

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday, 7 April 2026

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Claire Parris (Chair), Carolina Veres (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy and Ellie Plater

Start / End Start Time: 18:30
Time: End Time: 19:45

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Robert Boyle, Rob Henry and Nigel Williams.

2 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 12 March 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 24/00451/FPM - ABBEYFIELD 2 POUND AVENUE

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of an existing vacant care home and the erection of 15 flats on land at the bottom of Pound Avenue, adjacent to Astonia Lodge and nearby residential dwellings.

The Planning Officer presented the site location, photographs of the existing building, surrounding area, and proposed elevations. The proposed development was described as slightly taller than No. 4 Pound Avenue but lower than Astonia Lodge. Floor plans, parking provision (5 spaces), cycle storage, and waste arrangements were outlined. CGI images were also shown to illustrate the proposed scheme.

The Committee was advised that the site constituted previously developed land in a sustainable location with good access to services and transport links. The principle of residential development was considered acceptable and compliant with relevant planning policies.

The design, scale, and massing were considered acceptable within a varied streetscape. The use of appropriate materials and architectural features was expected to enhance the appearance of the currently derelict site.

The Committee noted concerns regarding overlooking and proximity to neighbouring

properties. Separation distances of 19–22 metres were considered acceptable in an urban context. Conditions were proposed requiring obscure glazing to protect privacy. While the building represented an increase in scale, no significant harm to outlook was identified.

It was noted that one flat fell below nationally described space standards; however, this was balanced by larger bedroom provision and was considered acceptable overall.

The proposal included 5 parking spaces, below policy requirements (9 spaces). This was identified as a policy conflict. However, the site was considered highly sustainable, and a recent appeal decision was noted where lack of parking did not justify refusal. Highways officers raised no objections on safety grounds. Members discussed concerns about overspill parking and local congestion. Revised cycle storage provision (21 spaces) was accepted following earlier concerns, with secure and accessible facilities proposed.

The Local Lead Flood Authority raised no objections subject to conditions, and an acceptable drainage strategy was secured. The scheme could not deliver on-site biodiversity net gain; however, the applicant committed to achieving the required 10% gain off-site through credits. This would be secured by condition. Waste and recycling arrangements were considered acceptable and sustainable construction measures would be secured by condition.

Members raised concerns regarding:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Insufficient parking provision and potential overspill
- Substandard size of one unit
- Loss of care home use

Members also highlighted the benefits of redeveloping a vacant brownfield site and delivering much-needed housing.

Members were informed that policy required 25% affordable housing (4 units). However, the applicant submitted a viability appraisal demonstrating that the scheme was not financially viable with affordable housing or contributions. This was independently reviewed, and both assessments concluded the scheme would result in a deficit. It was therefore accepted that no affordable housing or Section 106 contributions could be secured. The development would remain liable for Community Infrastructure Levy payments.

Concerns regarding the loss of the care home were noted; however, the building had been vacant since 2020 and was no longer viable for that use. Questions were raised regarding parking management, construction impacts, and enforcement of conditions. Officers clarified that would be the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

It was noted that a Construction Management Plan would be required to mitigate impacts, including avoiding school drop-off and pick-up times. Swift bricks and biodiversity enhancements were discussed and would be addressed

via conditions where possible.

The Officer concluded that, although there were policy conflicts (notably lack of affordable housing and parking shortfall), these did not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. The application was therefore recommended for approval.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions set out below and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which the permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 23069-0000-P1; 23069-0100-P1; 23069-0101-P1; ASC.23.521; 23069-0300-P1; 23069-1100-P3; 23069-1101-P2; 23069-1102-P2; 23069-1300-P4; 23069-1103-P2;
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. No demolition, construction or maintenance activities audible at the boundary, and no deliveries of construction and demolition materials shall be undertaken outside the hours 07:30 hours to 18:00 hours Monday to Friday and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such activity shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
4. Any external lighting installed at the site shall be angled so as to avoid any spillage beyond the site boundaries unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
5. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified, it must be reported in writing immediately to the local planning authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary, a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
6. Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

7. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner.

8. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Noise Impact Assessment prepared by IEC Limited, reference IEC/4552/01/AVH dated 08.12.2023 and subsequent Technical Note reference IEC001 dated 01.08.2024 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

9. At least 50% of the residential units are Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings.

10. The development will be constructed as per the approved documents including the minimum Finished Floor Level (FFL) of 90.9 mAOD. This is to ensure that the development should be appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment.

11. The first floor windows in the eastern side elevation of the development hereby approved shall be glazed with obscured glass and shall be fixed so as to be incapable of being opened below a height of 1.7 metres above floor level, and shall be retained in that form thereafter.

12. No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Plan would need to include details of:

- a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
- b) Access arrangements to the site;
- c) Traffic management requirements;
- d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
- e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
- f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
- g) Timing of construction activities including delivery times and removal of waste, and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.
- h) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- i) Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- j) where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements;
- k) Phasing Plan.

