

Summary Details

- Property Address: 101 Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 1QX.
- Planning Authority Ref: APP/X1925/W/25/3372664
- Date: 28/10/2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to the recent objection submitted by the residents of 99 Pixmore Avenue regarding our proposed minor building works at 101 Pixmore Avenue. As lifelong residents of Letchworth Garden City, we feel it is important to provide clarity and context from our perspective, not as developers or outsiders, but as ordinary members of this community who have lived, worked, and contributed to the area for decades.

Our family has lived in Letchworth Garden City for over 50 years. We have proudly operated our store on Pixmore Avenue for the past 16 years, and we know the road, the residents, and the rhythm of the neighbourhood intimately. This is not just where we live and work, it is our home. We care deeply about preserving the character, harmony, and community spirit that make Letchworth so special.

In contrast, **the resident of 99 Pixmore Avenue has only recently returned to the property after a 15-year absence.** While we respect her right to raise concerns, it is important to note that her objection does not reflect the lived reality of the street or the nature of our proposal. We are also ordinary residents just like her and we have always approached changes to our property with care, consideration, and respect for our neighbours.

Unfortunately, the objection submitted contains numerous inaccuracies, exaggerated claims, and misrepresentations. In some cases, evidence appears to have been deliberately staged to support a misleading narrative or example, a photograph taken during a brief moment of daytime activity is presented as proof of persistent parking congestion, despite clear evidence (including CCTV footage) that the road is quiet for most of the day or taking photographs during specific times of the day depending on the sun/shadow.

Our proposed development is modest in scale, carefully designed to minimise any impact on neighbouring properties, and fully compliant with relevant planning policies. It introduces no north-facing windows, maintains generous separation distances, and includes dedicated off-street parking. Concerns raised regarding parking, privacy, and noise are either overstated or factually incorrect.

We trust that the planning inspector will assess this appeal based on objective evidence, professional assessments, and the actual merits of the proposal. Not on speculation or emotional argument. In the sections that follow, we address each point raised in the objection, clarify the facts, and demonstrate why the concerns presented do not constitute valid grounds for refusal.

We will be preparing a **comprehensive, point-by-point response** to each of the neighbour's objections, addressing them **section by section**. This structured approach will allow the Inspector to clearly understand our perspective, separate fact from misrepresentation, and see how the proposed development **fully complies with planning policy, preserves privacy, and respects the character of the area**. By systematically responding to each claim, we aim to demonstrate that the neighbour's concerns are either **factually incorrect or overstated**, ensuring the Inspector can assess the proposal fairly and accurately.

1. Principal of Development

We fully acknowledge, as does the Council's delegated officer report, that the site lies within the settlement boundary and that there are no objections to the principle of residential development. The location is sustainable, well-connected, and entirely appropriate for modest residential growth. Our proposal aligns with this principle and reflects a responsible, proportionate approach to development.

The objector claims that the absence of objections during the original application process should not be interpreted as support for the scheme. However, this assertion is speculative and does not reflect the facts. The application was submitted and publicised in full accordance with statutory planning procedures. If the objector or her family did not engage in the process at the time, that is unfortunate, but it does not invalidate the legitimacy of the process or the absence of objections from other neighbours who were aware and had the opportunity to comment.

It is also important to correct the misleading claim that there is "significant planning history" at 101 Pixmore Avenue. The property has seen a small number of applications over nearly a decade, each of which was independently assessed and either approved or refused based on its own merits. This is not unusual for a property of its age and use. The current proposal is not part of a pattern of overdevelopment, but rather a modest and carefully considered enhancement that respects the scale and character of the existing building.

The objector's interpretation of our reference to "finishing off" previous works is also misconstrued. This phrase was never intended to suggest that the building was left incomplete or that the current proposal is a continuation of unchecked development. Instead, it refers to the architectural coherence of the rear elevation—ensuring the building is visually balanced and functionally complete. To suggest that a single-storey extension is inherently "unfinished" is a subjective opinion, not a planning principle, and should not be treated as a material consideration.

