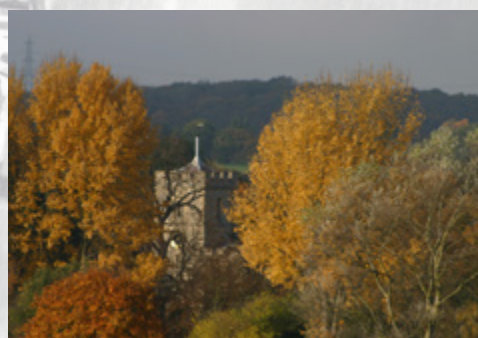
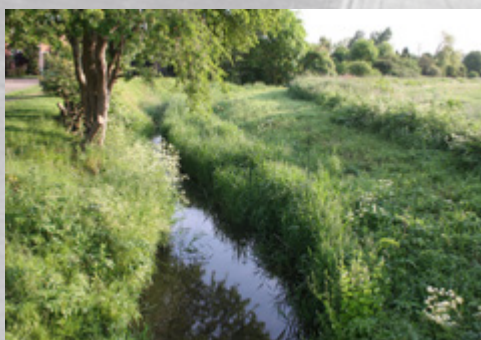


# WALKERN

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2017–2033

### Basic Conditions Statement



SUBMISSION VERSION

# **Walkern Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2033**

## **Basic Conditions Statement**

### **Introduction**

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012 (as amended), this plan must satisfy “basic conditions” before it can come into force. The plan must:

- Have appropriate regard to national planning policy
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area
- Not breach and otherwise be compatible with European Union (EU) Regulations, including human rights requirements and not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site or European off shore marine site

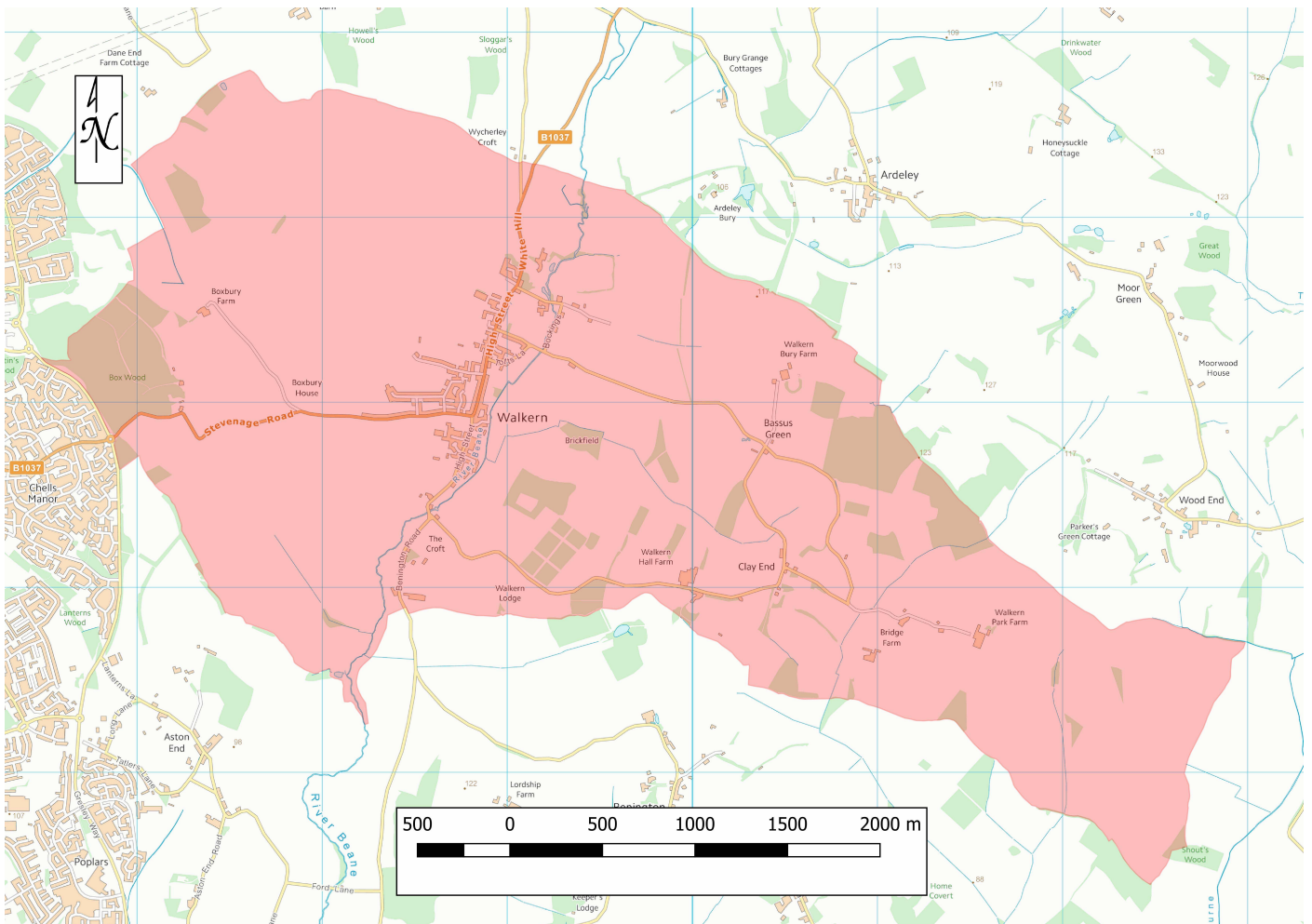
In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan must meet the prescribed legal requirements. This statement confirms that the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan, 2017 - 2032, submitted by Walkern Parish Council and its supporting Neighbourhood Steering Group, meets all the necessary requirements.

### **Legal Requirements**

The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan (hereinafter called the Neighbourhood Plan) is submitted by Walkern Parish Council, which as the qualifying body is entitled to submit a neighbourhood plan for its own parish. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group (WNPG) and overseen by Walkern Parish Council. The whole parish of Walkern has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area through an application made under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6), and approved by East Herts District Council on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The Neighbourhood Area is shown below.



# Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area



The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies relating to the development and use of land within the neighbourhood area. The proposals relate to planning matters (the use and development of land) and have been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the period to which it relates as 2017 - 2033. This period has been chosen to align with the end date of the East Herts District Plan 2011-2033 Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Neighbourhood Plan proposal relates to the Walkern Neighbourhood Area and to no other area. The Submission Draft Walkern Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there are no other neighbourhood plans in place within the neighbourhood area.

## **Key Requirements**

### **1. Regard for the National Planning Policy Framework**

The Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to both the Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17) of the National Planning Policy Framework and the 13 themes of delivering sustainable development within it.

#### **Core Planning Principles**

The production of the Neighbourhood Plan has been led by WNPG, made up of volunteers, overseen by Walkern Parish Council with advice and drafting support from a Planning Consultancy practicing predominantly in East Hertfordshire. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan provide a practical framework to guide the Local Planning Authority in making decisions on planning applications in the parish. A Housing Needs Survey was commissioned and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan promote sustainable economic development.

One of the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan was to meet the aspirations and needs of the local community, strengthening the sense of community and enhancing health and wellbeing of new and existing residents. Sustainable means of transport are promoted to protect the environment and improve health and fitness.

Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan recognise the importance of the rural area of the parish as well as the need for a thriving rural village. Renewable resources are encouraged along with the reuse of existing land and buildings. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment has equal importance to conserving and enhancing heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

### **Sustainable Development**

Of the 13 themes of delivering sustainable development, only two are not relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan; ensuring the vitality of town centres and facilitating the sustainable use of minerals. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan that contribute to delivering sustainable development under each of the remaining themes are set out below:

#### **Building a strong, competitive economy**

Policy 13 New Business, Policy 14 Diversification of Farm Businesses and Policy 15 New Infrastructure, all support local small business development.

#### **Supporting a prosperous rural economy**

Policy 13 New Business, Policy 14 Diversification of Farm Businesses and Policy 15 New Infrastructure, support appropriate scale accommodation for small rural businesses, support the essential diversification of farm businesses and provide the infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of the growing number of people in the rural economy working from home.

#### **Promoting sustainable transport**

Policy 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane includes a requirement for the Sustainable Transport Contribution of £100,000 from the development of the site to be a contribution towards a cycleway link between Walkern and Stevenage, as a necessary provision. Policy 17 Traffic Impact and Sustainable Transport Provision promotes the option of travelling to the nearest town on foot or by bicycle, the use of electric cars and the improvement of public transport facilities.

#### **Supporting high quality communications infrastructure**

Policy 15 New Infrastructure supports the sympathetic installation of new infrastructure

## **Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes**

The following policies all contribute to the delivery of a wide choice types, tenures and sizes of high quality homes: Policy 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane; Policy 9 Housing Infill Sites; Policy 10 Rural Homes; Policy 11 Affordable Housing and Policy 12 Design of New Development.

## **Requiring good design**

Policy 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features, Policy 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane, Policy 9 Housing Infill Sites, Policy 10 Rural Homes and Policy 12 Design of New Development, all refer to design as important aspects of new development. In addition, Policy 15 New Infrastructure supports the integration of renewable energy and communications infrastructure into proposal for new development.

## **Promoting healthy communities**

The Facilities and Services policies; Policy 18 Assets of Community Value, Policy 19 Community and Recreation Facilities and; Policy 20 Maintaining Existing Health Services support the promotion of healthy communities, along with the inclusion of a cycleway link between Walkern and Stevenage in Policy 8, which promotes walking and cycling and Policy 4 Protected Recreational Open Spaces which maintains green areas for active leisure activities.

## **Protecting the green belt land**

The village is located in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt where Policy 10 Rural Homes has a presumption against new homes outside the village except in certain circumstances. Development on green belt land in the Parish will be judged against policies in the East Herts District Plan.