13. No development shall take place (including site clearance and demolition) until details of tree protection measures for the trees to the south of the application site

and any trees on the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The tree protection measures as approved shall be implemented prior to commencement of development and remain in place until the development has been completed. Within the tree protection areas to be fenced off there shall be no alteration to the ground level and they shall be kept clear of vehicles, materials, surplus soil, temporary buildings, plant and machinery.

14. No development shall take place (including site clearance and demolition) until a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the site has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in consultation with the Waste Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved SWMP.

15. Prior to the commencement of development, construction drawings of the surface water drainage network, associated sustainable drainage components and flow control mechanisms and a construction method statement shall be submitted and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall then be constructed as per the agreed drawings, method statement, Drainage Strategy and Drawings (Drainage Strategy and Drawing Rev P6, dated 15 December 2025) and remaining in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No alteration to the agreed drainage scheme shall occur without prior written approval from the Local Authority.

16. No development shall take place above slab level until a schedule and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

17. No development shall take place above slab level until details of measures to address adaptation to climate change have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall then be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

18. No development shall take place above slab level until details of the treatment of all boundaries including details of any walls, fences, gates or other means of enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The approved boundary treatments shall be completed before the use hereby permitted is commenced or before the building(s) is occupied.

19. No development shall take place above slab level until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft and hard landscaping and details of the treatment of all hard surfaces. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details showing all trees to be removed, or retained, together with details of all new planting to take place including species, size and method of planting.

20. No development shall take place above slab level until a scheme for the provision of adequate water supplies and fire hydrants, necessary for firefighting purposes at the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the scheme has been implemented in accordance with the approved details.

21. No development shall take place above slab level until details of integrated swift bricks and bat boxes to be provided within the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

22. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted the parking provision as shown on the approved plans, shall be constructed, hardsurfaced and made ready for use. Any new areas of hardstanding created, or existing areas which are replaced, shall be constructed in a porous material or provision shall be made for a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) to be built into the hardsurfaced areas. Once provided the parking facilities shall be retained in that form and thereafter be used for the parking of vehicles only.

23. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby permitted, all parking spaces shall be provided with the underlying infrastructure for connection to the electricity network to enable them to be served by an electric vehicle charging point.

24. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the cycle storage as shown on approved plan 23069-1100-P3, for the storage of not less than 20 cycles in a single storey formation shall be implemented accordingly. The cycle storage shall be retained and maintained accordingly during the lifetime of the development.

25. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, the waste and recycling storage area as shown on plan 23069-1100-P3 shall be implemented accordingly. The storage shall be retained and maintained accordingly during the lifetime of the development.

26. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include:

- i. a timetable for its implementation.
- ii. details of SuDS feature and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect including a drawing showing where they are located.
- iii. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable

drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. This will include the name and contact details of any appointed management company. Hertfordshire County Council

27. Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first use of the development; a survey and verification report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 15. Where necessary, details of corrective works to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

1. Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Forhad Chowdhury, Kamal Choudhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, and Carolina Veres

Against – Stephen Booth

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Rob Henry & Nigel Williams

4 26/00112/FPH - 60 UPLANDS STEVENAGE

The Committee considered an application for the erection of a first-floor side extension at 60 Uplands, located within the Chells Manor Ward. The proposal related to an extension above an existing garage and dining room of a two-storey linked detached property.

Members were advised that the property currently benefitted from a front driveway laid in block paving, providing space for two vehicles. It was noted that the existing garage had internal dimensions of approximately 2.25 metres by 5.02 metres, which

fell below the Council's standard of 3 metres by 6 metres and therefore was not counted as a formal parking space.

The proposed development comprised a first-floor extension to provide a study, storeroom, and ensuite bathroom. Officers advised that the design was proportionate in accordance with relevant Council policies.

Photographs of the site and surrounding context were presented, including front and rear elevations. Members noted the relationship of the property to neighbouring dwellings, including Nos. 59 and 63.

The Committee was informed that the application had been brought before Members because the applicant was a member of staff. Officers confirmed that the proposal was considered acceptable and recommended approval.

In response to a question from Members, officers clarified that the extension was intended solely for use as part of the existing single household. It was confirmed that the development did not involve subdivision or use as separate accommodation.

The Council has acted Pro-Actively for the following reason:-

1. Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out below:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan; P1; P2; P3

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match the materials used in the construction of the original building to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, and Carolina Veres

Against – 0

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Kamal Choudhury, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Rob Henry & Nigel Williams

Members raised a question regarding an application which was granted planning permission.

Officers advised that planning applications could be determined under delegated powers, and that members were able to make representations or request a call-in only during the statutory consultation period.

Members were advised to review the weekly planning applications list to ensure they were aware of relevant submissions.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Delegated Decisions be noted.

6 INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Appeals / Called In Decisions be noted.

7 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR