

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Creation of new Single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory: 20 Grange Bottom, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 9UQ

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a householder planning application for the removal of the existing rear conservatory and its replacement with a permanent single-storey rear extension at 20 Grange Bottom. The proposal provides approximately 10.8 m² of additional floorspace connected to the existing lounge. The lawful residential use of the property as a single dwellinghouse is unchanged. The statement has been prepared proportionately to the limited scale and effects of the development. The design has been developed from a measured survey of the property, an appraisal of its residential context and the existing relationship with neighbouring dwellings.

Site and Surrounding Context

The application property is a two storey dwelling within an established residential street in Royston. The building is attached to the neighbouring property on one side and has an integral garage and driveway at the front. The rear garden rises away from the house through retaining walls, steps and terraced patio areas. Boundary fencing and planting provide enclosure to the garden.

The existing conservatory is a lightweight, glazed structure attached to the rear elevation and reached from the lounge. It sits at the lower garden level between the house and the first retaining wall. Its small scale, rear position and the rising landform limit its visibility from public viewpoints. The immediate townscape is residential in character, with conventional brick elevations, tiled pitched roofs and varied modest rear alterations.

No change is proposed to the front elevation, driveway, garage, parking arrangement or public highway access. The proposal is contained wholly within the established residential curtilage.

Proposals

Use: The extension enlarges the existing lounge and remains ancillary to the dwellinghouse. No separate unit of accommodation is created.

Amount: The extension provides approximately 10.8 m² of additional floorspace. It is modest relative to the dwelling and retains the large majority of the rear garden.

Layout: The extension occupies the position of the conservatory at the rear of the lounge. Full height glazed doors provide outlook and access to the patio/garden, while the rooflight brings daylight into the deeper plan. Existing garden steps and terraces remain substantially as shown.

Scale and form: The extension is single storey with a shallow mono-pitched/lean-to roof kept below the first-floor windows. Its low eaves and subordinate roof form ensure that it reads as a secondary addition to the host dwelling.

Appearance and materials: The elevations use a simple domestic composition with vertically proportioned glazing, a rooflight and a tiled roof. The external wall, roof, window, door, rainwater and trim finishes will match or closely complement the colours and texture of the existing dwelling. Exact products can be agreed by condition if required.

Landscaping: The proposal reuses an already developed part of the rear garden. No material change is proposed to the wider garden layout. No tree works form part of this application; any separate work by a neighbouring owner is outside the scope of the proposal and is not relied upon for acceptability.

Design

The principal design objective is to replace an ageing lightweight conservatory with a well insulated, durable room that is comfortable throughout the year, while keeping the addition visually and spatially subordinate. Locating the extension on the established conservatory footprint is an efficient use of previously developed domestic land and avoids encroachment into the main garden.

The extension responds positively to the host dwelling by adopting a simple single storey form, a pitched roof and a restrained material palette. The roof remains below the first floor openings and the rear only position avoids any change to the street scene. The scheme therefore preserves the dwelling's legibility and the established character of Grange Bottom.

Residential Amenity

The proposal is not expected to cause material harm to neighbouring living conditions. It is single storey, occupies the location of the existing conservatory and is set within the enclosed lower part of the garden. The modest height and sloping roof limit enclosure, loss of outlook and overshadowing. The rising garden and existing boundary treatments further contain the addition.

The main glazing faces into the application property's own rear garden. No new upper floor or elevated side facing windows are proposed, so there is no material new overlooking relationship. The continued domestic use will not generate materially different noise, activity, traffic or servicing effects.

Access and Inclusive Design

The development does not alter access to the site from Grange Bottom, the driveway, parking spaces, garage or principal entrance. It creates no additional dwelling, bedroom or occupancy and therefore produces no additional transport or parking demand.

Internally, the enlarged lounge will remain accessible from the existing ground floor circulation. The detailed threshold to the rear doors will be designed as level or as low as practicable, subject to weathering, drainage and the existing garden levels. Door widths, glazing safety, ventilation, thermal performance and any guarding will be addressed through the Building Regulations. Because the proposal is an alteration to an existing private dwelling, opportunities for inclusive access are necessarily governed by the existing building and stepped rear garden, but the works will not make access to the dwelling less satisfactory than at present.

Sustainability and Drainage

Replacing the conservatory with a permanent insulated structure will improve year round usability and should reduce uncontrolled winter heat loss and summer overheating when compared with the existing extensively glazed enclosure. The detailed construction will meet the applicable Building Regulations for insulation, glazing, airtightness and ventilation. The rooflight and rear glazing provide useful natural light and ventilation.

Surface water discharge will follow the existing lawful arrangement or a Building Regulations compliant alternative, with preference given to infiltration within the site where ground conditions and distances from foundations permit. The small roof area and retention of the wider garden mean no material increase in flood risk is anticipated.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 forms the relevant local development plan. The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.

Policy SP1 : Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP1 applies the presumption in favour of sustainable development and seeks economic, social and environmental gains. The extension is within the established settlement of Royston and improves the utility and energy performance of an existing home without changing its residential use, access or infrastructure demands. It represents an appropriate and sustainable form of domestic development.

Policy D1 : Sustainable design

Policy D1 requires high quality design that responds positively to the site, local context, character and sustainability considerations. The extension is confined to the rear of the dwelling, adopts a clearly subordinate form and uses durable materials that complement the existing house. Its scale, layout and appearance respond directly to the established domestic character of Grange Bottom.

Policy D2 : House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

Policy D2 requires extensions to be sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, window details and materials. It also supports pitched roofs where appropriate and requires extensions not to dominate adjoining properties. The low single storey lean-to roof, restrained footprint, rear siting and complementary finishes ensure that the extension remains subordinate to the host dwelling and does not dominate either neighbouring property.

Policy D3 : Protecting living conditions

Policy D3 protects existing and future occupiers from unacceptable effects on privacy, daylight, outlook and general amenity. The garden facing glazing, absence of elevated side windows, limited height and position within the enclosed lower part of the garden avoid overlooking, overbearing impact and material loss of light. The continued domestic use will not create additional noise or disturbance.

NPPF Policies S3 and S4 – Sustainable development within settlements

Policies S3 and S4 provide a positive basis for sustainable development that accords with the development plan. The proposal is within Royston, complies with the adopted design and amenity policies and delivers clear improvements to the quality and performance of the existing home without material adverse effects.

NPPF Policy DP3 – Key principles for well-designed places

Policy DP3 requires development to respond to its context and to the relevant principles of liveability, climate, nature, built form and identity. The scheme improves year round living conditions, reuses an already developed part of the garden, adopts a compact subordinate form and maintains the coherent residential character of the property and its surroundings.

NPPF Policy DP4 – The design process

Policy DP4 requires design quality to be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development. The existing and proposed drawings clearly define the location, footprint, form, roof profile, openings and relationship with the host dwelling. The design is practical, buildable and capable of being delivered without any reduction in quality.

Heritage, ecology and other considerations

The modest rear extension does not affect the significance or setting of any heritage asset. It occupies the footprint of the existing conservatory and affects maintained domestic garden land, with no significant ecological effect. Householder development of this type is exempt from the statutory biodiversity net gain requirement. Demolition and construction will nevertheless proceed with appropriate care to avoid harm to nesting birds or other protected species.

The application does not alter the number of bedrooms, parking provision, highway access, refuse storage or the drainage catchment in any material way. These matters therefore remain as existing.

Conclusion

The proposed extension is a modest and proportionate replacement for the existing conservatory. Its siting, scale, pitched roof, openings and complementary materials respect the host dwelling and established residential character. The scheme causes no material harm to neighbour amenity, highway safety, parking, accessibility, heritage or the wider environment, while delivering a more durable and energy-efficient living space.

The proposal accords with Policies SP1, D1, D2 and D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and with the relevant national decision making policies in the August 2026 NPPF. Planning permission should therefore be granted.

Photos





