

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/02224/FPH
CASE OFFICER:	WT
APPLICATION SITE:	Beech House, Stevenage Road, Redcoats Green Little Wymondley, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 7JR
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Detached quadruple garage/carport following demolition of existing garage/carport

RECOMMENDATION:

On 30 July 2025 I commented under ref: 25/01285/PREH for a similar proposal.

I find this proposal **UNOBJECTIONABLE** on the basis that the scheme will satisfy the provisions of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Impact on listed building's special character and its setting

There is no direct impact upon the listed building, so the main impact is upon the setting to Beech House and whether this affects the building's significance.

Harm, preserve or enhance.

If the well-treed soft landscape frontage is retained, then the impact of the new building will only fully be revealed from the rear, and it is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect the listed building's setting therefore would not harm its significance.

SITE CONTEXT:

Beech House is grade II listed and is therefore a Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The list entry can be found at the following link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102502?section=official-list-entry>



DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The key heritage issue is to consider the impact of the proposal upon the listed building's significance because of the proposed garage building being located within its immediate setting.

The Google Maps aerial image below clearly shows the dense landscape screen west of the house and in front of the existing mono-pitch, car-port structure.



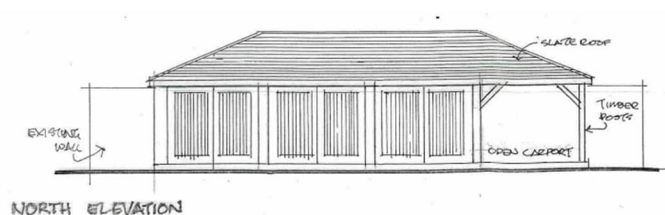
From the rear, the existing car-port structure is low and from a distance one might be forgiven for regarding this as a simple form of boundary treatment defining a hard-surface area.



The proposed 4-bay structure with its dual-pitched, hipped roof would be a more significant building but would be broadly similar in size to other buildings located to the north-east of Beech House. I previously stated that although constructed with a timber frame, the fact that all four openings would receive garage doors means that the knee braces (a positive feature of the building's design) would not be visible when the doors are closed. I encouraged splitting the building into both garages and car-port spaces thus enabling some of the knee braces to be permanently 'on show' and would create more of a cart-hovel aesthetic as opposed to a row of garages.



I said that officers would probably be reliant upon the applicant's willingness to take this design advice on board rather than this being imposed. I provided the above images to illustrate a 2-bay garage / 2-bay carport alternative. The iteration below is considered unobjectionable, however the drawing does not show metal strap hinges to the garage doors and well-detailed oak curved knee braces are sought rather than straight braces.



Suggested conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The roof shall be covered with natural slate unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area and to comply with Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

4. The garage doors shall receive black metal strap hinges unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area and to comply with Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

5. The garage/carport shall be constructed with an oak frame and curved knee braces unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area and to comply with Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:
Section 66(1)

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:
Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):
The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)

- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:

Although the proposal would result in a significantly taller and more imposing building within the close setting of Beech House, the relationship between both buildings would only really be apparent when viewed from the rear garden. The frontage soft landscape screening would more-or-less maintain the status quo when viewing the site from the public highway.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 23/10/2025