## **Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding**

Policy 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane, Policy 12 Design of New Development and Policy 15 New Infrastructure, support the need for energy efficient homes and sustainable urban drainage within new developments. A specific policy, Policy 16 Flood Risk has been added to highlight the location of Walkern in the flood plain of the River Beane.

## **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

Environmental sustainability is promoted in Policy 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features, Policy 5 Designated Local Wildlife Sites, Policy 6 Green Corridors and Policy 7 Local Green Space.

## **Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

Policy 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features, Policy 3 Walkern Conservation Area and Heritage Assets, Policy 4 Protected Recreational Open Spaces and Policy 12 Design of New Development promote the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

## **2. Contribution to Achieving Sustainable Development**

There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Plan, supported by Policy 1 Sustainable Development. The plan contributes to the sustainable development of Walkern by:

- Providing a framework for a new housing development in the village up to 2033
- Supporting the development of brownfield infill sites in the village
- Providing scope for new rural homes in exceptional circumstances
- Promoting the provision of Affordable homes in line with a recently commissioned Housing Needs Assessment
- Proposing improvements to an existing employment area
- Promoting good design in new developments including sustainable urban drainage schemes, integrated renewable energy infrastructure, energy efficient homes and reducing surface water flooding
- Containing proposals and policies to; enhance and develop community facilities and services and; improve infrastructure
- Supporting the development of a new cycle path between Walkern and Stevenage
- Identifying areas for the allocation of future Community Infrastructure Levy/section 106 funds

## **3. Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Local Plan**

At the time of preparing this document, the current development plan for the area consisted of the “saved” policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and Minerals and Waste Plans produced by Hertfordshire County Council. The East Herts District Plan, which has

undergone its final consultation and was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, will replace the local plan policies. When it is formally “made” by the district council, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the parish.

During the formulation of this Plan, considerable regard has been paid both to the “saved” Local Plan policies of 2007, and the emerging policies of the district plan. Both the emerging policies and the adopted policies are referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan policies are in accordance with the following relevant “saved” policies in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007:

SD 1-3  
HSG 3-1  
GBC 1-4, 6-11 & 14  
TR 1-5, 10-17 & 20  
EDE 1-7  
ENV 1-9, 11-21, 23-25, 27 & 28  
BH 1-3, 8 & 14-17  
LRC 1-5  
CRC 9-11  
OSV 1, 4 & 6-8

The Neighbourhood Plan policies are also in accordance with the policies and the strategic objectives in the emerging East Herts District Plan (see table in Appendix A).

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in consultation and cooperation with the local planning authority, East Herts District Council.

There is a duty and a commitment by the district council to review its planning policies whenever the need is demonstrated. Consequently, Walkern Parish Council will monitor and review the Neighbourhood Plan, so as to ensure that its policies remain in general conformity with the adopted East Herts District Plan.



## **4. Compatibility with Human Rights and EU Legislation**

The proposal and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are compatible with the human rights legislation and all the existing requirements of European Law. The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

To ensure compliance, a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report was prepared (attached at Appendix B). Following consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, East Herts Council has provided a determination stating that neither an environmental assessment nor an HRA are required in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan. The determination is attached to this statement at Appendix C.

### **Summary**

It is a legal requirement that Walkern Parish Council and WNPG submit this statement. It confirms that the submitted Walkern Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions required of a neighbourhood plan as defined in current neighbourhood planning legislation.

This statement was approved at a meeting of Walkern Parish Council and WNPG held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to accompany the Draft Walkern Neighbourhood Plan and Statement of Public Consultation approved by Walkern Parish Council on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (Minutes attached at Appendix D).

## **APPENDIX A**

The following tables indicate how the policies in the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan are in accordance with:

- **The strategic objectives in the East Herts District Plan 2017–2033**
- **The policies in the East Herts District Plan 2017–2033**
- **The sustainable development objectives in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).**

**APPENDIX B - Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report  
For Walkern Neighbourhood Plan (June 2017)**

**APPENDIX C - East Herts Council SEA/HRA determination Sept 2017**

**APPENDIX D - Minutes of Walkern Parish Council 15 June 2017**

# APPENDIX A

## Policy Map to the Strategic Objectives in East Herts District Plan 2017–2033

Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies																				
East Herts District Plan Policies 2017 -2033 Strategic Objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Mitigate the effects of climate change	✓							✓				✓				✓				
2. Encourage safe and vibrant mixed communities	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
3. Balance the housing market	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
4. Protect the countryside and historic environment from inappropriate development and promote good design	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓								
5. Foster entrepreneurial endeavour	✓												✓	✓	✓					
6. Improve access opportunities and encourage sustainable travel	✓							✓									✓			
7. Maintain and improve existing facilities and provide new facilities	✓			✓				✓									✓	✓	✓	✓
8. Decrease water consumption, increase biodiversity and protect and enhance environmental assets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓								
9. Ensure development occurs in parallel with necessary infrastructure	✓							✓							✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

**Key:** ✓ In accordance with ✗ Conflicting (No symbol = no specific link)

# Policy Map to the East Herts District Plan Policies

## 2017 - 2033

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### Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies

[illegible]

# Policy Map to the East Herts District Plan Policies

## 2017 - 2033

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### Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies

[illegible]

**Policy Map to the East Herts District Plan Policies**  
**2017 - 2033**

Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies																				
East Herts District Plan Policies 2017 -2033	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
CFLR4 - Water based recreation																				
CFLR6 - Equine Development																				
CFLR7 - Community Facilities	✓																		✓	
CFLR8 - Loss of Community Facilities	✓																	✓	✓	
CFLR9 - Health & Wellbeing	✓																			✓
CFLR10 - Education	✓							✓									✓			
NE1 - Designated Nature Conservation Sites	✓				✓															
NE2 - Non-designated Nature Conservation Sites	✓					✓														
NE3 - Species & Habitats	✓				✓	✓														
NE4 - Green Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓												
HA1 - Designated Heritage Assets	✓		✓																	
HA2 - Non-designated Heritage Assets	✓		✓																	
HA3 - Archaeology	✓		✓																	
HA4 - Conservation Areas	✓		✓																	
HA5 - Shopfronts in Conservation Areas	✓		✓																	
HA6 - Advertisements in Conservation Areas	✓		✓																	
HA7 - Listed Buildings	✓		✓																	
HA8 - Historic Parks & Gardens																				
HA9 - Enabling Development																				
CC1 - Climate Change Adaptation	✓							✓				✓			✓		✓			
CC2 - Climate Change Mitigation	✓							✓				✓			✓		✓			
CC3 - Renewables & Low Carbon Energy	✓							✓				✓			✓		✓			

# Policy Map to the East Herts District Plan Policies

## 2017 - 2033

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### Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies

<b>East Herts District Plan Policies 2017 -2033</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
WAT1 - Flood Risk Management	✓							✓								✓				
WAT2 - Source Protection Zones	✓				✓			✓												
WAT3 - Water Quality & Water Environment	✓				✓															
WAT4 - Efficient use of Water	✓							✓				✓								
WAT5 - Sustainable Drainage	✓							✓				✓								
WAT6 - Wastewater Infrastructure	✓																			
EQ1 - Contaminated Land & Land Instability	✓																			
EQ2 - Noise Pollution	✓																✓			
EQ3 - Light Pollution	✓											✓								
EQ4 - Air Quality	✓																✓			
DEL1 - Infrastructure & Service Delivery	✓			✓				✓		✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
DEL2 - Planning Obligations	✓			✓				✓		✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

**Key:**    ✓ In accordance with   ✗ Conflicting   (No symbol = no specific link)



**Policy Map to the Sustainable Objectives  
in the National Planning Policy Framework**

**Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

<b>NPPF Sustainable Development Themes</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
Building a strong competitive economy	✓												✓	✓	✓					
Ensuring the vitality of town centres																				
Supporting a prosperous rural economy	✓												✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Promoting sustainable transport	✓							✓									✓			
Supporting high quality communications infrastructure	✓														✓					
Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Requiring good design	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓					
Promoting healthy communities	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓									✓	✓	✓	✓
Protecting Green Belt land										✓										
Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change	✓							✓				✓			✓	✓				
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	✓			✓	✓															
Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals																				

**Key:** ✓ In accordance with ✗ Conflicting (No symbol = no specific link)

# APPENDIX B

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

### For Walkern Neighbourhood Plan

(June 2017)



Prepared for Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group and Walkern Parish Council by  
Govresources Ltd



# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This screening report will determine whether the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) is likely to have any significant environment effects and so require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 1.2 The Plan has been prepared for the Parish of Walkern and the purpose of the Plan is to help inform the decisions reached by East Herts District Council across all areas of development in the Parish of Walkern. It is to ensure the village grows gradually in order to preserve the character and the rural feel of the Parish. Future development must be sustainable based on the principle that better lives for residents now, do not mean worse lives for future generations. Positive growth, making economic, environmental and social progress will enhance every aspect of the Parish of Walkern.
- 1.3 As a general rule, SEA is more likely to be necessary if:
- A neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development (for housing, employment etc.) that haven't already been appraised through the sustainability appraisal (SA) of the relevant Local Plan).
  - The neighbourhood plan area contains sensitive environmental assets that may be affected by the policies and proposals in the neighbourhood plan.
  - The neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects not already addressed through the sustainability appraisal of the relevant Local Plan. In order to determine the significance of environmental effects, both the characteristics of the Plan and the characteristics of the effects should be considered against the list of characteristics contained in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.
- 1.4 The vision of the Plan is:
- . **The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan will shape the evolution of Walkern over the next 16 years by meeting the aspirations and needs of the local community. We are committed to preserving Walkern's historic character and strong rural identity by ensuring that development in the Parish is sustainable, protects valued natural features, strengthens a sense of community and enhances wellbeing of new and existing residents. We want to make sure Walkern Parish remains a great place to live.**

