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PLANNING STATEMENT

RETENTION OF EXISTING REAR / SIDE EXTENSION
AT
57 GERNON ROAD
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY
HERTFORDSHIRE
SG6 3HS

May 2025

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1.0 General Information

This Planning Statement is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying planning application submitted to North Herts District Council for the proposed single storey side / rear extension at number 57 Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City.

57 Gernon Road is a semi-detached, three bedroom cottage built in 1907. The property is located within the Conservation Area at Gernon Road where there are a mixture of bungalows, 2-storey semi-detached and detached dwellings.



57 Gernon Road, Letchworth

The ground level at Gernon Road falls from west to east by approximately 10.0m from the junction with Broadway to Norton Way South. Specifically, the ground level from the roundabout with Rowland Way to Norton Way South falls approximately 2.7m. This difference in ground level means that each dwelling along the road, when travelling from west to east, is at a lower level than the neighbouring property.

2.0 Planning History

Planning permission was granted in November 2015 for a two storey rear extension under planning reference 15/02320/1HH.

Planning permission was granted in June 2019 for a part single and part two storey rear extension and new attached garage built tight to the boundary with 59 Gernon Road under planning reference 19/00870/FPH.

Planning permission was granted in April 2023 for a single storey side / rear extension under planning reference 22/03169/FPH.

3.0 Planning Issues

When taking into consideration the level of the existing dwelling it has been established that the partly completed extension is only 140mm higher than that which was granted planning permission under planning reference 22/03169/FPH. The issue lies with the ground level adjacent to the extension and the fact that this level has been reduced as part of the construction process. To clarify, when building, the layer of topsoil is removed from the site. This layer of topsoil is usually a minimum of 250mm thick and would, in part, account for the current ground level adjacent to the extension being lower.

Furthermore, prior to the erection of the extension, a prefabricated concrete garage occupied the area adjacent to the neighbouring property at 59 Gernon Road as pictured below. As part of the demolition of this garage the 300mm concrete slab below was broken out and removed from site.



Garage at 57 Gernon Road, Letchworth

This therefore means that the ground level here and adjacent to the neighbouring property has been reduced, making the current extension seem circa 250mm - 300mm higher.

Once the build is complete a new path will be installed to the side of the extension providing access to the rear garden and patio area. This path will align with the level of the drive and be close to the previous ground level prior to construction.

In addition to this the approved extension proposed the building to be located 300mm from the boundary with number 59 Gernon Road. The actual extension has been built circa 800mm from this boundary, which significantly reduces the visual impact on the neighbouring property, as illustrated on the accompanying plans.

Furthermore, planning permission has already been granted under planning reference 19/00870/FPH for a new garage located at 50mm from the boundary with number 59 Gernon Road at its tightest point. This application proposed a height to the garage of 3000mm which, as can be seen from the site section detail included with this application, has a far greater impact on the neighbouring property than that which is currently under construction.

It is noted that planning permission was granted for a single storey rear extension to 92 Pixmore Way, Letchworth Garden City in January 2024 under planning reference 23/02680/FPH.

In a similar manor to that which we have at 57 Gernon Road, this application proposed the demolition of an existing structure prior to the erection of the extension. In the case of 92 Pixmore Way this existing structure was located close to the boundary line with the neighbouring property at number 90 Pixmore Way. Planning permission was granted for a single storey rear extension located close to the boundary line and of a similar design to that proposed at 57 Gernon Road. This application proposed an extension height of 3390mm.

Once the footpath alongside the extension at Gernon Road has been installed, the height of the extension will be circa 3380mm which is less than that approved at 92 Pixmore Way and located significantly further from the boundary line. It can therefore be seen that the extension currently under construction at 57 Gernon Road has a significantly less impact on the neighbouring property than that which gained approval at 92 Pixmore Way.



Extension at 92 Pixmore Way taken from Gernon Walk

4.0 Conclusion

This application proposes to regularise the extension currently under construction.

The above statement identifies the planning issues and provides justification for them. It establishes that the proposed extension is consistent with another extension within close proximity and which recently was granted planning permission. It also establishes that the proposed extension currently under construction has provided a reduction in impact on the neighbouring property than that which was previously approved in 2019 and 2022.

We therefore feel that this proposal has a good basis for the granting of planning permission.