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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Client - Mr & Mrs Apperly
Report Ref. - 260016-RIC-XX-XX-RP-A-0001
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Project Address - 56 Gaping Lane, Hitchin

Revision	Date	Comments	Issued by
P01	25.08.2026	Issued for Planning	RR

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the proposed design for alterations and extensions to 56 Gaping Lane, Hitchin. The proposals comprise a part two-storey, part single storey rear extension and internal reconfiguration to improve the layout and functionality of the existing family home.

The design has been developed following pre-application advice and seeks to provide additional family accommodation while remaining sympathetic to the character of the existing dwelling and the surrounding residential area.

Site Analysis

The application site is an existing semi-detached dwelling located on Gaping Lane, Hitchin, within an established residential area characterised by two-storey family housing with generous rear gardens and a varied mix of extensions and alterations.

The property occupies a long, narrow plot with off-street parking to the front and a substantial rear garden extending northwards.

The existing dwelling has already been altered over time, including a single-storey rear projection, and the surrounding properties demonstrate a range of domestic extensions that contribute to an evolving residential character.

Design Principles

The primary objective has been to create a larger, more practical family home without compromising the character of the existing dwelling or the wider streetscene.

The proposal retains the established building line and preserves the appearance of the principal elevation, with only modest alterations visible from Gaping Lane. The majority of the additional built form is located to the rear, ensuring that the development remains subordinate when viewed from the public realm.

The first-floor extension has been designed with a set-back, lowered ridge roof form with matching materials to integrate with the existing dwelling, while the ground floor extension has been proportioned to improve internal living accommodation without appearing overly dominant.

Access & Circulation

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements remain unchanged, with off-street parking retained on the existing driveway.

Internally, the ground floor has been reconfigured to create an open-plan kitchen, dining and living space extending across the rear of the property, while retaining a separate lounge and playroom. A new utility area and ground-floor WC improve day-to-day functionality.

At first floor level, the revised layout provides four bedrooms with improved circulation. The existing staircase remains in its current position, minimising disruption to the existing circulation route.

Planning Policy & Design Considerations

The proposal has been developed with regard to the relevant policies of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, with particular emphasis on achieving high-quality design that responds positively to its context.

The scheme is largely unchanged following pre-application discussions, with careful consideration of neighbouring amenity and privacy. An additional first-floor en-suite side window has been designed as a white uPVC top-hung opening window fitted with obscure glazing to prevent overlooking while maintaining natural daylight within the new accommodation.

The proposal has also been designed to comply with Building Regulations through a subsequent technical design stage, including appropriate structural, thermal and drainage provisions.

Design Details

The proposed ground floor rear extension introduce a contemporary yet sympathetic addition that reflects the proportions and roof form of the existing dwelling. The enlarged ground floor accommodates a generous kitchen, dining and living area with wide glazed openings to the garden, while the first-floor extension provides an additional bedroom.

The first-floor extension has been carefully integrated beneath a matching pitched roof, with the ridge and eaves designed to remain visually subordinate to the original house.

External materials have been selected to closely match the existing property and include:

- White cement render.
- Slate-style roof coverings to match the existing roof.
- White uPVC windows and doors.
- White uPVC fascias with black guttering to match the existing detailing.
- Obscure-glazed side window to protect neighbouring privacy.

These materials ensure the extension reads as a natural continuation of the existing dwelling while maintaining a cohesive appearance.

Conclusion

The proposed development at 56 Gaping Lane has been carefully designed to provide a substantial improvement to the existing family accommodation while respecting the character of the dwelling and the surrounding residential environment.

The extensions have been positioned and detailed to minimise their impact on neighbouring properties, preserve the established streetscene and respond positively to pre-application advice. The use of matching materials, sympathetic roof forms and privacy-conscious window design ensures the proposal integrates successfully with the existing property and represents an appropriate form of residential development.