1.5 The plan contains a number of sustainable objectives **A-M**:

- . **A** Ensure new development protects and enhances local landscape character, valued nature conservation sites and the rich biodiversity of the Parish
- . **B** Protect and enhance the village conservation area and its setting, and listed, and locally listed buildings
- . **C** Protect and enhance the Parish's open spaces and views for public access and informal recreational use
- . **D** Ensure the River Beane, a rare chalk stream that runs through Walkern Parish, is preserved and protected from over-abstraction
- . **E** Enhance and improve the environmental quality of the Parish, minimising noise and air pollution
- . **F** Ensure the mix, size and type of new housing meets local needs, including a sufficient supply of affordable housing and preferential access to some new homes for people with a strong local connection
- . **G** Require new development to be of high quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and to be sympathetic to, and improve, the look and feel of the Parish
- . **H** Ensure the design and location of new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding
- . **I** Support existing businesses, creative industries and home working, and encourage new local employment opportunities for residents
- . **J** Preserve and enhance public transport services to and from the village for residents who do not have use of a car, and encourage walking and cycling
- . **K** Ensure that community facilities (e.g. school, GP surgery) enhance the health and wellbeing of local residents
- . **L** Ensure the village has indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that meet the needs of young children, teenagers and adults, and strengthen the sense of community.
- . **M** Give the Parish the opportunity to access Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to maintain and improve Parish facilities.

1.6 The final version of the plan's policies is contained in the Submission Version Walkern Neighbourhood Plan. There are 20 policies dealing with the environment, housing, businesses, infrastructure and community facilities. Other information that may contribute to the understanding of the process and methodology adopted in the preparation of the Plan can be found in the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement. Further information can also be found in the Basic Conditions Statement.

1.7 The Plan does not allocate any sites for development, or any other significant development. The Neighbourhood Plan Area does not contain or border any sensitive sites of European significance (Natura 2000) or any of

the sensitive areas identified in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations i.e. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB), National Parks, World Heritage Sites or Scheduled Monuments.

- 1.8 Walkern is however rich in environmental assets including listed buildings, a conservation area and locally designated wildlife sites and has constraints such as land in flood zone 3, areas of surface water flooding and a groundwater source protection zone. All these matters have been carefully considered through the preparation of the Plan and policies have been written specifically to take into account these assets/constraints.

## **2. Legislative Background**

- 2.1 The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA Directive) to be carried out for certain plans and programmes to assess their effects on the environment. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 transposed this Directive in law.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans fall within the scope of this legislation. They are a plan as defined by Article 3(2) of the SEA regulations and Regulation 5 paragraph 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 2.3 Under Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive and Regulation 5 paragraph 6 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is only required for documents that determine land use in small areas at the local level where it is considered that they are likely to have 'significant environmental effects'. This is carried out through a screening determination.
- 2.4 The role of a screening exercise is to determine whether the effect of the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.
- 2.5 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012) transpose the requirements of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. The Habitats Directive and Regulations afford protection to plants, animals and habitats that are rare and vulnerable in a European context.
- 2.6 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a systematic process through which the performance of a plan or project can be assessed for its likely

impact on the integrity of a European Site. European Sites, also referred to as Natura 2000 sites, consist of Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Potential Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (pSPA and cSAC); and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

- 2.7 Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states: ‘Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives’. The first stage of HRA is to screen a plan or programme to identify if there are likely to be any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.
- 2.8 The three statutory environmental bodies were consulted on the Pre-submission version of the Plan and only the Environment Agency returned comments. The comments have been incorporated into the Plan.

### **3. Establishing a need for a SEA Summary**

- 3.1 The Plan has been assessed in accordance with Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.
- 3.2 The schedule considers the characteristics of the plan in relation to a number of bullet points:
- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
  - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
  - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
  - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
  - the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
- 3.3 Only the Action Plan provides a list of projects, which is not a statutory part of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Plan does not allocate resources. The Plan when adopted will be a stand-alone document without influencing any other plans or programmes. However, it will become part of the East Herts District Plan; both of these plans promote sustainable development. Policies on issues such as surface water and river flooding and protection of a groundwater Source Protection Zone have been included within the plan at the request of the Environment Agency. The Plan does not deal with waste management.



- 3.4 The second part of the schedule concerns characteristics of the effects of the Plan and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
  - the cumulative nature of the effects;
  - the transboundary nature of the effects;
  - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);
  - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
  - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
    - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
    - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
    - intensive land-use;
  - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.
- 3.5 All the above matters are dealt with in the recent submission documents for the emerging East Herts District Plan i.e. Sustainability Appraisal of the East Herts District Plan (AECOM 2016) and the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (AECOM 2016). The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any development sites and therefore does not propose any more development within its area than the emerging East Herts District Plan and accords with the policies contained in the District Plan. Please refer to these documents for all matters relating to Schedule 1 of the SEA regulations.
- 3.6 The Plan does not have any transboundary effects and it has paid particular regard to the existence of the Walkern Conservation Area, which covers most of the village. The recently updated Walkern Conservation Appraisal and Management Proposal was adopted in December 2016 and was updated during the preparation of the Plan at the request of the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group. In addition, the landscape of the Beane is greatly valued by Walkern residents and policies in the plan encourage good management of the river and protection of the landscape from harmful development.
- 3.7 A full assessment of the likely effects of the Plan are contained in Appendix A attached. They show that if there any significant environmental effects of the Plan, they will be positive effects.
- 3.8 As the responsible authority, East Herts Council will seek the opinions of the 3 statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency).

