

**Cassandra Rhodes
7 High Street
Kimpton
SG4 8RA**

To: North Herts District Council Planning Department

Re: Planning Application 25/02567/FP – 9 High Street, Kimpton

Dear Council,

I am writing in relation to the above planning application submitted by my next-door neighbour. I was surprised not to have been approached by my neighbour or informed by them that this application was going to be made before it was submitted, as there are aspects of the proposal that will obviously have an impact on my property. I hope that this letter will prompt a neighbourly discussion as to how the amenity issues raised by the proposed development can be addressed.

In summary:

- I object to the proposed carport due to its visual impact and effect on my back garden, and conflict with NHDC Local Plan policies D2 and D3.
- I would be happy to discuss with my neighbours as to how the design could be amended to reduce or mitigate the impact of the proposed carport on my property, once consideration has been given to the dominance/visual impact/loss of daylight aspects.
- I do not object to the extension, but I request that a schedule of condition be prepared as a precautionary measure regarding the party wall between our properties.

I set out my reasons below.

1. Rear carport - objection

I have enclosed with this letter a couple of photographs showing my back garden, taken from my back window. The proposed carport (2.4m to eaves, 1.8m to ridge, 1.1m from my fence) is tall, bulky, and close to my boundary, which will dominate the garden space and reduce light.

Having reviewed the NHDC Local Plan, I think the policy considerations set out below are relevant to this application and have not been properly considered or addressed.

Policy D2: House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

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Planning permission for house extensions will be granted where:

a) The extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials and the orientation of the main dwelling; and

b) The extensions do not dominate adjoining properties and:

i. it is well related to the floor levels of adjoining properties,

ii. there is an appropriate distance between the proposed extension and the windows of the adjoining properties; and

iii. spacing between buildings ensures there is no harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Planning permission for replacement dwellings and outbuildings will be granted where:

c) The proposal does not harm the character and appearance of the site; and

d) The location of the proposal does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene or area."

In relation to this policy, para 9.17 of the Local Plan says: "The policy requires that consideration is given to the effect that a proposal may have on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and the character and appearance of the locality in which they are proposed as these are matters that can often be overlooked with the desire for increased living space".

I can't see any evidence from the planning statement or proposed drawings to demonstrate that this policy has been considered, or that any consideration has been given to mitigation measures so that the carport will avoid dominating my back garden. The visual effect from my back garden will be as though someone has built a bungalow right next to the boundary. I would welcome a discussion with my neighbours as to how the design could be revised in order to mitigate the adverse effects upon my back garden (for example, a flat roof or otherwise re-designed roof would lessen its impact, or it could be stepped back further from the boundary), but as things stand I object to the proposed carport due to the lack of consideration given in its design as to how it will impact on my property.

Policy D3 (Protecting Living Conditions)

"Policy D3: Protecting living conditions

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. Where the living conditions of proposed developments would be affected by an existing use or the living conditions of an existing development would be affected by a proposed use, the Council will consider whether there are mitigation measures that can be taken to mitigate the harm to an acceptable level. If the Council is not satisfied that mitigation proposals would address the identified harm, development proposals will not be permitted."

Paragraphs 9.19-9.20 of the Local Plan comment as follows in relation to the above policy:

"9.19 All development has the potential to have an adverse impact on its neighbours, in a wide variety of ways. Such harm may arise from traffic generation, parking, loss of daylight and sunlight, noise, overlooking, pollution (including light pollution) and dominance as well as other issues.

9.20 A significant number of proposed sites for housing in the District are on previously developed land within urban areas. Such sites are often close to existing residential areas. Care is needed to ensure that the adverse impacts of any such development on neighbouring residents is minimised. It is not practical to provide absolute protection for existing residents' current living conditions, instead, there is a need to ensure that any impacts a development has are identified and appropriate mitigation built into the scheme."

Again, there is no reference in any of the planning application documents to demonstrate that this policy has been considered, nor any suggestion of mitigation measures. I would welcome a discussion with my neighbours as to how the adverse impact of the carport could be reduced or mitigated.

All of this is in the context of both of our properties being in the Kimpton village Conservation Area, meaning that it is particularly important for design to be sensitive and for new structures to respect this character and maintain a sense of space.

For the above reasons, I object to the proposed carport.

2. Extension/Loft Conversion - observations

I do not object to the extension or loft conversion. The one observation I would make is that the works will place additional loads on the party wall and, having discussed the proposals with a structural engineer, I gather that this may require new beams or roof purlins to be installed. I would therefore request a condition survey of my property and the party wall before work begins to document its current condition and help prevent disputes or damage.

I do not know whether party wall notices are required, but I think it would protect both parties for a schedule of condition to be prepared to document the state of the property, given that the law requires someone undertaking building work to reinstate any damage caused by the work.

I trust that the Council will take these concerns and observations into account.

Yours faithfully,

C. Rhodes

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7 High Street, Kimpton, SG4 8RA