

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

19 Garden Fields, Kimpton, Hitchin, SG4 8RU

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The scale planning drawings of the proposal by Hugo Hardy Architect and the relevant cill document.
- The conservation area report.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is written in support of a house holder planning application for the following works:

A modest black timber clad extension, in the private garden at 19 Garden Fields. The extension creates two internal window seats, interior and exterior storage, a new entry with new dark grey aluminum glazed entry door and new matching windows in the extension only. The introduction of two new conservation rooflights on the less visible, due to neighbouring properties, village green side of the existing building and pitched roof. The proposal also includes new external hard standing and the removal of the existing internal chimney breasts and the external brick chimney at number 19.

2. WIDER ENVIRONS, SITE and LISTED CONTEXT

Kimpton is a historic Hertfordshire village characterised by its strong community identity, flint-built parish church, and a landscape shaped by the valley of the former River Kym. It lies about six miles south of Hitchin and features a mix of period homes, 19th- and early-20th-century buildings, and later 1970s housing estates. The village is known for its active local groups, annual May Festival, and a reputation for safety and rural charm, all set within a gently undulating agricultural parish with deep historical roots stretching back to Domesday.

Within this setting, 19 Garden Fields sits in a residential area just east of the village centre, close to the High Street and the amenities that form the heart of Kimpton. The surrounding neighbourhood reflects the village's blend of older properties and later developments, offering convenient access to local green spaces and the wider countryside that frames the parish. Its location places it within the quiet, community-oriented fabric of Kimpton while remaining well connected to nearby towns such as Hitchin, Harpenden, and St Albans. .

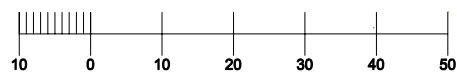
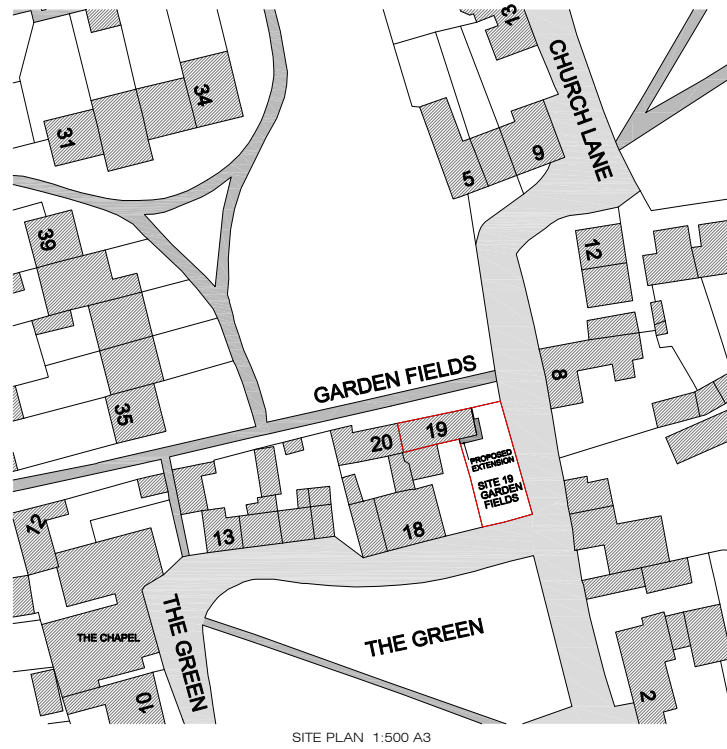
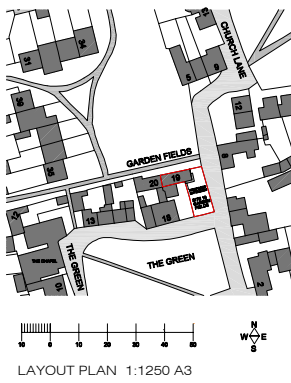
2. CONTEXT con't.....

19 Garden Fields sits within a village whose historic character is defined by its medieval parish church, long-established settlement pattern, and the distinctive Y-shaped valley formed by the former River Kym. Kimpton's built heritage is concentrated around the High Street and Church Lane, where flint cottages, agricultural buildings, and the 12th- to 15th-century Church of St Peter and St Paul form the architectural core. This older nucleus reflects centuries of incremental development, with the surrounding landscape shaped by ancient routeways, historic field systems, and the agricultural economy that dominated the parish for most of its history. 19 Garden Fields sits within the Kimpton village conservation area.