## Appendix A - Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely Significant Effect Yes/ No?
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) will form part of the Statutory Development Plan and therefore would set a framework for future development projects in Walkern. However, the plan sits within a wider framework set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the current saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan; and the emerging East Herts District Plan. The policies of the Plan are in general conformity all levels of the current and emerging planning framework for the area. In addition, the projects for which the neighbourhood plan contributes to setting a planning framework are very local in nature.	No
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The Plan will sit below the statutory development plan and provide a greater degree of detail to illuminate the development plan policies, as they relate to the Parish of Walkern. Therefore, the Plan will respond to rather than influence other plans or programmes.	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations and promote sustainable development	The Plan will work to protect and enhance the character, natural environment and landscape of Walkern, including statutory environmental designations and Local Green Space designations. A number of policies in the Plan will contribute to the social sustainability of Walkern and provide socially sustainable development as defined in the NPPF, including a supply housing which meets the needs of current and future generations, balancing growth with infrastructure provision. Therefore, it is considered that the Plan will have a <b>positive</b> impact on local environmental assets and therefore will promote sustainable development.	Yes Positive
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	There are no environmental problems directly relevant to this plan. There will be an increase in the number of houses in the village as a result of new development. However the Plan will help to address wider environmental problems as highlighted in the NPPF at a local level, such as climate change, air pollution, traffic congestion, loss of biodiversity and flooding; without any negative effects.	No
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The Plan is not directly relevant to the implementation of European legislation. This legislation is taken into account by the East Herts planning documents, with which the Neighbourhood Plan complies.	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely Significant Effect Yes/ No?
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The Plan will result in <b>positive</b> environmental effects through policies that seek to protect historic and landscape character and green spaces; <b>positive</b> social effects by addressing local highways issues indirectly through the provision of adequate off-street car parking and support the development of community recreational facilities; and <b>positive</b> economic effects through policies which seek to support existing farms, small businesses and village shops and pubs. These <b>positive</b> effects are small and low frequency but are likely to be long term.	No
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	A combination of the Plan, which seeks to protect and enhance the character, environment and landscape of Walkern and wider environmental policy in the East Herts Local Plan and the emerging East Herts District Plan is likely to have cumulative <b>positive</b> environmental effects and benefits for the Parish of Walkern. Notwithstanding the above, the effects of the Plan will be small scale.	Yes Positive
(c) the trans boundary nature of the effects	All effects will be very local, having negligible or no impacts on neighbouring areas.	No
d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant risks to human health or the environment. Instead, the Plan aims to enhance the environment and to provide the infrastructure required to meet the social needs of Walkern's residents.	No
e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the whole Parish of Walkern covering an area of approximately 1,200 hectares. Policies in the Plan are focused on the village of Walkern where most of the population of the Parish live (just over 1,541 at the 2011 Census). Although some policies also relate to the hamlets of Clay End and Bassus Green and the wider landscape of the River Beane, in relative terms, the magnitude and spatial extent of effects is small.	No
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or - intensive land-use	The Plan area contains a conservation area, numerous grade 2, and grade 2* listed buildings plus a grade 1 listed church and sites of local wildlife importance as well as the River Beane chalk stream. Policies provide for the protection of the natural and historic environment from detrimental new development. East Herts planning policies and the NPPF will also protect these natural assets and listed and unlisted heritage assets.	No
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognized national, Community or international protection status	The Plan contains policies aimed at protecting green and recreational open space and the creation of new recreation and leisure facilities for walkers, riders and cyclists. There are no sites within the plan area with a recognized international protection status.	No

Your contact: George Pavey  
Ext: 1623  
Date: 06/09/2017

Dear Heidi,

**Re: Walkern Neighbourhood Plan – Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

I write to advise that on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017 the following recommendations were made:

- (a) **In accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the District Council, as the responsible authority, has determined that an environmental assessment of the emerging Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. In making this determination, the District Council has had regard to Schedule 1 of the Regulations and has carried out consultation with the consultation bodies; and**
- (b) **The emerging Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect upon a Natura 2000 designation and therefore does not require an HRA.**

The recommendations were agreed and the non-key process which has a call-in period expired on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September. This letter should be attached to your Basic Conditions Statement when you submit your Neighbourhood Plan for Regulation 16 consultation.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Sime  
Team Leader Planning Policy  
[claire.sime@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:claire.sime@eastherts.gov.uk)

# APPENDIX D

## WALKERN PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 15 June 2017

#### **The meeting opened at 8.00 pm**

Those present were the acting Chairman, Cllr A Green and Cllrs S Wood, K Overall, M James and C O'Brien. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Alexander and Cllr J Hughes. EHDC and HCC Cllr K Crofton was also in attendance.

The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated, were accepted as a correct record on the proposal of Cllr O'Brien and seconded by Cllr Wood.

#### **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The first Walkern sign has been installed by WSCC and was officially unveiled on 3 June 2017 when the visitors from Lanvallay were in Walkern to attend the ceremony. Steve and Sue Barmby will install the other two as soon as possible. They will be asked to quote to look after the flowers once planted. The other option is to ask if a nearby resident would be willing to adopt one.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **Public Forum**

The 'ransom strip ownership' on the land formerly belonging to the Cordell's was brought up again. This was formerly the strip of land where drainage was laid by the District Council to stop flooding of their housing stock in Moors Ley. The Chairman firmly pointed out that this 'ransom strip' does not exist, the whole of the land was sold to Mears Homes, who will put in adequate draining during the Froghall lane development and was not a matter for further discussion by the Parish Council.

#### **Walkern Neighbourhood Plan – Final Version to be Agreed**

The Neighbourhood Plan has been finished and all the statutory procedures have been completed and incorporated into the plan as necessary. It is now in published form and will go to the District Council for the consultation period. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to approve the Plan, the Basic Conditions Statement and the Consultation Statement on the proposal of Cllr O'Brien and seconded by Cllr Overall. The Chairman once again thanked Michele Rist, Jacqueline Veater and the whole team for a remarkable piece of work on behalf of Walkern.

#### **Froghall Lane Development**

A resident has made a suggestion for an additional parking area on the development to ease the parking congestion at the top of Moors Ley. A village meeting has been arranged for 29



June 2017 when the Parish Council will invite Walkern residents to come and look at the latest draft plans and information and any further issues can be discussed to be put forward to EHDC for consideration before formal plans are received from the developers. EHDC Cllr Crofton and the Chairman were a little sceptical about the suggestion for additional parking on site, the reason being why would the developer want to give up any land to accommodate such a suggestion for nothing, but it would be further discussed at the village meeting after which a proposal could be forwarded to EHDC. Tim Hagyard has left EHDC so Cllr O'Brien will enquire who is overseeing the planning application for future contact.

### **Walkern Sports & Community Centre**

There has been a further proposal regarding the future of WSCC which needs to be discussed by a full Parish Council. This will be added to the agenda for the next meeting when hopefully all will be present, otherwise an additional meeting may need be called.

### **Drive Safe Initiative**

Tom Defley and volunteers will be manning the mobile smiley face equipment this coming weekend around Walkern to produce data in support of any future applications for more speed aware equipment. We already have one smiley face coming to Walkern soon. As yet its final destination is to be agreed. The Parish Councillors have offered to be volunteers on this project and if anyone else is willing to help with monitoring traffic speed once a month or so, helping to make Walkern a safer place with less speeding, then please contact Cllr O'Brien or the Clerk for details.

### **Jubilee/Village Garden Project**

Cllrs Green, Wood and O'Brien have met Julie Toll, the project designer, to amend the design. Cllr O'Brien will post on the Walkern website as soon as possible and an event will be arranged in the near future for residents to have a look and comment.

### **Aubries Play Area/HA Queries**

Cllr Hughes is unable to attend the meeting tonight but will report to the Parish Council as soon as possible.

### **A507 Petition to Reclassify to 'B' Road**

Walkern Parish Council has supported Cottered Parish Council in their petition to request Herefordshire County Council to reclassify the A507 through Hertfordshire to a 'B' Road. It is believed that this could significantly reduce inappropriate lorry traffic leaving the A507 to take the B1037 through Walkern High Street, as a rat run to Stevenage. Ardeley Parish Council, spurred on by this, is now seeking the possibility of a weight restriction on the B1037 from Stevenage to Cottered, which would significantly reduce the number of HGV traffic through Walkern, Cromer and Cottered. The Parish Council agreed unanimously to support this.



### **Disability Improvements to Ease Access in Walkern**

Cllr O'Brien highlighted a number of issues relating to disability improvements for easier access around Walkern from the report prepared last year after a Parish Council village walkabout and concerns from a village resident. Many of the issues relating to overgrown hedges along pavements were addressed but the issues concerning dropped kerbs in some areas could not be addressed at the time because of lack of funding from the Highways Locality Budget. County Councillor Ken Crofton confirmed the money could be found from the Locality Budget this year but it would eventually end up being added to ratepayers bills. He suggested that the absolute priority matters be considered first and foremost. The Clerk received a letter from St Mary's Church to confirm they had taken professional advice regarding the installation of a ramp in place of the steps and it was felt the only alternative would be a meandering path from the gate to the church but bearing in mind the sensitive land and the Grade 1 listed building, the shallow/wide steps leading to the church would be considered a reasonable response to access regulations and that there was nothing further that could be expected to be done.