In summary, the principle of development is firmly established and supported by both local policy and the Council's own assessment. The objection fails to present any credible planning grounds to challenge this. Rather, it relies on retrospective hypotheticals, mischaracterisations of the planning history, and an inaccurate portrayal of the proposal's intent and scale. We respectfully urge the Inspector to focus on the facts and policy context, which clearly support the acceptability of the development in principle.

2. Design of Character of the Area

Council's Concern

We fully respect the council's duty to preserve the distinctive character and integrity of Letchworth Garden City, and we share that commitment. However, we must respectfully disagree with the conclusion that our proposal constitutes overdevelopment or represents poor design.

The proposed extension has been carefully designed to sit comfortably within its context. It is modest in scale, proportionate to the existing building, and consistent with similar developments that have already been approved throughout Pixmore Avenue. The increase in depth is minimal and will not alter the established rhythm or balance of the street scene. The overall height remains subordinate to the main building, ensuring the extension blends naturally with the existing form rather than competing with it.

The description of a "blank flank wall" at a height of 5 metres in close proximity to the boundary does not accurately reflect the proposal. The wall in question will be internal to our boundary, finished in materials that exactly match the host property. It will not cause any sense of enclosure, overshadowing, or visual harm to neighbouring homes.

Concerns about reduced natural light are also overstated. The mature trees at the rear, which already limit direct sunlight, are an established site feature unrelated to the proposal. The proposed flat includes well-placed windows designed to ensure sufficient daylight internally while maintaining neighbour privacy — demonstrating a balanced and sensitive design approach.

The neighbour's suggestion that the property already "dominates its plot" ignores the fact that each previous extension was granted permission in full compliance with planning guidance. The current proposal is not excessive, nor does it create a cumulative sense of overdevelopment. On the contrary, it completes the property in a cohesive and architecturally consistent way that respects its surroundings.

Importantly, the scheme aligns with the aims of Local Plan Policies **SP9 (Design and Sustainability)** and **D1 (Sustainable Design)**. These policies encourage well-considered, high-quality design that responds positively to local character and makes efficient use of existing land. Our proposal does exactly that — it reflects the established scale and materials of the area while making practical and responsible use of the site.

In summary, this is a modest, contextually appropriate, and carefully designed extension that preserves the integrity of Letchworth Garden City's architectural heritage. It causes no material harm to neighbouring amenities, enhances the usability of the existing building, and is wholly consistent with both local precedent and policy objectives.

We therefore respectfully submit that the concerns regarding overdevelopment and design quality are unfounded, and we trust that the proposal will be seen for what it is — a proportionate, thoughtful improvement that continues the proud Letchworth Garden City tradition of balanced and well-designed living.

Appellants Rebuttal

We fully appreciate the importance of clarity and accuracy in any planning application and would like to address the neighbour's comments regarding alleged inconsistencies in our statements. These remarks appear to arise from a misunderstanding of the submitted plans rather than any genuine ambiguity within our proposal.

To be clear, **no new north-facing windows are proposed** as part of this development. The existing first-floor flat currently contains a small side window, which will remain in its original position. Its appearance will simply be improved to ensure it blends seamlessly with the wider elevation. The only additional window referenced in the application relates to a separate elevation, positioned away from the shared boundary, and therefore has no impact on the neighbour's privacy.

All plans submitted to the council clearly and accurately show these details. At every stage, our intention has been transparent, and the design has been carefully developed to respect both the privacy and amenity of surrounding properties. The proposal fully complies with standard separation distances and sits comfortably within the design principles that underpin Letchworth Garden City's planning framework.

We must respectfully reject the suggestion that there is "confusion" or that the extent of overlooking is unclear. The plans and supporting documents are straightforward and consistent. The neighbour's interpretation appears to conflict with separate elements of the design, leading to an inaccurate conclusion about potential overlooking.

It is also worth noting that the architectural context of Pixmore Avenue is diverse, featuring a variety of orientations, window placements, and extensions. This variety is part of what makes Letchworth Garden City distinctive. Our proposal sits sensitively within that context - modest in scale, respectful in design, and wholly in keeping with the established character of the street.

In summary, the proposal does not introduce any new north-facing windows, does not increase overlooking, and has been designed with care to maintain neighbouring privacy. We have approached this development thoughtfully and transparently, ensuring that it enhances the property while preserving the values and harmony that define our community.

My response

We fully respect the importance of maintaining the architectural integrity and historic character of Letchworth Garden City. It is a place defined by thoughtful design, open space, and balance — qualities we value deeply and have sought to preserve throughout this process. However, we disagree with our neighbour's assessment and the interpretation presented.

The proposed extension is **modest in scale and sympathetic in form**, carefully designed to complement the existing building without overwhelming it or the surrounding area. The five-metre height referenced in the objection is consistent with standard first-floor proportions and is not unusual for this part of Pixmore Avenue, where many neighbouring properties feature similar or larger extensions. The external wall will be finished with matching materials to ensure continuity and harmony with the host property. It will not create an overbearing sense of enclosure or materially reduce the openness of the adjoining garden.

Contrary to the claim that this would “erode the Garden City character,” the proposal has been **designed to reflect and respect that very ethos** — modest, functional, and cohesive. Letchworth Garden City was founded on the principle of architectural variety within a shared harmony, not rigid uniformity. Pixmore Avenue already displays a range of house types, rooflines, and extensions that reflect natural and thoughtful evolution over time. Our design follows this pattern, sitting comfortably within the established character of the area.

In relation to daylight and outlook, we have taken great care to ensure that neighbouring amenities are preserved. The **45-degree guideline** has been correctly and conscientiously applied — an objective, industry-standard measure used to assess light and outlook. The proposed extension fully complies with this test, ensuring there will be **no significant loss of daylight or sunlight** to habitable rooms at 99 Pixmore Avenue.

It should also be acknowledged that existing extensions and mature vegetation along the boundary already influence current light levels and outlook. The proposed addition is proportionate and will not materially alter these conditions. Moreover, a **substantial amount of garden space** remains to the rear and side of the property, preserving the sense of openness and greenery that is central to the Garden City character. We value this green setting immensely and have ensured that the proposal retains ample outdoor space, mature planting, and visual openness in keeping with the area's landscape-led design tradition.

As for the comments regarding “mutual overlooking,” this is a natural and typical feature of residential neighbourhoods — including those within the Garden City. Our proposal introduces **no new windows facing 99 Pixmore Avenue** and has been deliberately designed to **safeguard privacy** on both sides. The suggestion that the site appears “cramped” or “contrived” is subjective and not supported by planning policy or the visual evidence presented.

We firmly believe the design **complies with Local Plan Policies SP9 (Sustainable Development) and D1 (Sustainable Design)**. It responds positively to local context through its matching materials, balanced proportions, and a form that respects both character and neighbour amenity. Far from diminishing the Garden City principles, this proposal upholds them, enhancing an existing property in a careful, proportionate, and sustainable manner.

In conclusion, we have lived and worked in Letchworth for many years and take pride in its unique heritage and community spirit. We would never pursue any development that undermines those values. Our proposal represents a modest improvement that blends seamlessly with its surroundings, preserves neighbour amenity, and respects the greenery, space, and balance that define the Garden City.

3. Living conditions of neighbors

Overbearing Impact

We fully understand and respect that changes to a neighbouring property can raise concerns, particularly where visibility and privacy are involved. Our intention, however, has never been to create any form of harm or overbearing impact. The proposed extension has been designed with **great care and sensitivity**, both architecturally and contextually, to ensure it remains modest, proportionate, and fully in keeping with the established character of Pixmore Avenue and the wider Garden City.

We disagree with the suggestion that the extension would appear “over dominant” or “discordant.” The proposal follows the existing building line and reflects the same scale and proportions as other nearby two-storey developments. Its overall height remains consistent with the host dwelling, and the separation distances to neighbouring boundaries ensure that it does **not create an enclosing or oppressive effect** when viewed from adjoining gardens. The wall referenced by the neighbour will be finished with materials that exactly match the existing building, blending seamlessly with the original structure rather than standing out against it.

The rear garden of 101 Pixmore Avenue remains **spacious and open**, with substantial outdoor space to both the rear and side of the property. This preserves the sense of greenery and openness that is intrinsic to the Garden City character. The proposed extension sits comfortably within this plot and leaves ample private amenity space for both the ground floor and first-floor flats.

Regarding the concern about the ground-floor amenity area, it is important to clarify that the current proposal does **not remove or reduce** private amenity for existing residents. Any references to landscaping were made in the spirit of **enhancement, not replacement** to improve the appearance and usability of the space for all occupants. The privacy of the ground-floor flat has been fully considered in the design, with careful positioning of doors and windows to ensure separation and screening remain effective.

We acknowledge that the officer's report referred to the development being "highly visible" from neighbouring gardens. However, visibility does not equate to harm. In residential settings, many buildings are visible to one another, and what matters in planning terms is whether the proposal creates **material harm** to outlook, privacy, or light. In this case, the extension sits within an established built form, with **no significant loss of light or overbearing presence** supported by measurable evidence. The visual relationship between the two properties will remain consistent with the pattern already typical of the area.

We also note the statement that a two-storey wall would "loom" over the neighbouring garden. Respectfully, this is an overstatement. The modest projection, combined with the boundary fencing and existing vegetation, ensures the extension remains **visually contained and proportionate**. The sense of openness within both gardens will continue to be experienced much as it is today.

Finally, we would emphasise that **the proposed development aligns with Local Plan Policies SP9 (Sustainable Development) and D1 (Sustainable Design)** by delivering a balanced, contextually sensitive, and sustainable form of development. The design enhances the property in a responsible and well-considered way, preserving the distinctive Garden City principles of space, greenery, and community harmony.

In conclusion, this proposal is a small, respectful improvement that maintains neighbor privacy, protects the open and green setting, and reflects the very values that make Letchworth Garden City such a special place to live.

Overlooking and Loss of Privacy

The concerns raised regarding overlooking and loss of privacy are incorrect. The proposed development has been designed so that **no windows on the new build will face the neighbour's garden**, ensuring there is **no line of sight into their rooms, garden, or bathrooms**. Any suggestion that north-facing windows or side windows would overlook their property is therefore untrue.

Regarding the staircase, while it is external and located at the rear of the property, it **does not provide any view into the neighbour's garden or rooms**. Its positioning and height have been carefully planned to avoid any overlooking, and it will not increase visibility into their private areas. Similarly, concerns about noise or comings and goings along the boundary are exaggerated; the staircase is confined within the rear area of the property and does not create additional access that would affect the neighbour's amenity.

The neighbour's claims about external lighting affecting their rooms are also inaccurate. There are no new windows or external lighting that would shine into their property. In short, the statements made regarding loss of privacy, overlooking, and harm to amenity **do not reflect the actual plans**. An on-site inspection by an officer would clearly demonstrate that the design **preserves the neighbour's privacy and maintains existing levels of amenity**.

Noise

We acknowledge the neighbour's concerns regarding potential noise from the proposed new flat; however, these concerns are disproportionate and not supported by evidence.

Firstly, the proposed unit is a single-bedroom flat, designed for minimal occupancy. Environmental Health has reviewed the proposal and raised no objection, confirming that any noise generated would be well within acceptable residential levels. Her suggestion that "the cumulative impact of additional comings and goings late at night" would cause harm unfairly stereotypes the prospective tenants, implying that they would be noisy. In reality, no complaints about noise from our property have ever been made, making such claims unsubstantiated and highly overemphasized.

Secondly, her concerns regarding the existing external staircase and noise from our fridge cooling units are similarly overstated. She was aware, when moving next door, that the property includes a retail shop with three flats, where a small degree of everyday noise is inevitable. The addition of one further small flat will not materially increase noise or disturbance. Indeed, the majority of existing noise originates from the car garage, not from the flats themselves.

Finally, this assessment is supported by planning precedent: similar extensions and flats have been approved throughout Letchworth Garden City without causing demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenities. The proposed flat has been carefully designed to minimise any potential impact, including careful positioning of windows and building services. There is no evidence to suggest that the new flat would cause a material increase in noise or disturbance to neighbouring properties.

Loss of light and Quality of Accommodation

The concerns regarding window size, light, and shading are not supported by the facts of the proposed development. The new flat has been designed to **ensure adequate daylight and sunlight** for all habitable rooms, and the existing flats already have windows oriented to maximize light. The suggestion that removing rear windows from the existing flat and replacing them with side windows would materially reduce light is **incorrect**; the repositioning of windows has been carefully planned to maintain appropriate daylight levels in line with building standards and guidance.

The concerns regarding shading from the proposed development are overstated and do not reflect the actual conditions. While 101 Pixmore Avenue lies to the south of the neighbour's garden, the assertion that the extension would cast permanent shadows over half of her garden after midday is **incorrect**. Shadows naturally move throughout the day, and a significant proportion of shading in her garden is caused by **trees and bushes within her own property**, not solely by the proposed extension. We have been running this business at this property for 16 years and have observed the sunlight from all angles; both her garden and mine receive **plenty of sunlight at various times of the day**. The photograph provided by the neighbour appears to have been taken at a specific moment to exaggerate the presence of shadows and give the misleading impression that they persist all afternoon. Shadows shift continuously with the sun, and her garden enjoys substantial periods of

direct sunlight. The proposed development **does not materially increase shading** beyond the existing situation, and both properties continue to experience a balance of sunlight and natural shadow in line with typical garden conditions.

4. Highways and Parking

One of the key points raised in the objection relates to parking availability on Pixmore Avenue. The neighbour claims that “on-street parking on Pixmore Avenue is already oversubscribed” and has submitted a photograph to support this claim, showing her driveway allegedly being blocked. However, this image does **not accurately reflect the typical conditions** on the road. In fact, I have CCTV footage showing the neighbour deliberately stepping outside to take this photo during a brief period of daytime activity, seemingly for the purpose of supporting her objection. As someone who has lived and worked on this road for many years, I can confidently say that the road is **quiet for the majority of the day**, with vehicles only occasionally stopping briefly to visit local shops or the garage and not remaining parked for extended periods.

The officer’s report correctly notes that the property is close to the town center and well served by public transport. There is ample parking also available on the road, and many of the houses have driveways. Additionally, several residents either use bicycles or do not own cars. Having operated our store on this road for the past 16 years, we are familiar with nearly every neighbour and can confidently say the road remains largely unoccupied. The addition of one flat will not significantly impact parking availability, and we trust the officer will take this into consideration. Furthermore, we **have dedicated space on our property to accommodate one additional vehicle**, ensuring that the road itself will not be affected.

Issues cited by the neighbour, such as cars blocking her dropped kerb, are **existing conditions unrelated to this development**. The proposed flat is unlikely to exacerbate these matters, as one additional resident will have no impact on cumulative parking demand in the wider street.

I would welcome the planning officer to **visit the site at various times** throughout the day to observe the actual parking situation. To further support this, the Highways Consultee has stated:

“This level of development is unlikely to generate any extra movements which would ultimately lead to demonstrable harm to the highway network in terms of free flow and capacity. Therefore, the highway authority would not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.”

This professional assessment confirms that the proposed development will **not negatively impact parking or traffic flow**, and the neighbour’s claims exaggerate the potential effect on the local highway and parking conditions.

5. Planning balance and Conclusion

The objections raised by the neighbour in their conclusion are factually inaccurate and do not reflect the true nature of the proposed development. The claims of overdevelopment, loss of privacy, overbearing impact, noise, parking pressure, and substandard accommodation are **either exaggerated or demonstrably incorrect**. The development has been carefully designed to respect the local context, safeguard neighbouring amenities, and comply with planning policy.

Overdevelopment and design: The neighbour claims that the proposal deepens the building and introduces a five-metre-high blank wall close to her boundary. In reality, the extension **fits within the existing footprint and scale** of the property, and its design has been considered to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area. The building does not extend beyond what is typical for neighbouring properties, and the massing is consistent with Local Plan Policies SP9 and D1. The suggestion that the design is “contrived” is subjective and not supported by the plans, which demonstrate a thoughtful response to the site and its context.

Privacy and overlooking: Contrary to the neighbour’s claims, the proposed development **does not introduce any windows that face her garden**, and the external staircase at the rear **cannot see into her outdoor space or rooms**, including bathrooms. Assertions that the staircase will increase overlooking are false. Existing privacy levels are maintained, and the proposed changes do not materially alter the relationship between properties. The neighbour’s statements about perceived overlooking are based on **misinterpretation of the plans**, and an on-site inspection would clearly demonstrate that privacy is preserved.

Overbearing impact: The claim that the extension will loom over or enclose the neighbour’s garden is **exaggerated**. Shadows in her garden are caused primarily by existing trees and bushes within her property, and the photograph she submitted was taken at a single point in the day to create the impression of permanent shading. Both gardens experience **natural sunlight and shadow throughout the day**, and the proposed development does not materially increase shading or create an overbearing effect.

Noise and disturbance: The one-bedroom flat will generate **minimal additional noise**, as acknowledged in the appeal statement, and Environmental Health has raised **no objections**. The external staircase is positioned at the rear and does **not overlook the neighbour’s garden**, and typical comings and goings from a single household are unlikely to result in any significant disturbance. Claims that noise will intensify are therefore **unfounded and speculative**.

Parking: The neighbour suggests that on-street parking is oversubscribed and that the proposed flat will exacerbate parking stress. This is **misleading**. CCTV evidence and long-term observation confirm that the street is quiet for most of the day, and the photograph provided by the neighbour was taken during a brief period of daytime activity to exaggerate the situation. Highways have assessed the proposal and concluded that **the development is unlikely to generate additional**

traffic movements that would harm the highway network, supporting the officer's assessment that parking provision is acceptable.

Internal amenity: The proposed flat has been designed to provide **good levels of natural light and usable internal space**, meeting the standards set out in Policies D1 and D3. The claim that the accommodation is substandard is not supported by the plans or any professional assessment. All habitable rooms receive sufficient daylight, and the configuration ensures a high-quality living environment.

In conclusion, the objections raised by the neighbour rely on **misrepresentation, selective evidence, and exaggerated interpretation** of the plans. The proposed development maintains privacy, does not cause overbearing or overshadowing impacts, produces minimal additional noise, and is acceptable in terms of parking and internal amenity. The benefit of providing a one-bedroom flat is fully in line with planning policy, and the alleged harms cited by the neighbour **do not withstand scrutiny**. An on-site inspection would confirm that the development **respects the character of the area, maintains neighbouring amenity, and provides high-quality accommodation**. The appeal should therefore be allowed.

Photographs 1, 2, and 3 clearly show that the road is quiet and largely free of parked cars, day and night. This is an accurate reflection of normal conditions, which I can demonstrate to the Inspector at any time either in person over a full week or through my CCTV footage showing consistent patterns over time.







Photograph 4 shows how directly opposite 99 and 101 Pixmore Avenue, the house at 70 Pixmore Avenue has a **two-storey rear extension**, comparable in scale and position to the extension we are proposing. From the perspective of 99 Pixmore Avenue, our extension would be **seen in the same way** as the extension at 70 Pixmore Avenue is visible from its neighbouring properties.

Developments of this type have been **consistently granted planning permission throughout Letchworth Garden City**, establishing a clear and well-documented pattern of consent for such extensions. The photograph below shows the extension at 70 Pixmore Avenue as seen from the garden of 72, providing direct evidence that extensions of this scale and position are **accepted and typical in the area**.



Photograph 5 shows a house on the neighbouring street, Jackmans Place, which is **fully visible from the neighbour's garden**. This is not unusual; such sightlines are a **common and accepted feature throughout Letchworth Garden City**, reflecting the town's historic layout and pattern of development. The visibility of neighbouring properties across gardens is typical of the area's design and does **not diminish privacy or amenity in a way that would justify refusal**. This example underscores that the proposed extension at **101 Pixmore Avenue** is consistent with established local precedent, both in terms of scale and the way it relates to surrounding gardens.



Photograph 6, **with the relevant area circled in orange**, demonstrates that the property at 97 Pixmore Avenue already directly overlooks the garden of 99 Pixmore Avenue. In addition, several flats located behind 99 Pixmore Avenue have clear lines of sight into the same garden. Any shadows visible in the photograph are largely caused by the **trees and bushes within the garden of 99 Pixmore Avenue**, rather than our proposed extension. Given this existing level of overlooking and shading, it is **unreasonable to suggest** that our extension would result in any additional loss of privacy or amenity. The design has been **carefully and sensitively planned**, with no windows facing the rear garden or towards 99 Pixmore Avenue, ensuring that the privacy of neighbouring properties is **fully preserved**.

