

Planning Statement & Design and Access Statement

Proposed Replacement Dwelling @ 11 Kingswood Avenue, Hitchin, SG4 0PA

January 2026

Introduction

This statement accompanies a full planning application for the demolition of the existing dwelling at 11 Kingswood Avenue, Hitchin and the erection of a replacement dwelling for self-build and owner occupation.

The statement has been prepared to explain the context for the proposal, the design evolution following pre-application advice, and to demonstrate how the scheme accords with relevant planning policy at both national and local levels.

Site Description & Context

Site Location

The application site is located on the south side of Kingswood Avenue, within an established residential area of Hitchin. The site lies within the settlement boundary and is not subject to any statutory designations such as Conservation Area, Listed Building status or Tree Preservation Orders.

Existing Property

The existing dwelling is a semi-detached house of non-traditional construction. The property has reached a point where upgrading or retrofitting to modern standards would require extensive intervention, including replacement of much of the existing fabric.

The non-standard construction limits the property's long-term viability, energy efficiency, and mortgageability. Replacement with a modern dwelling provides an opportunity to significantly improve sustainability, appearance and compliance with current Building Regulations.

Surrounding Character

Kingswood Avenue is characterised by semi-detached dwellings of similar scale and proportions, with consistent building lines, pitched roof forms, and defined spacing between properties. The street has a strong and coherent residential character, which has been carefully considered in the design of the proposal.

Pre-Application Context & Design Evolution

A formal pre-application enquiry (ref. 25/02591/PRE) was submitted to North Hertfordshire District Council. The Council confirmed support for the principle of redevelopment, noting that the site is within the settlement boundary and suitable for a replacement dwelling.

However, the Council raised concerns regarding:

- The impact of the original design on street character and rhythm
- The prominence of the front gable and massing

- The visual effect of detaching the dwelling from the neighbouring semi
- Boundary distances and detailing following detachment

Response to Pre-App Advice

The proposal has been significantly amended in direct response to this feedback:

- The front gable has been removed, resulting in a simpler and more traditional roof form
- The front elevation has been rationalised, with a centrally positioned entrance and porch to better reflect the established rhythm of Kingswood Avenue
- Built form has been rebalanced, with two-storey massing relocated to the rear
- The dwelling width has been reduced, increasing the visual gap and reducing perceived bulk
- Side-facing first-floor windows have been designed to be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m to protect neighbouring amenity
- Notes have been added confirming the making good of the neighbouring flank elevation following demolition

These changes ensure the dwelling sits comfortably within the street scene while still delivering a high-quality, contemporary home.

Proposed Development

Description of Development

The proposal seeks planning permission for:

- Demolition of the existing dwelling
- Construction of a new replacement dwelling for self-build occupation
- Associated parking, access, landscaping and drainage works

Layout & Scale

The dwelling remains two storeys in height and is comparable in scale to neighbouring properties. Internal layouts have been refined to improve functionality, including:

- Dedicated home office space
- Adequate built-in storage
- Family-focused living spaces

The building footprint and massing have been carefully adjusted to respond to site constraints and pre-app feedback.

Appearance & Materials

The design adopts a restrained and high-quality material palette, appropriate to its context:

- Pitched roof with traditional proportions
- Fenestration aligned and proportioned to reflect surrounding dwellings
- Cream-coloured windows to soften the appearance and harmonise with the street
- High-quality external finishes suitable for long-term durability

Residential Amenity

The proposal has been designed to avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring properties:

- No unacceptable overlooking due to window placement and obscure glazing
- No overbearing impact due to appropriate separation distances

- Boundary relationships improved through refined massing and detailing

Access, Parking & Highways

Vehicular access remains from Kingswood Avenue.

The proposal provides adequate off-street parking in line with local standards, including:

- Dedicated parking spaces
- Provision for electric vehicle charging, as requested through pre-application consultation

There is no adverse impact on highway safety

Sustainability & Drainage

The replacement dwelling represents a significant improvement in sustainability over the existing building:

- Designed to achieve a high EPC rating
- Modern insulation and construction methods
- EV charging provision
- Surface water to be managed via a soakaway within the rear garden

Soakaway location is shown as indicative, with final size and position to be confirmed following BRE 365 infiltration testing and Building Control approval

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The proposal is a self-build dwelling for owner occupation and therefore benefits from an exemption from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. This has been confirmed by the applicant and is referenced accordingly within the submission.

Planning Policy Assessment

The proposal accords with:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – promoting high-quality design and sustainable development
- **North Hertfordshire Local Plan** policies relating to design quality, residential amenity, and sustainable development

The revised scheme directly addresses pre-application concerns and represents a policy-compliant form of development.

Conclusion

The proposed replacement dwelling at 11 Kingswood Avenue represents a well-considered and high-quality redevelopment of a constrained, non-traditional property.

Following pre-application consultation, the design has been refined to respect the established character of the street, protect neighbouring amenity, and deliver a sustainable, energy-efficient home for long-term occupation.

The proposal is considered acceptable in principle and in detail and is respectfully submitted for planning approval.