### **Parking Issues at Church End**

The Parish Council has looked at the parking issue in Church End. This appears to be a problem when there is a function at the United Reformed Church, where there is no parking facility for more than two cars. Cars sometimes park further along Church End, opposite where the pavement is high and there is concern that emergency services would not be able to access the road if necessary. The Parish Council felt that the kerb is not too high for an emergency vehicle to access if it needed to. The easiest solution would be for the URC to put up a polite sign asking members not to park too far along, as does St Mary's Church, when having a function. The Clerk will write to Olga Ginn suggesting this.

### **Payments/Receipts/2016/17 End of Year Accounts for Audit**

United Reformed Church - hall bookings x 5	£ 100.00
Blue Bury Contractors Ltd - new padlock for sportsfield gate	£ 54.82
Banana UK Media - 3 new Walkern signs	£1836.00
Zurich Municipal - PC annual insurance policy	£1419.06
S Barmby - maintenance of Recreation Ground May 17	£ 160.00
Staff costs	£1382.57

The above payments were ratified and the following agreed on the proposal of Cllr James and seconded by Cllr Overall.

Lisa Moss Design - WNP Submission Version –design and layout	£1470.00
S Barmby - installation of 3 new Walkern signs and removal of old ones	£ 300.00

The End of Year Accounts for 2016/17 were presented to the Parish Council and the annual audit form completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk at the Council meeting. All accompanying information will be sent to BDO LLP as necessary. The accounts were unanimously accepted as a true record of the Parish Council accounts for 2016/17 with no objections or comments.

## **Grant Requests from St Mary's Church and the United Reformed Church**

A letter was received from the Secretary to PCC St Mary's Church, Walkern to request that the annual grant be increased from £500 per annum to £2,500. It was agreed that as the Parish Council budget had already been set for this year, it would not be possible to increase the amount at this time. The Clerk will write to the Secretary to explain this and the award for this year remains the same at £500.

Olga Ginn, on behalf of the United Reformed Church, requested an increase of £200, which would go towards the cost of work to the front access as a safety issue. It was agreed for the same reasons as above that the grant for this year would remain the same as last at £375.00

### **Planning**

#### **Planning applications received:**

Land at Winters Lane, Walkern

Erection of 4no 4 bed dwellings comprising 2 detached and 2 semi-detached together with garaging, cartilage parking, communal bin store and landscaping plus the provision of 2 vehicular parking places along Winters Lane. Cllr O'Brien offered to write an objection based on previous objections to development at this site.

#### **Planning applications granted:**

Walkern and Sandon URC, High Street  
Walkern

Alteration to main door and doorway access and alterations to side door access to provide access for the disabled.

#### **Planning applications refused:**

Stafford House, 1 Kitcheners Lane,  
Walkern

Demolition of existing rear and side extensions. construction of part rear and part side extension with garage and alterations to external appearance. Construction of 3 bedroom dwelling at the rear of existing dwelling.

#### **Planning appeal to Planning Inspectorate:**

Land adj to 36 High Street, Walkern

Erection of 2no two bedroom dwellings.

### **Correspondence**

A letter has been received from a resident of Finches End who is concerned about the parking of parents in Finches End at school drop off/pick up times. They are parking either side of her drive affecting her sightlines, making it hazardous to exit and enter safely. The Clerk will write to the school Headteacher to ask if he could suggest any solution to this escalating issue.

### **Schedule of Outstanding Items**

None.

### **Any Other Business**

Due to the minutes no longer being published in the Walkern Journal, Cllr O'Brien offered to do a regular write up to précis issues and projects involving the Parish Council, together with any important matters the village may be missing out on hearing about. This will be an agenda item for discussion and consideration at the next meeting.

**The meeting ended at 10.00 pm.**

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday 13 July 2017 commencing at 8.00 pm at the United Reformed Church hall.**



# WALKERN Parish Council

## BALANCE OF ACCOUNTS ON 10 JULY 2017

Community A/c	£ 17,625.14
Premium A/c	£ 29,322.43
Recreation Ground Charity A/c	£ 9,690.21
Benefit of Inhabitants of Walkern Charity A/c	£ 4,720.06

## PAYMENTS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Mrs H Broady - telephone/internet charges June 17	£ 56.27
St Mary's Church – annual grasscutting grant	£ 500.00
United Reformed Church – annual grasscutting grant	£ 375.00
S Barmby – maintenance of Recreation Ground and additional hedge cutting June 17	£ 240.00
Mrs H Broady – reimbursement of printing costs	£ 41.94
Lisa Moss Designs - WNP design and layout	£1470.00
S Barmby – installation of 3 new Walkern signs and removal of old ones	£ 300.00
The School Grounds Company Ltd – maintenance of sports-field	£ 616.50

 13/7/17



[www.walkerneighbourhoodplan.com](http://www.walkerneighbourhoodplan.com)