

Friday 25th September 2026

To: Planning Department North Hertfordshire Council

Re: Planning Application 26/02011/FPH – 76A High Street, Kimpton, Hitchin, SG4 8QW

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as the owner and occupier of the adjoining property, 74 High Street, Kimpton, to object to the above planning application.

Having reviewed the submitted plans, including the proposed ground-floor, first-floor, cellar and elevation drawings, I have concerns regarding the scale, design, siting and massing of the proposed development, its effect upon the residential amenity of No. 74, its relationship with the established character of High Street and Kimpton, and the practical constraints associated with the site.

I would particularly request that the case officer undertakes a site visit to No. 74, including the side and rear garden and, if possible, the affected ground-floor rooms. The relationship between the two properties, the existing outlook and privacy, and the likely effect of the proposed extension are considerably easier to appreciate from the adjoining property than from the submitted drawings alone.

1. Previous refusal – design, size and siting

Planning application 24/00852/FPH was refused by North Hertfordshire Council on 7 June 2024. The stated reason for refusal was:

“The proposal by reason of its design, size and siting would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031, and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.”

I recognise that the current application has been revised, including the omission of the proposed loft works. I do not suggest that the previous refusal automatically determines the current application. However, I respectfully ask the Council to consider whether the revisions have genuinely overcome the concerns identified in the previous decision, particularly those concerning design, size and siting.

The current drawings still show a substantial enlargement of the dwelling. The proposed rear accommodation is shown as a significant extension beyond the existing rear building line, with the submitted elevation drawing showing a rear depth dimension of approximately 5.184 metres. The proposal also creates additional first-floor accommodation, including Bedroom 3. The proposal should therefore be assessed as a substantial change to the scale and built form of the existing dwelling.

2. Residential amenity – overbearing effect, outlook, daylight and sunlight

My principal concern is the effect of the proposed development upon the residential amenity of No. 74.

The submitted plans show a substantial rear extension and a new first-floor element immediately adjacent to the neighbouring property. The ground-floor plan identifies the adjoining property as “Neighbour”, illustrating the very close physical relationship between the proposed development and No. 74.

I am concerned that the increased depth, height and massing would result in an unduly overbearing and enclosing form of development when experienced from my property and garden.

In particular, the outlook from my kitchen window would become dominated by the proposed close-built form, creating a substantially greater sense of enclosure and reducing the amount of daylight and

sunlight reaching this part of my property. There would also be an impact upon the outlook from a ground-floor reception room. In addition, the proposed development would affect sunlight reaching the rear garden as the sun passes across the position of No. 76A.

I therefore ask the Council to assess the proposal from the perspective of the affected rooms and garden at No. 74. I would particularly welcome a site visit so that the case officer can see the existing outlook and understand the likely change in outlook and enclosure.

My additional concern is as the property is on the market and the current owners do not actually wish to deliver this proposal before selling, if permission is granted, this has the potential to become a stepping stone any new future purchaser to revise the plans and increase even further.

3. Overlooking and loss of privacy

I am also concerned about potential overlooking and loss of privacy resulting from the additional accommodation and fenestration shown on the submitted plans.

The proposed first-floor accommodation, including Bedroom 3, introduces additional upper-level built form and windows into the relationship between the two properties. I ask the Council to assess carefully the position, height, orientation and actual field of view of all proposed windows in relation to the windows and private garden areas of No. 74.

The ground-floor plan also shows new or reconfigured fenestration close to the adjoining property. I am concerned about the relationship between the proposed ground-floor window(s) and the existing windows of No. 74. Although obscure glazing is identified at one location on the drawings, I respectfully ask the Council to consider whether that measure is sufficient to protect the privacy of No. 74 as a whole, as the second ground floor window appears to look directly into my kitchen window.

4. Character and appearance of High Street and Kimpton

The proposal should also be considered within the established character of High Street and the historic village setting of Kimpton.

Kimpton is a linear village, and the established character of the High Street includes the close relationship between traditional buildings, gardens, boundaries and open spaces. The existing property at 76A forms part of an established group of older cottages within this context.

I am concerned that the cumulative scale and massing of the proposed additions would represent a substantial alteration to the existing dwelling and could result in development that is insufficiently responsive to the established scale, proportions and pattern of the surrounding properties, in contrary

to North Hert Council guidance to protect the historic core and historic environment from inappropriate development.

I ask the Council to consider the existing scale and proportions of 76A; the relationship between 76A and the adjoining cottages; the established building line; the relationship between buildings, gardens and boundaries; the substantial increase in built form; and whether the resulting development would preserve the established character and appearance of this part of High Street.

The previous refusal specifically identified harm arising from the design, size and siting of the proposal. I therefore ask the Council to consider whether the current design has satisfactorily addressed those concerns.

5. Parking and highway considerations

76A currently has no off-street parking provision, meaning that occupants and visitors rely upon on-street parking.

The submitted plans provide for a three-bedroom, 5-person dwelling. This has the potential to increase residential occupancy, vehicle movements and parking demand. The width of 76a allows one car length, consideration must be given to the potential of 5 cars for a 5-person dwelling and where they could safely park. With children living at home long into adulthood, this is a genuine concern.

There is already substantial on-street parking along this section of High Street. The road is narrow and parked vehicles can leave only limited space for vehicles to pass. At the bend close to the properties, gaps between parked vehicles are particularly important in allowing traffic to pass.

I am concerned that additional parking demand associated with the enlarged property could reduce the availability of these passing opportunities and could affect highway safety, pedestrian safety and the free movement of traffic. I have observed vehicles being forced towards or onto the pavement when adequate passing space is unavailable.

I therefore respectfully request that the Council and Highway Authority consider the existing parking conditions, the absence of off-street parking at 76A, the proposed three-bedroom accommodation, the likely associated parking demand, the narrowness of the High Street and the need to maintain safe passing opportunities, with a mind to conduct their own survey on parking and traffic management.

6. Side access, physical constraints and proposed cellar lightwell

The submitted plans identify both an existing lightwell and a proposed new cellar lightwell along the constrained side of the property. The cellar plan also specifically identifies a "New lightwell".

Given the extremely limited physical space between 76A and No. 74, I ask the Council to consider whether the proposed excavation, lightwell and associated construction can realistically be undertaken entirely within the application site and without affecting adjoining land or access.

I appreciate that the precise determination of private land ownership and legal boundaries is a civil matter and that I am not asking the planning authority to determine ownership. My concern is instead that the physical constraints are relevant to whether the development can practically be constructed as shown and whether the proposed arrangement would interfere with existing access arrangements.

I also understand that No. 76 benefits from an existing right of way over part of the land at 76A, and that the route of this right appears to coincide with land upon which the proposed extension is to be constructed. I appreciate that the existence and enforceability of private rights are civil matters, but I believe the arrangement is relevant to understanding the physical constraints of the site.

7. Construction access, deliveries and construction management

The restricted nature of the site raises practical concerns regarding the construction phase.

A two-storey extension of the scale shown would require the delivery and removal of building materials, plant, equipment, excavated material and construction waste.

Given the lack of off-street parking, the narrowness of the High Street and the constrained access around the property, I am concerned about the potential effects of unmanaged construction activity upon neighbouring properties and highway conditions.

I therefore ask the Council to consider how contractor vehicles, delivery vehicles, skips, building materials, excavation spoil, plant and equipment, and construction waste would be accommodated and transported to and from the site. I respectfully request that the Council satisfies itself that the proposed development can physically be constructed as shown and that appropriate access and construction arrangements have been considered.

Below is a copy of my title plan for accuracy as the location plan submitted within the planning application appears to be misleading.



If permission is granted, I respectfully request that the Council considers whether a Construction Management Plan or Construction Traffic Management Plan should be required, addressing contractor parking, delivery times, loading and unloading, material storage, waste removal, skip positioning and construction access.

8. Bats and protected species

I also wish to bring to the Council's attention the regular presence of bats in the immediate vicinity of the properties.

Bats are regularly observed flying and foraging in my garden and around the properties at dusk. I am not suggesting that this establishes the presence of a bat roost within No. 76A, nor am I claiming to have identified a roost.

However, given the nature and extent of the proposed works to the existing dwelling, I respectfully ask the Council to consider whether sufficient ecological information has been submitted to establish whether bats or other protected species could be affected.

In particular, I ask the Council to consider whether a preliminary ecological appraisal and/or appropriate bat survey is required before the application is determined. I would be happy to provide photographs or videos showing the regular presence of bats in the immediate vicinity if these would assist the Council's assessment.

9. Request for a site visit

Given the particularly close relationship between the properties, I would strongly welcome a site visit by the case officer to No. 74 High Street, including the side and rear garden and, if possible, the affected ground-floor rooms.

I believe a site visit would allow the Council to appreciate matters that are difficult to convey fully through plans alone, including the proximity of the proposed extension; the existing outlook from the kitchen and reception room; the relationship between the proposed building and the affected windows; the privacy currently enjoyed by the rear garden; the limited space between the properties; the existing daylight and sunlight conditions; and the physical constraints around the side/front access.

I would be very happy to facilitate access to No. 74 if the case officer considers a site visit helpful.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully object to planning application 26/02011/FPH.

My principal concerns are:

- The scale, design, siting and massing of the proposal, particularly having regard to the previous refusal of application 24/00852/FPH.
- The potentially overbearing and enclosing effect upon No. 74, including the impact upon outlook, daylight and sunlight.
- Potential overlooking and loss of privacy arising from the additional accommodation and fenestration.
- The effect upon the established character and appearance of High Street and Kimpton.
- Parking and highway concerns arising from the absence of off-street parking at 76A, the proposed three-bedroom accommodation and constrained parking and passing arrangements.
- The extremely constrained physical relationship between the properties, including the proposed cellar lightwell and existing access arrangements.
- The practical implications of construction access, deliveries, skips, contractor vehicles, materials and waste.
- The regular presence of bats in the immediate vicinity and whether sufficient ecological information has been submitted.

I respectfully request that these matters are fully considered before the application is determined and that particular consideration is given to the effect of the proposal upon the residential amenity of No. 74 and the established character of this part of Kimpton.

I would particularly welcome a site visit to No. 74 and its side and rear gardens.

Yours faithfully,

Michelle Knight

Owner and occupier of 74 High Street Kimpton
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