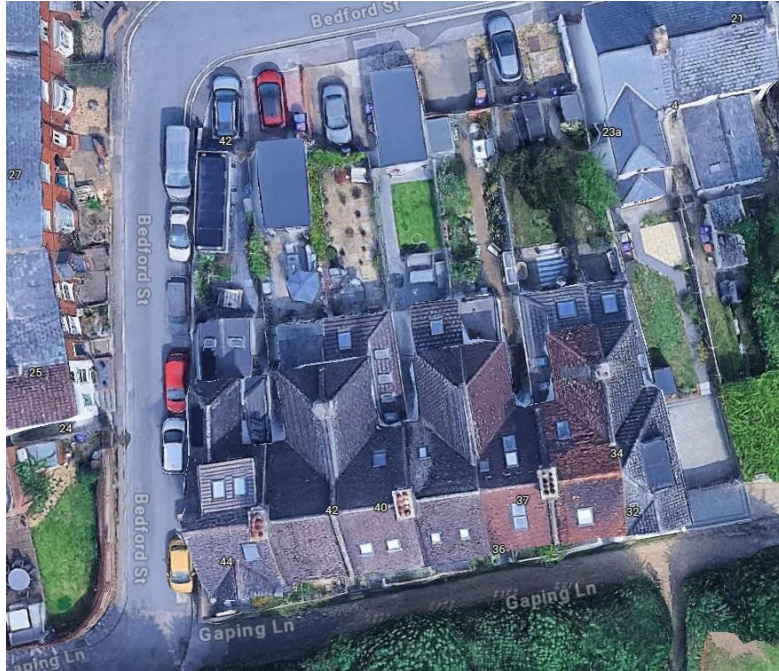


DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



34 Gaping Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 2JQ

Householder planning application

April 2026



Contents



- 1 Introduction
- 2 Site description
- 3 Planning history
- 4 The proposal
- 5 Relevant planning policy
- 6 Design and appearance
- 7 Impact upon neighbouring living conditions
- 8 Access and parking provision
- 9 Conclusion



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by INTOUCH PLANNING LTD, to support a householder planning application for: Insertion of rear L shaped dormer window and roof extension and insertion of two rooflights into front roofslope, following removal of existing front rooflight (development already partly carried out). The site address is 34 Gaping Lane, Hitchin SG5 2JQ.
- 1.2 The Statement provides an assessment of the planning policy framework relevant to the proposal, as well as other relevant material considerations, based on a contextual understanding of the site and the locality.

2. Site description

- 2.1 The site comprises a two storey mid-terrace dwellinghouse, within the main urban area of Hitchin. The dwellinghouse is not listed and is not located within, or adjacent to a Conservation Area. The site has vehicular access from a rear driveway, accessed from Bedford Street.
- 2.2 The neighbouring properties are Nos. 32 and 36 to either side, with No. 32 being the end-terrace, which has a side dormer window. No. 44 has a rear dormer window, as the opposite end terrace property. The following Figure shows an aerial view of the site, as the whole terrace.



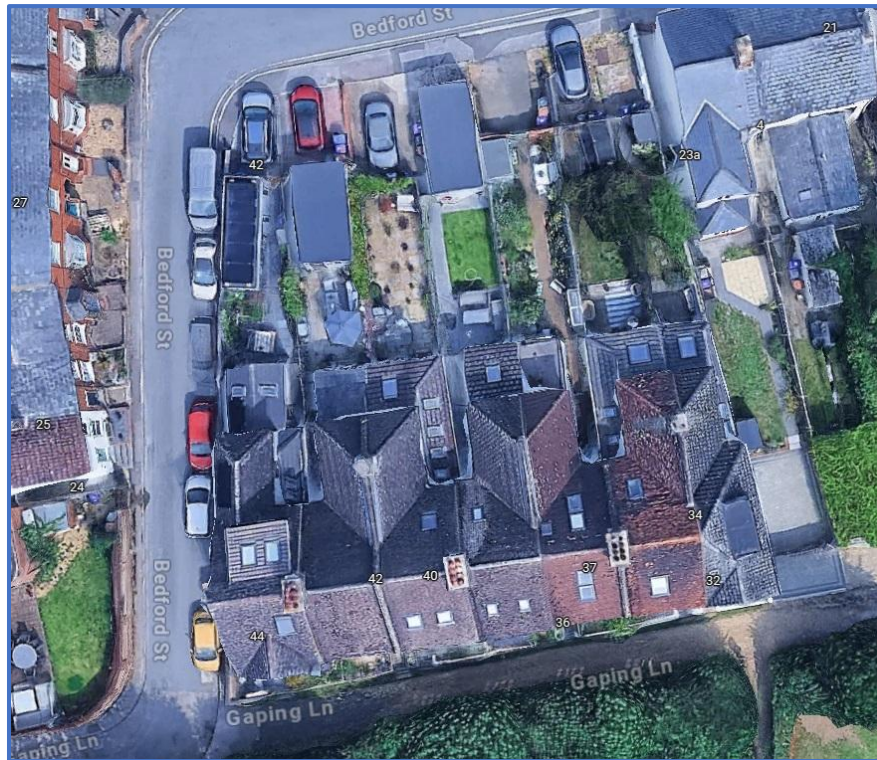


Figure 1 – Aerial view of the site and terrace

3. Planning history

- 3.1 14/01556/1HH - Single storey side extension - Planning permission granted.
- 3.2 25/02266/FPH - Insertion of rear L shaped dormer window and roof extension and insertion of two rooflights into front roofslope following removal of existing front rooflight (development already carried out) – Refused for the following reason:

The rear roof extension, without the eaves set in, appears as a flat roofed, visually bulky, third storey extension harmful to the character of the appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area, within the context of the row of houses where hipped roofs to rear projections and tiles are the feature. As a result the roof extension is considered to be contrary to the provisions of Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 which require for development to respond positively to a site's local context and to be sympathetic to the original dwelling in form and external materials.



4. The proposal



- 4.1 The proposed development comprises a rear dormer window roof extension, as an L shape with part on the main roofslope and part on the outrigger. The proposal is for changes to the currently built version, by way of re-instating the eaves and soffits back to the original size and position, change the current cladding to matching hanging tiles. The flat roof is of a dark grey membrane finish, with black windows.
- 4.2 Two rooflights are proposed to front roofslope, to replace the existing single rooflight. The extension provides an enlarged loft conversion which was originally converted some 20 years ago. The rear room is a home office room, with bathroom provided to the originally created bedroom in the loft conversion.
- 4.3 The following Figures show the proposed site plan, second floor plan and elevations.

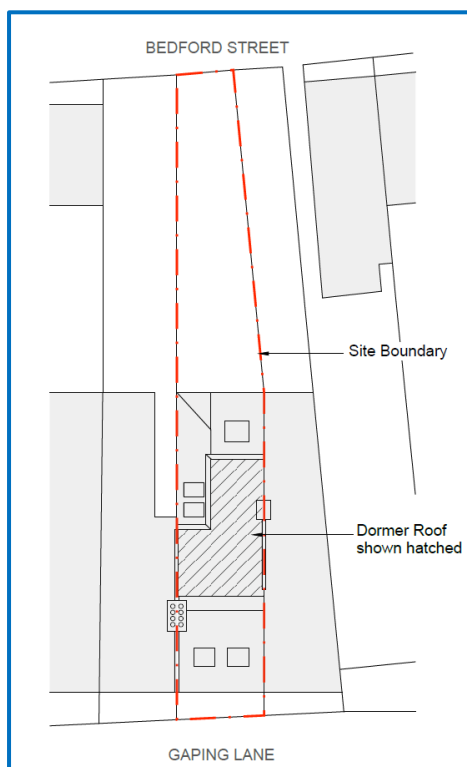


Figure 2 – Proposed site plan



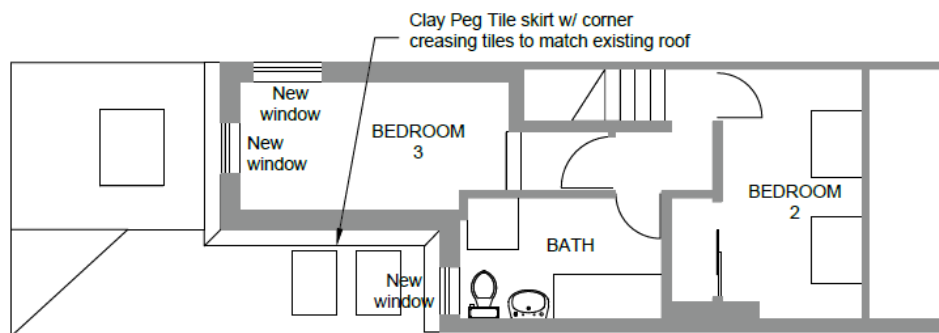


Figure 3 – Proposed second floor plan



Figure 4 – Proposed front and rear elevations



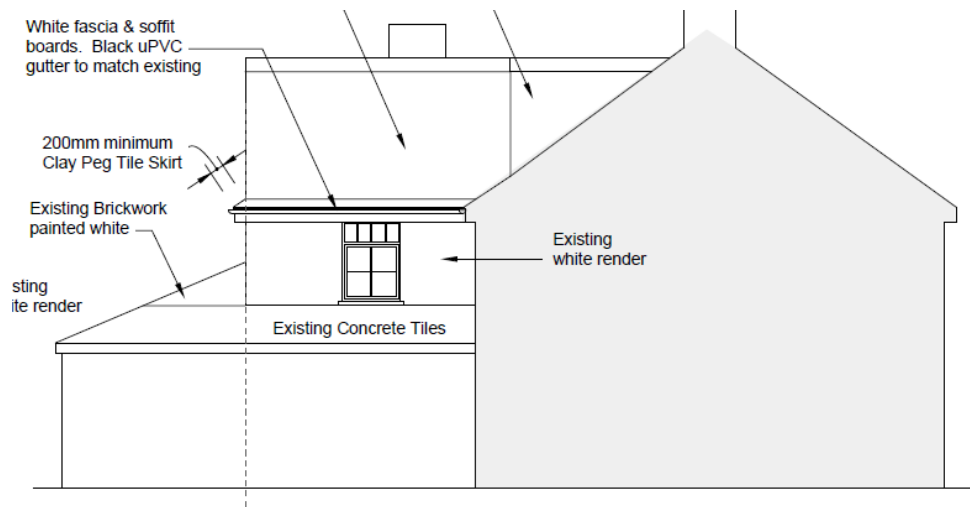


Figure 5 – Proposed left side elevation

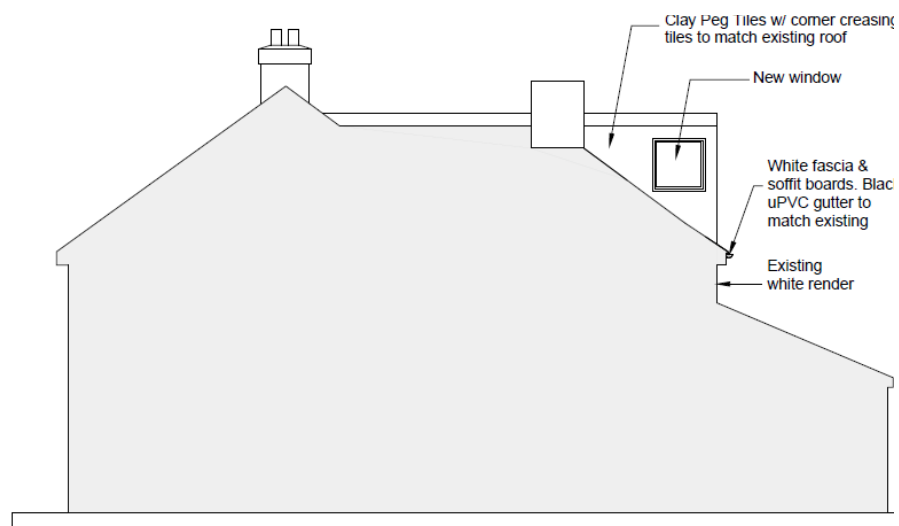


Figure 6 – Proposed right side elevation





Figure 7 – View of existing rear elevation with rear dormer window



Figure 8 – View of existing rear elevations of the adjacent properties



4.4 The proposal consists of the following drawings:

- 100 - Pre-existing and proposed site plans
- 101 - Pre-existing floor plans and elevations
- 102 - Proposed floor plans and elevations

5. Relevant planning policy

5.1 The following policies within the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are considered to be of relevance to this application, followed by relevant Sections of the NPPF:

5.2 North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)

- SP1 Sustainable development in North Herts
- SP9 Design and Sustainability
- D1 Sustainable design
- D2 House extensions and replacement dwellings
- D3 Protecting living conditions
- T1 Assessment of transport matters
- T2 Parking

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Vehicle Parking at New Development

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 12. Achieving well-designed places

6. Design and appearance

6.1 In regard to the design of the proposal, the objectives of the NPPF include seeking to secure the creation of high quality, sustainable buildings and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). This states that “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable communities*”. In this



regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the North Herts Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.



- 6.2 The proposed roof extension is considered to be appropriate in design, scale, and appearance, being subordinate and subservient in the overall roofscape of the dwelling. It is considered that the addition has no harm to the appearance of the dwelling within the street scene.
- 6.3 The works would actually have been permitted development, if carried out as per the proposed, from the outset. The volume is below 40 cubic metres, the roof enlargement does not protrude beyond any first floor wall to the rear or side elevations, with 200mm length of eaves retained, together with matching materials for hanging tiles to match the existing roof tiles.
- 6.4 The fact that this overall roof addition would have been permitted development, if built to the now proposed, should be afforded considerable weight in the consideration of this application. With this fact, together with the subtle changes since the last proposal for re-instated eaves and with matching hanging tiles, the roof addition would be of an acceptable size, design and appearance for this context. This proposal is therefore considered to overcome the previous reason for refusal.
- 6.5 The addition would cause no harm to the visual amenity of the host property, or upon the character of the area. The addition is set within the overall terrace, with minimal public view from Gaping Lane. The addition is well screened by the roofline of No. 32, from the only view further along Gaping Lane, which is shown in the following photograph.





**Figure 9 – View of the development from Gaping Lane (on right, with side dormer window at No. 32 to left)
– materials to be changed to matching hanging tile**

- 6.6 In regard to Section 12 of the NPPF, the development does indeed function well in providing a suitable sized bedroom or home office area, with the subordinate design adding to the overall quality of the area, for the lifetime of the development. The scheme is considered to be visually attractive as a result of the good architecture and high quality materials, with no harm upon the visual amenity of the street scene.
- 6.7 Overall, the design, form and appearance are in accordance with the provisions of Section 12 of the NPPF and with Policies SP9, D1 and D2 of the Local Plan.

7. Impact upon neighbouring living conditions

- 7.1 The objectives of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). This principle is reflected in the provisions set out in Policy D2 and D3 of the North Herts Local Plan.



- 7.2 Policy D3 of the North Herts Local Plan sets out that planning permission will be granted for developments proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 7.3 The proposal is considered to have no detrimental impact on the living conditions of any neighbouring properties. The roof extension has no dominating impact upon any rear windows or amenity spaces. The rear window faces down the garden only. There is a flank elevation window but this only faces the rearmost part of the adjacent gardens, causing no loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers. This was agreed with by the Planning Authority on the last application. The addition therefore has no impacts of dominance, loss of light or privacy upon any nearby dwellings.
- 7.4 Therefore, the development would not result in any harmful impact upon the living conditions of any neighbouring occupiers. The proposal is in accordance with Local Plan policy and, with Section 12 of the NPPF.

8. Access and parking provision

- 8.1 In regard to access, this is to remain unchanged from the existing rear access driveway for one vehicle. It is considered that the development retains sufficient levels of off street car parking provision for the enlarged dwelling. There has been no increase in bedroom number, as the pre-existing was four bedrooms with the loft conversion already providing two bedrooms to the second floor. The existing works have essentially relocated a bedroom on this floor and created a central bathroom.
- 8.2 The development therefore has no adverse impact upon the highway network and is in accordance with Policy T1 and T2 of the Local Plan and with the Parking SPD, within this highly sustainable location being so close to the plentiful amenities of Hitchin town centre.



9. Conclusion

- 9.1 In conclusion of the development, the proposed roof extension, as an improved variation of the existing built addition, would have no harm upon the visual amenity of the street scene, or character of the property and the overall area.
- 9.2 The works would be permitted development, which is to be afforded considerable weight. This, together with the enhanced details of this scheme, overcomes the previous reason for refusal.
- 9.3 The overall size, design and appearance would cause no harm to the visual amenity of the locality and is largely unseen from the Gaping Lane street scene. The materials are to match for hanging tile, with fully re-instated eaves and soffit details, giving an attractive appearance.
- 9.4 The development would have no harm upon the living conditions of any neighbouring properties by way of dominance, loss of light or loss of privacy. Parking provision is ample as existing on site within this highly sustainable location.
- 9.5 The proposal is considered to be in accordance with the provisions of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable for the grant of planning permission accordingly.