Garden Fields, by contrast, represents a later phase of village expansion, characterised by 20th-century residential development rather than historic vernacular architecture. As a terraced property within this estate, 19 Garden Fields does not form part of the medieval or early built fabric but instead sits just beyond it, in an area shaped by modern housing needs rather than historic land use. It is the pivot point between the old town fabric and the newer Garden Fields. Its relationship to the historic context is therefore one of immediate adjacency: it lies close enough to benefit from the village's heritage setting and established landscape character, and in the village conservation area statement it is highlighted as directly contributing to the Conservation character of the area. The Building is supporting the overall character of the area but in itself is not listed or locally listed.



Above: Plan view showing 19 Garden Fields in the village context.



Above: Site a and layout plan



Above: Elevation of 19 and 20 Garden Fields from Garden Fields with number 19 being on the left hand side with the fenced garden.



Above Left:

Existing gable elevation of 19 Garden fields from the garden.



Above Right:

19 Garden fields existing elevation as seen from the historic Green. The timber gates and shed to the right of the image are in the garden of number 19.



Existing 19 Garden Fields from Green.



Proposed 19 Garden Fields from the Green with 2 no. conservation rooflights and the added flue pipe.



Existing 19 Garden Fields from Church Lane.



Proposed 19 Garden Fields from Church Lane.



Existing 19 Garden Fields garden entry gate



Proposed 19 Garden Fields garden entry gate with extension.

3. THE DESIGN PROPOSAL

The proposed extension has been designed as a sensitive yet contemporary vernacular addition that enhances both the character and functionality of the existing home. Its form and massing remain subordinate to the original building, preserving the established roofline and ensuring the development sits comfortably within its residential setting. Large-format glazing strengthens the relationship between the interior and the garden, drawing daylight deep into the plan and creating a calm, generous living environment. The architectural language is deliberately modern but respectful, allowing the new elements to be read as a coherent evolution of the property rather than a pastiche of its historic fabric.

Material selection plays a central role in grounding the extension within Hertfordshire's long tradition of brick and timber construction. Black-stained vertical timber boarding provides a crisp, contemporary expression while echoing the region's historic use of dark weatherboarding on agricultural and vernacular buildings. At low level, brickwork is carried through up to damp-proof course, visually tying the new structure back to the existing house and reinforcing continuity with the area's characteristic brick-built forms. Together, these materials create a robust, tactile palette that is both locally rooted and future-facing, ensuring the extension contributes positively to the architectural character of the home and its wider context.

The proposal also includes a modest reconfiguration of the external amenity space to enhance its usability for the family while maintaining the green, landscaped character of the garden. The existing shed—a visually intrusive structure—will be removed and replaced with a small, sensitively designed BBQ and seating area that sits discreetly within the private rear garden. The current pond, which offers limited functional value, will be replaced with a more flexible limestone-tiled patio arrangement that provides a durable, attractive surface for outdoor dining and family use. These interventions are deliberately low-impact and remain entirely within the established garden envelope. Importantly, the revised hardstanding does not result in any meaningful reduction in planting. The garden retains its generous green areas, mature boundary vegetation, and established planting beds, all of which contribute to the privacy and visual softness of the plot. Some small trees around the patio adjacent to the house will be removed. The improvements simply rationalise and upgrade existing features, creating a more coherent and practical outdoor environment without altering the overall balance between built and natural elements. As such, the external works enhance amenity for the occupants while preserving the verdant character of the property and its contribution to the wider setting near Kimpton's village green.



Above: View of the proposal of the gable end of the house from inside the houses private garden.

THE DESIGN PROPOSAL IMAGES



Above: View when sitting in the new window seat of the re-configured and re-decorated ground floor.



Above: The two windows seats and internal storage created by the proposed extension.

4. PLANNING POLICY & CONSTRAINTS CONTEXT

1. Site Location & Planning Authority

- The site is located at 19 Garden Fields, Kimpton, Hertfordshire, within the administrative area of North Hertfordshire Council.
- Hertfordshire County Council is the Highway Authority and responsible for minerals, waste, and education planning.

2. National Planning Policy Context

The proposal is assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with particular relevance to:

- Sustainable development (design quality, environmental protection, and amenity).
- Green Belt policy, which applies to Kimpton as a village washed over by the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- Design policies, requiring development to be sympathetic to local character and context.

3. Local Planning Policy Context

The site is subject to the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031, including:

3.1 Spatial Strategy

- Kimpton is designated a Category A village, where limited infill and proportionate extensions are acceptable in principle.

3.2 Relevant Local Plan Policies

- SP5 – Green Belt: Protects openness; extensions must be proportionate and avoid encroachment.
- SP1 / SP9 – Sustainable Development & Design: Requires high-quality, contextually appropriate design.
- D1–D3 – Design & Character: Ensures development respects local character, scale, and massing.
- T1–T3 – Transport & Parking: Requires safe access and adequate on-site parking.
- NE Policies – Biodiversity & Landscape: Protects ecological features, trees, and landscape character.

4. Planning Constraints & Designations Affecting the Site

4.1 Green Belt

- The property lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- Extensions are acceptable where proportionate and where they do not harm openness or result in encroachment.
- New standalone buildings or significant increases in bulk are generally resisted.

4.2 Conservation & Heritage

- The site is within the Kimpton Village Conservation Area. KV4 and 5 are the key views that touch on Number 19 Garden Fields the proposed extension has no impact on these views.
- There are grade 2 listed buildings close to the site and grade 2* and Grade 1 buildings in walking distance ,the wider historical context is covered in theconservation area statement.
- No locally listed buildings are recorded in the immediate vicinity but some buildings are noted as contributing to the Conservation character of the Kimpton Conservation area and number 19 and 20 Garden Fields do just this.

4.3 Ecology & Environmental Designations

Based on categories used by Natural England and DEFRA for assessing planning applications:

- The site is not within or adjacent to any:
 - o Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - o Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - o Ramsar site
 - o Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- The site is not within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone for development types typically requiring consultation.
- No Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, or Ancient Woodland are recorded within the immediate residential area. (Protected site categories referenced per Natural England guidance.)The adjacent Greens are significant in the Conservation area.

4. PLANNING POLICY & CONSTRAINTS CONTEXT con't...

4.4 Flood Risk & Drainage

- The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the lowest probability of flooding.
- Standard surface water drainage and SuDS principles apply.

4.5 Trees & Landscape

- No Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are recorded on the site.
- Boundary vegetation and garden trees should still be retained where possible to maintain local character.

4.6 Article 4 Directions

- There are no Article 4 Directions affecting the property.
- Standard permitted development may not apply as these are likely restricted by Green Belt considerations or the Kimpton Village Conservation area.
- No AONB, National Park, Heritage Coast, or Geological Site designations apply.
- No minerals safeguarding or contaminated land designations are recorded for this residential plot.

5. Local Character & Built Form Considerations

- 19 and 20 Garden fields make up a late 19th or early 20th century terrace.
- Extensions must:
 - o Respect the scale, massing, and roof form of the host dwelling.
 - o Avoid over dominance or loss of symmetry within the street scene.
 - o Maintain adequate spacing and avoid harm to neighbour amenity.

6. Summary of Key Constraints Relevant to the Proposal

- Green Belt designation is the primary constraint: extensions must be proportionate and must not harm openness.
- The building sits within the Kimpton Village Conservation area.
- No, ecological, or flood risk designations impose additional restrictions.
- Local Plan design policies require high-quality, contextually appropriate design that integrates with the character of Garden Fields.
- No TPOs, Article 4 Directions, or statutory environmental designations affect the site.

5. PLANNING JUSTIFICATION

- The proposed development at 19 Garden Fields has been carefully designed to comply with the relevant national and local planning policies and to ensure that it integrates sensitively with both the host dwelling and the wider character of Garden Fields. The scheme represents a proportionate and well considered form of domestic extension that preserves the openness of the Green Belt, respects local character, and safeguards the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Green Belt Considerations

- The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, where extensions to existing buildings are acceptable in principle provided they remain proportionate and do not result in harm to openness or encroachment into the countryside. The proposal has been deliberately limited in scale and massing to ensure that it remains subordinate to the host dwelling and does not materially increase the visual or spatial presence of built form within the Green Belt.
- The extension sits entirely within the established residential curtilage and does not project beyond the existing pattern of development within Garden Fields. The proposal does not introduce any new detached structures, nor does it extend built form into previously undeveloped land. As such, the development does not give rise to any meaningful reduction in openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. The scheme therefore accords with NPPF Section 13 and Local Plan Policy SP5.

Design, Character and Appearance

- Garden Fields is characterised by both modern residential properties of consistent scale, form, and materials and 19th and early 20th century cottages. The proposed extension has been designed to reflect this established suburban character. The roof form, fenestration, materials, and proportions have been selected to ensure a coherent relationship with the host dwelling and the surrounding streetscene.
- The extension remains visually subordinate, avoids over dominance, and maintains the rhythm and spacing that define the cul de sac. The proposal therefore complies with Local Plan Policies SP9, D1 and D2, which require high quality design that responds positively to local character and reinforces a sense of place.

Neighbour Amenity

- The proposal has been designed to avoid any unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties. The scale and siting ensure that there is no material loss of daylight, sunlight, or outlook to adjoining dwellings. Window placement has been carefully considered to prevent overlooking or loss of privacy. The development therefore accords with the amenity principles embedded within Local Plan Policies D3 and SP9.

Highways and Parking

- The proposal does not alter the existing access arrangements and does not generate any additional parking demand beyond what can be accommodated on site. The development therefore complies with Policies T1–T3 and raises no concerns for the Highway Authority.

5. PLANNING JUSTIFICATION con't.

Environmental and Technical Constraints

- The site is located within Flood Zone 1, where development is considered appropriate. There are no heritage designations, conservation areas, protected trees, ecological constraints, or Article 4 Directions affecting the property. The proposal does not give rise to any environmental or technical issues that would weigh against approval.

Conclusion

- The proposed extension represents a modest and proportionate form of development that is fully in keeping with the character of the host dwelling and the wider residential setting in the Kimpton Village Conservation area. It preserves the openness of the Green Belt, protects neighbour amenity, and accords with both the NPPF and the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.
- In light of the above, the proposal constitutes a sustainable and policy compliant form of development, and it is respectfully submitted that planning permission should be granted.

666. THE NEW WORKS IN RELATION TO THE NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES.

The proposed extension at 19 Garden Fields has been carefully developed in response to its sensitive position near Kimpton's village green, where buildings are modest in scale and characterised by generous garden plots and mature planting. The design maintains this established rhythm by keeping the extension compact, low in height, and visually recessive when viewed from surrounding properties or the public realm. Its material palette—combining brickwork at low level with black timber boarding above—echoes the local vernacular without competing with the existing dwelling or neighbouring homes. As a result, the extension reads as a quiet, well-integrated addition that reinforces the area's architectural coherence rather than altering its character.

In terms of neighbour impact, the proposal has been shaped to ensure a high degree of privacy and minimal visual intrusion. The property benefits from a well-enclosed rear garden defined by robust fencing and established perimeter planting, which together create a natural buffer between the extension and adjacent homes. The modest footprint, controlled height, and orientation of openings further ensure that no harmful overlooking or overshadowing will occur. Overall, the extension has been designed to sit discreetly within its plot, preserving the amenity of neighbouring residents while enhancing the functionality and long-term sustainability of the home.

7. ACCESSIBILITY, SERVICES AND TRAFFIC

The proposed extension will have no adverse impact on local accessibility, services, or traffic conditions. As a modest enlargement to an existing dwelling, it does not introduce any additional households, parking demand, or vehicle movements beyond those historically associated with the property. The existing access arrangements remain unchanged, and the proposal does not alter the established relationship between the cottage and the surrounding road network near the village green. All works are contained within the private curtilage, and the scale of development is such that no additional pressure will be placed on local utilities or community infrastructure.

For the occupants, the extension represents a significant improvement in amenity, providing a more functional, comfortable, and sustainable living environment without increasing the building's external impact. The well-enclosed garden, existing boundary fencing, and mature planting ensure that the development remains visually discreet and maintains the privacy and tranquillity enjoyed by neighbouring residents. In this way, the proposal delivers meaningful benefits to the family living in the cottage while preserving the character, accessibility, and day-to-day functioning of the surrounding area.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed extension at 19 Garden Fields represents a modest, highly sensitive enhancement that delivers significant amenity benefits for the occupants while remaining almost invisible within the wider setting. With an increase in footprint of less than 5m², the development is exceptionally small in scale and has been designed to sit discreetly within the existing garden enclosure, screened by mature planting and boundary fencing. The use of flush-fitting conservation rooflights ensures that any upward-facing elements remain visually unobtrusive, and their position—largely shielded from the village green by neighbouring properties—further reduces any potential visibility.

The proposal fully accords with relevant planning policies, conservation principles, and biodiversity expectations. It does not intensify the use of the site, introduce additional parking demand, or place pressure on local services, and it preserves the balance between built form and green space within the plot. The external works—including the rationalised patio, improved hardstanding, and replacement of the shed with a small BBQ and seating area—enhance the usability of the garden without reducing lawn or planting, ensuring that ecological value and visual softness are maintained. Overall, the scheme provides a carefully considered, low-impact evolution of the cottage that improves the quality of life for the family while causing no harm to the character, amenity, or environmental quality of the area near Kimpton's village green.