside the containers at any time**
- **No external lighting unless details approved**
- **External finish of the fence / gate**
- **Complete removal of the garages in a timely manner**
- **Precautionary land contamination**

Final wording of conditions and any others considered necessary to be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning