

Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:** Committee

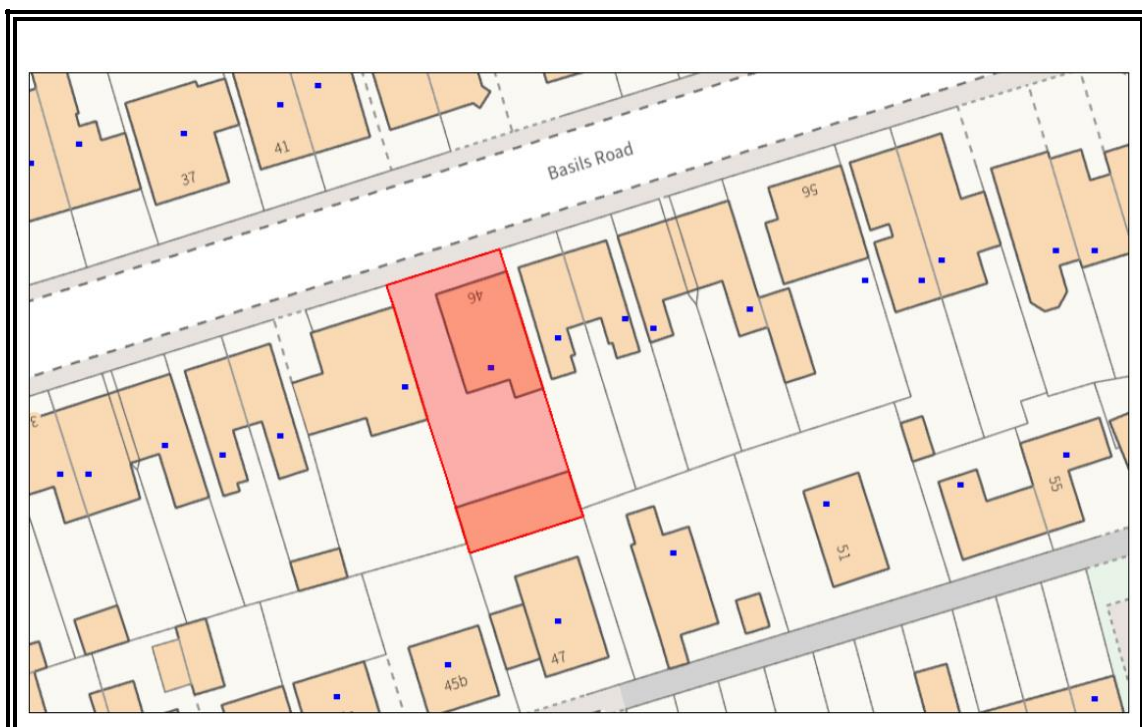
Date: 30 June 2026

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Application No :	26/00281/FP
Location :	46 Basils Road, Stevenage
Proposal :	Erection of extensions, alterations and associated works to facilitate conversion to 6no. flats
Drawing Nos.:	25115-001; 25115-002; 25115-003; 25115-004; 25115-100 C; 25115-110 B; 25115-120 B; 25115-130 B
Applicant :	Skyline Assets Limited
Agent:	CROE Architects
Date Valid:	2 April 2026
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a detached property within the Old Town area of Stevenage. The property is in mixed use with an office at ground floor (vacant) and a residential flat on the first floor. The site has an outbuilding at the rear, which is currently used as a workshop and as storage. The rear is also used for parking.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 05/00273/FP Change of use of ground floor from offices (B1) to residential use granted planning permission 26.07.2005.
- 2.2 25/00431/FP Erection of single storey rear extension and change of use of ground floor from office (use class E) to create 3no. x 1 bed flats at ground and first floor with associated parking and storage.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of extensions, alterations and associated works to facilitate the conversion of the property to 6no. one-bedroom flats. The proposal would involve a two-storey side extension and a part one / two storey rear extension, with a double gable end roof extension.
- 3.2 Following objections raised by the Highway Authority over details concerning the access and rear parking area, together with officer concerns over the design of the rear roof extension, window glazing and internal flat sizes, amended plans were received. The application is being assessed based on the proposal shown in the amended plans which have been subject to neighbour and statutory consultee re-consultation.
- 3.3 The application comes before the Planning Committee as it has been called in by a Ward Member.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

Original Plans

- 4.1 The application was publicised by way of letters sent to adjoining owner / occupiers and a site notice. Thirty-six objections were received, together with a petition raising the following concerns. It should be noted that in some cases more than one representation has been submitted by individual neighbours:
- Loss of Residential Amenity (overlooking, overbearing impact, outlook and light)
 - Inconsistent Plans / Adjoining Wall Gap — Contradictions in drawings about a gap between the new structure and the neighbour's wall; objection to any structure being fixed to or placed against the external wall.
 - Ventilation and Damp — The neighbour's property has solid walls with no cavity and existing damp issues; the new structure could worsen ventilation and damp conditions.
 - Access for Maintenance — Requests assurance that access to the side of the property will remain available for maintenance.
 - Misrepresentation of previous planning permission — Claims the application incorrectly states that prior permission was for five flats.
 - Highway safety and inadequate parking leading to congestion and parking problems on Basils Road.

- Flat conversion (density) out of character with area, which is predominantly family housing.
- Design and Scale – The bulk and massing of the proposed extension would appear overbearing and out of character in relation to the surrounding properties and an overdevelopment of the site.
- Noise and light pollution.
- Application fails to address impact on the setting of the Old Town Conservation Area. Proposal is harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area, by reason of its width and massing.
- The applicant's characterisation of local character is unsound.
- Failure to notify neighbouring properties.
- Restrictive Covenants.
- Bin and Cycle Storage – Location and Fire Safety.
- Plans fail to acknowledge an existing window on the adjoining wall of No.44. The right to light is a recognised legal right.
- Increase in housing will impact on water and sewerage infrastructure.
- Support for the reasons behind the Highway Authority's objection to the application.

Plans submitted 8 May 2026 revision A/B

4.2 Amended plans were submitted to address concerns around the design of the roof extension and the objection from the Highway Authority. The application was re-publicised by way of letters sent to adjoining owner / occupiers and all those who had previously submitted a representation. Thirty-six representations were received reiterating the previous objections. It should be noted that in some cases more than one representation has been submitted by individual neighbours. The following new points were raised:

- All concerns raised in previous objections remain outstanding.
- Revised drawings reduce parking provision further.
- This application conflicts with Policies SP5, SP8, SP13 and IT5 of the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2019, and that these conflicts, taken individually and cumulatively, provide strong and compelling grounds for refusal.
- This will be an HMO, not flats.
- First and second floor rear windows should be obscure glazed to match planning condition at 44 Basils Road for rear extension granted permission in 2015 (ref. 15/00202/FPH).
- Flats do not comply with nationally described space standards.
- Proposal fails to meet minimum back-to-back separation distance with No.47 Grove Road.

4.3 Amended plans were submitted to reduce the bedroom sizes in flats 2 and 3 to comply with the nationally described space standards and to show obscure glazing to the rear first and second floor windows with additional rooflights for flats 4 and 6. The application was re-publicised by way of letters sent to adjoining owner / occupiers and all those who had previously submitted a representation. Thirty representations were received reiterating the previous objections and a petition. It should be noted that in some cases more than one representation has been submitted by individual neighbours. The following new points were raised:

- Amenity concerns (noise and disturbance) associated with location of bin and bike storage adjacent to side wall of No.44.
- Query whether bin and bike storage structures will be fixed to shared boundary wall with No.44 raising concerns over structural impact, vibration, and noise transmission through the wall.
- Poor outlook for flats 4, 5 and 6 due to obscure glazed windows.
- Revised elevation drawings do not include a measurement showing by how much the proposed rear extension will project beyond the rear building lines of the adjoining properties at No. 44 and No. 48 Basils Road.
- Query over fire evacuation procedure and fire escapes.
- Query over how construction traffic would access site.
- No waste management plan and no details on how bin storage area would be managed.
- Bins would attract vermin.
- Query over whether a change of use has been applied for relating to the ground floor commercial use.
- Application fails to address how existing boundary installations will be protected or how security of neighbouring properties will be maintained during and after construction.
- 18m high boundary fence a typographical error?

4.4 The above is a summary of the issues raised. A full copy of the representations are available on the application file on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1. HCC Highway Authority (comments dated 27 April 2026)

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons:

5.1.1 There is insufficient information supplied with this application to enable the Highway Authority to reach a recommendation. In the absence of the necessary information, the Highway Authority recommends refusal due to doubt over possible implications for highway safety and convenience.

HCC Highway Authority (comments dated 14 May 2026)

- 5.1.2 Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to conditions.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

- 6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage, the statutory development plan comprises the following documents:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted 2019)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (adopted 2007)

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2.1 The latest revision of the NPPF was published in December 2024. The policies it contains are material considerations which will be taken into account in dealing with applications. Due weight will be given to development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

6.3 Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply

- 6.3.1 Since November 2018, housing delivery has been measured against the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) as set out by the Government planning policy and guidance. The results of the HDT dictate whether a local planning authority should be subject to consequences to help increase their housing delivery. Where an authority's HDT score is less than 95%, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years. Where an authority's HDT score is less than 85% of its housing requirement, the Council must incorporate a 20% buffer into its housing supply calculations in line with paragraph 79 of the NPPF. This will be in addition to the preparation of an Action Plan. Where an authority's score is below 75%, the Council will be subject to the HDT's most severe penalty and must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development under paragraph 11d) of the NPPF. The latest HDT results published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2024 identifies that Stevenage delivered 38% of its housing requirement.
- 6.3.2 The Council, based on its HDT score is currently subject to the most severe penalty under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2024). For reference, as this policy is now engaged, it means Local Plan policies would be classed as out-of-date. Consequently, Stevenage Borough Council must apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development in its decision making and give great weight towards the need to deliver housing. The Council must also apply a 20% buffer in its 5-year housing supply calculations, and it also has to produce an Action Plan in order to boost housing delivery.
- 6.3.3 On the 21 May 2024, the Council published its 5 Year Land Supply Update May 2024. This identifies that the Council can demonstrate a Housing Supply of **5.59 years** for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2029, using the *Liverpool* methodology (spreads the delivery of historic undersupply of housing equally across the remainder of the Local Plan

period) and guidance from the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance. The 5-year land supply includes a 20% buffer.

- 6.3.4 However, the Revised Housing Technical Paper (June 2025) identifies that the Council's Housing Supply is at **5.49 years**, but this has yet to be confirmed through an Examination in Public (EiP) and is therefore not formally adopted at this time.

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.4.1 The Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG"), with which Members are fully familiar, is an online resource containing guidance supplementing the NPPF. The PPG is a material consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications.

6.5 National Design Guide

- 6.5.1 The National Design Guide 2021 is Government guidance on the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It has the same status as the PPG and should similarly be taken into account when determining planning applications.

6.6 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted 2019)

- 6.6.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019. Weight must be given to the policies it contains according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 6.6.2. In addition, the council is required to regard the local plan policies most relevant to determining the application as out-of-date because the application involves the provision of housing and the delivery of housing in the borough was substantially below the housing requirement over the last three years. Those policies are:

- Policy SP1: Climate Change
- Policy SP2: Sustainable development in Stevenage;
- Policy SP7: High quality homes;
- Policy SP8: Good design;
- Policy IT5: Parking and access;
- Policy HO5: Windfall sites;
- Policy HO9: House types and sizes;
- Policy HO11: Accessible and adaptable housing;
- Policy GD1: High quality design;
- Policy FP7: Pollution;
- Policy FP8: Pollution sensitive uses;
- Policy EC7: Employment development on unallocated sites

- 6.6.3 According to the NPPF, the fact that these policies are regarded as out-of-date means that permission should be granted for the proposed development unless: i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

6.7 Local Plan Review and Update (2024)

- 6.7.1 The council concluded a full review of the plan in 2024, as required by regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 6.7.2 In response to the review, the council has proposed a partial update of the local plan. Weight must be given to the emerging policies in the partial update according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the policies; and c) the degree of consistency between the policies and the most recent revision of the NPPF.
- 6.7.3. At the time of writing, the partial update has been through examination by the Secretary of State, and the major modifications consultation has closed. The partial update is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation and is scheduled to be adopted in July 2026. The council considers the emerging policies within it to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF. Where relevant, the weight to be given to emerging policies will be set out in the assessment section of this report.

6.8 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.8.1 The following supplementary planning documents are relevant to determining the application:
- Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025)
 - Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025)

6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.9.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) Charging Schedule in 2020. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location, and floor space of a development. This proposal is CIL liable.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are the principle of development, design and visual impact, standard of accommodation, impact on residential amenity, highway safety and car parking, trees, climate change mitigation, flood risk and drainage and biodiversity net gain.

- 7.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 Principle of Development

New Housing

- 7.2.1 The existing building is in office use at ground floor (currently vacant) with a self-contained one-bedroom flat above. The proposed development would involve the loss of the office use at ground floor and provision of additional housing. The site is not allocated for any particular purpose in the local plan. The proposal is therefore for windfall development for a net increase in five residential units.
- 7.2.2 Policy SP7 of the adopted local plan sets a strategic target of 7,600 homes to be provided within the borough over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. The emerging partial update of

the local plan identifies that 4,956 of these homes remain to be delivered as of 2024. However, the overall target remains unchanged, and the proposed development would make a small but nonetheless positive contribution to meeting this target.

- 7.2.3 The spatial strategy for housing also remains unchanged; the majority of the planned new housing will be delivered on regeneration sites in the town centre and in urban extensions to the north, west and south-east of the town, with a sizeable minority delivered on smaller housing sites spread throughout the borough. An allowance is also made for residential development coming forward on sites not specifically allocated for any purpose in the local plan, referred to as “windfall” sites.
- 7.2.4 Policy HO5 provides that planning permission for residential development on unallocated sites will be granted where the criteria at (a) to (e) are satisfied. In respect of criteria (a) and (b), the site meets the definition of previously developed land set out in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework and is located close to the High Street with excellent connectivity and access to a wide range of local facilities and services. Both criteria are clearly met.
- 7.2.5 Criterion (c) requires that there be no detrimental impact on the environment and the surrounding properties. The detailed environmental and amenity implications of the proposal are considered later in this report. As a matter of principle, however, the proposal is for residential development within a residential area, such that in land use terms there is no inherent conflict, and no obvious detrimental impact arises. Similarly, criterion (d) requires that the proposal would not prejudice the Council's ability to deliver residential development on allocated sites; given its scale and location, the proposal would not prejudice the delivery of any allocated site. Criterion (e) requires that the development would not overburden existing infrastructure, a matter also examined later in the report. As a matter of principle, the proposal is not of a scale or type that would inherently overburden existing infrastructure and would be liable to CIL. The proposal therefore accords with Policy HO5 as currently adopted, subject to the detailed assessments that follow.
- 7.2.6 Consideration must also be given to the emerging Local Plan Partial Update, which proposes to amend Policy HO5 by removing criteria (b), (c) and (d). The examination of the updated plan has concluded, and the plan is anticipated to be adopted imminently. Having regard to its advanced stage, significant weight can be afforded to Policy HO5 as proposed to be amended. Under the amended policy, the principle of development would fall to be assessed against criteria (a) and (e) alone, both of which are met for the reasons given above. It is material that the proposal therefore complies with Policy HO5 whether in its currently adopted form or as proposed to be amended; the outcome in principle is the same under either version of the policy.
- 7.2.7 Chapter 11 of the NPPF stipulates that decisions should promote the effective use of land, and under paragraph 125(d) it promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings to meet identified needs. As the proposal would develop an under-utilised brownfield site and would be delivering dwellings where there is an identified need, this weighs in favour of the development and carries great weight. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with this Policy.
- 7.2.8 Updated Policy SP2 (Sustainable Development) carries significant weight in the Local Plan Partial Update and states residential developments must have a good level of access to local facilities. The site is located within walking distance of the shops and amenities on the High Street, along with its public transport connections (bus). As such, the application site is considered to have excellent access to local facilities and alternative forms of travel to the private car and, therefore, deemed to be within a sustainable location.
- 7.2.9 The effect of the proposal on housing choice (in terms of the range of housing types and sizes provided in the borough) is also a relevant consideration. Policy HO9 (House types

and sizes) of the Local Plan (2019) (No change to this policy under the Local Plan Partial Update) states that there is a structural imbalance in the existing housing stock (albeit in a limited manner) whereby there is a lack of smaller properties and larger aspirational homes in the Borough.

7.2.10 The Design Guide SPD (2025) outlines that housing is an area of weakness across the town. One of the main issues is the lack of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures with a high proportion of three-bedroom terraced properties, and a lack of one- and two-bedroom properties. The lack of housing mix is exacerbated by changes in demographics leading to an increase in the number of single person households and couples needing homes.

7.2.11 Due to growth requirements for the town, there is a need to provide a substantial number of additional homes in Stevenage, and in particular, smaller dwellings or larger aspirational homes. Higher density development is set out as a key requirement of national guidance, and, where appropriate, densities will need to be raised to meet these targets for new homes. The proposal seeks to provide 6no. one-bedroom flats. As such the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HO9 as it would provide smaller dwellings which are an identified need.

7.2.12 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF (2024) states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting housing supply, it is important that a sufficient amount, and variety, of land comes forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are met, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. In addition, paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that the overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. As such, the proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites.

7.2.13 In summary, whilst the Council is currently able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, due to the under-delivery of housing as identified in recent HDT scores, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged with the consequence that permission should be granted unless the circumstances identified at paragraphs 11(d)(i) or 11(d)(ii) apply.

Loss of Existing Employment Floorspace

7.2.14 Policy EC7 of the Local Plan (2019) seeks to protect existing employment floorspace unless:

- There is sufficient suitable and employment land available elsewhere
- The proposals provide overriding benefits against other objectives or policies in the plan; or
- It can be demonstrated that a unit has been unsuccessfully marketed for its existing use, or has remained vacant, over a considerable period of time.

7.2.15 In the partial update of the local plan, criterion (iii) of policy EC7 has been amended to specify six months for marketing evidence, however there is an extant planning permission for the erection of a single storey rear extension and the change of use of the ground floor from office (use class E) to create 3no. x 1 bed flats at ground and first floor with associated parking and storage under reference 25/00431/FP. Therefore, the loss of the office space has already been established by this permission.

Conclusion

- 7.2.16 The proposed development would contribute to the aim of boosting housing supply as required by the NPPF without compromising the delivery of housing on allocated sites. There would be some economic benefit during the construction phase, and future occupiers would be likely to contribute to local services and facilities. Given the quantum of development (6 units), it is considered that these benefits would be substantial and therefore attract significant weight in favour of the proposal.
- 7.2.17 On balance, having regard to all the policy considerations laid out above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

7.3 Design and visual impact

- 7.3.1 Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) stipulates that the creation of high quality and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process. Where development is not well designed, permission should be refused.
- 7.3.2 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan (2019) and Local Plan Partial Update are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide. Policy GD2 (design certification) is a new policy emerging from the review and states that the Council will support developments that are designed to achieve high levels of certification against nationally and internationally recognised sustainability standards such as BREEAM excellent, Secured by Design Silver or higher or BRE Home Quality Mark.
- 7.3.3 The proposal would involve a two-storey side extension and a part one / two storey rear extension, with a double gable end roof extension. It is also proposed to increase the ridge height by 0.45m to achieve the necessary internal head room, which would bring the height of the property in line with No.44 adjacent.
- 7.3.4 In terms of depth, the rear extension would not project further than the existing single storey projection adjacent to the boundary with No.48, however it would 'square off' the building and extend the side adjacent to No.44 by 2.5m. The extension would incorporate accommodation in the roof and comprise a double gable end roof extension. To the side, the extension would leave a gap of 1m to the boundary with No.44 and the first floor would be constructed over an open sided space supported by brick pillars, with a garage door at the front providing vehicular access to the parking area at the rear.
- 7.3.5 The gable ended roof design would replicate the gable end rear extension approved and constructed in 2015 at No.44 and also the two-storey gable end projection at No.48, which is part of the original Victorian dwelling. Further along Basils Road to the west, a similarly large double gable end rear extension was approved at No.22 in 2019 as part of the part demolition of this property and erection of 2no. two-bedroom dwellings. The proposed increase to the ridge height would bring the height of the property in line with No.44 next door. Therefore, there is precedent within the immediate local area for an extension design as proposed and it is not considered its design or appearance would be out of character.
- 7.3.6 In terms of compliance with the Council's Design Guide on residential extensions, the two-storey side extension would retain a 1m gap to the side boundary and would be set back

from the front elevation of the existing building. Although the ridge height would be level, it is considered the front set back would be sufficient to achieve the required degree of subservience. The depth along the boundary with No.44 would be 2.5m, which is in accordance with the Design Guide. The width of 3.5m would be less than half the width of the existing building. The extension therefore accords with the requirements of the Design Guide in terms of depth and width.

- 7.3.7 Turning to massing and scale, it is acknowledged the extension would significantly increase the size of the building and the existing gap to the side would be lost. This would result in a change to the street scene, however the existing gap between the application property and No.44 is not a common feature in the road which is predominantly characterised by high density terraced or semi-detached Victorian properties many of which have been extended at the rear and into the roof space. As such, it is not considered important to retain this gap, as its loss would not harm the character of the street scene. The proposed extension would sit comfortably in the plot and would not appear out of scale with its surroundings.
- 7.3.8 In terms of materials and external finish, the extension would be constructed in red brick to match the existing building with part white render at third floor at the rear to provide architectural interest and break up the appearance of bulk. The roof tiles would comprise slate to match existing and windows would be white uPVC to match existing. The garage door would be timber automated side hung with a traditional appearance. It is considered the choice of materials and detailing would be high quality and respectful of the original property and surrounding buildings.
- 7.3.9 Comments have been received by neighbours that an assessment should be made on the proposal's impact on the Old Town Conservation Area to the west. The boundary with the Conservation Area lies some 200m away on the western side of Church Lane. It is considered this is a sufficient distance from the application site to ensure any extension at No.46 would not impact on the significance of this designated heritage asset. It is not therefore considered an assessment is required.
- 7.3.10 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would be of a high quality and suitably respectful of its surroundings. In these respects, the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the local plan and emerging partial update.

7.4 Standard of Accommodation

- 7.4.1 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that planning decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future residents. Paragraph 124 of the National Design Guide states that *“Good design promotes quality of life for the occupants and users of buildings. This includes function – buildings should be easy to use. It also includes comfort, safety, security, amenity, privacy, accessibility and adaptability”*.
- 7.4.2 Paragraph 126 of the National Design Guide also emphasises that *“well-designed homes and communal areas within buildings provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to-ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation. The quality of internal space needs careful consideration in higher density developments, particularly for family accommodation, where access, privacy, daylight and external amenity space are also important”*.

Internal Living Standards

7.4.3 Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Local Plan (2019) and Local Plan Partial Update relate to high quality and good design and are deemed to carry significant weight, this is because they generally reflect the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and National Design Guide, i.e, that these policies require developments to not adversely impact the amenities of neighbouring occupiers as a good design principle. These policies state that planning permission will be granted where the proposed scheme, under criterion j. meets the nationally described space standards. Appendix C of the Local Plan (2019) sets out the minimum gross internal floor space standards for dwellings which is in line with the Government's nationally described space standards. Through the Local Plan Review, these policies now carry significant weight.

7.4.4 The proposed one-bedroom flats should have a minimum gross internal floor area of 39m² for single occupancy and 50m² for double occupancy. For a bedroom to be considered big enough for a double bed (double occupancy), the standards require it to be a minimum of 11.5m². The following table shows the total floor area of the flats, bedroom sizes and confirms whether they meet the nationally described space standards for single or double occupancy:

Flat Number	Total Size (m²)	Bedroom Size (m²)	NDSS (Y/N)
1	40	10	Y Single
2	40	11	Y Single
3	40	11	Y Single
4	52	12	Y Double
5	50	10	Y Single
6	50	11	Y Single

7.4.5 The flats would either meet or exceed the space standards for the relevant occupancy, and the proposal complies with the nationally described space standards. Beyond the space standards, it appears the development would provide opportunities for passive ventilation, and the dwellings would also receive adequate daylight and sunlight. It is noted flats 4, 5 and 6 would be served by obscure glazed windows and rooflights. An assessment of outlook for future occupiers in terms of an acceptable living environment can be found in the residential amenity section 7.5 below.

Private Amenity Space

7.4.6 In terms of outdoor space, the flats would benefit from a small area of grassed communal amenity space at the rear. The site is also within walking distance of Letchmore Park, which would provide the occupants opportunities for further outdoor space and recreation. On this basis, the proposed amenity space is considered acceptable.

Noise and Light Pollution

7.4.7 Policy FP7 of the Local Plan (2019) and Local Plan Partial Update states that developments should minimise, and where possible, reduce air, water, light and noise pollution. Policy FP8 stipulates that permission for pollution sensitive uses will be granted where they will not be subjected to unacceptably high levels of pollution exposure from either existing, or proposed, pollution generating uses. Given the proposed development would be located within an existing residential area; harm from noise is not considered an issue. There has been no change to these policies within the local plan partial update.

7.4.8 Whilst comments from local residents regarding an increase in the number of residents causing noise and disturbance are noted, any issues arising in this regard would be a matter for Environmental Health. With regards to an increase in light pollution, it is considered the light emitted from the additional windows would still be typical of a large

dwelling in a residential area and therefore would not result in harm to justify a refusal of planning permission. The development is a residential development in a residential area and therefore a suitable and compatible use.

- 7.4.9 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the flats would accord with Policy GD1, FP7 and FP8 of the Local Plan (2019) and Local Plan Partial Update.

7.5 Impact on Residential Amenity

- 7.5.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan (2019) requires that development does not lead to an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight.

- 7.5.2 The proposed side and rear extension would project 0.9m beyond the existing rear building lines of the adjoining neighbours at Nos.44 and 48 Basils Road and would not intercept the 45-degree line for daylight and sunlight from their ground floor rear windows closest to the boundary. This would mean the extension would not block light or overshadow these rooms and it is not considered it would appear overbearing or harm the outlook from these dwellings.

- 7.5.3 Comments from a neighbour in terms of the plans failing to acknowledge an existing window on the adjoining wall of No.44 are noted, however this window is small and serves a bathroom which is not classed as a habitable room. The glass is obscure glazed. On this basis, it is not considered the proposed extension would raise any amenity issues with this neighbour in terms of loss of light or outlook from this window, which could justify a refusal of planning permission. The same conclusion can be made for the small existing side window at No.48.

- 7.5.4 Turning to the impact on No.47 Grove Road to the rear, Appendix 1 of the Council’s Design Guide (2025) and Appendix C of the Local Plan (2019) which has also been replicated in the Local Plan Partial Update are relevant. The relevant policies state there should be a minimum back-to-back separation distance of 35m between new dwellings over two storeys in height and existing properties. The separation distance between the proposed extension, which would create a three-storey building and No.47 Grove Road would be 17.5m to the ground floor conservatory and 21m to the first-floor rear elevation, which is significantly less than the required 35m. There is no vegetation or other boundary treatment to provide screening.

- 7.5.5 The two-storey rear extension granted planning permission in 2015 next door at No.44 Basils Road (ref. 15/00202/FPH) also failed to achieve the required minimum back-to-back separation distance with No.45B Grove Road to the rear. In this case, the applicant agreed to a planning condition requiring the first-floor rear windows which were to serve a bedroom to be obscure glazed and fixed shut below a height of 1.7m.

- 7.5.6 The same mitigation could be afforded to this proposal, with a planning condition requiring the rear windows in the first and second floors to be obscure glazed and fixed shut below a height of 1.7m. To maximise daylight and ventilation for the occupiers of flats 4 and 6, rooflights have been provided and the top part of the rear windows would be openable above a height of 1.7m. However, it is acknowledged the outlook to the rear afforded to future occupiers of flats 4, 5 and 6 would be sub-optimal due to either (i) the obscure glazing or (ii) the fact rooflights would only offer a view of the sky above.

- 7.5.7 In the emerging partial update of the local plan, Policy GD1 is amended to refer to “unacceptable adverse impacts” on neighbouring amenities. This change is proposed to reflect the fact that in some instances, impacts on amenities may be deemed to be acceptable despite being adverse. The emerging policy is afforded significant weight, and it is considered the adverse impact on outlook for the occupiers of flats 4, 5 and 6 through the use of obscure glazing / rooflights is acceptable in this instance to protect the privacy

of the occupiers of No.47 Grove Road. The use of rooflights and windows openable above a height of 1.7m would continue to ensure there would be sufficient natural light and ventilation. Flat 4 would also have an outlook to the front from the bedroom.

- 7.5.8 The applicant has agreed to the obscure glazing condition and submitted amended plans to show the obscure glazed windows and rooflights. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with emerging Local Plan Review policy GD1 as the adverse impact on outlook for the occupiers of flats 4, 5 and 6 through the use of obscure glazing / rooflights is considered acceptable to protect the privacy of the occupiers of No.47 Grove Road in this instance, together with the use of the mitigating planning condition as discussed above.
- 7.5.9 It should be noted there was an appeal decision (ref. APP/K1935/C/22/3296469) in January 2024 for a part two storey, part single storey rear extension which had been built without planning permission at No.68 Basils Road, close to the application site. The extension failed to comply with the minimum back-to-back separation distance as laid out in the Council's adopted Design Guide and the Inspector dismissed the appeal on the basis the proposal was harmful to the living conditions of the neighbouring dwelling with regard to outlook and privacy due to the insufficient separation distance. The Inspector also ruled obscure glazing the windows would not be acceptable due to the resultant poor outlook for the occupiers of the dwelling.
- 7.5.10 Officers consider that the updated wording of Policy GD1 in the Local Plan Partial Update, which explicitly recognises that, in some instances, adverse impacts on amenity may be acceptable, is a material consideration in the assessment of this application. The emerging policy carries significant weight as it has been through Examination, was not subject to major modifications and is due to be adopted next month (July 2026).
- 7.5.11 On this basis, the local plan policy context has changed since the appeal decision at No.68 Grove Road, and it is considered the use of obscure glazing to mitigate the privacy of the occupiers of No.47 Grove Road is acceptable. Whilst the outlook at the rear for the future occupiers of flats 4, 5 and 6 would be sub-optimal, it is not considered unacceptable and there would be sufficient access to natural daylight and ventilation.
- 7.5.12 With regards to the representation regarding the rear boundary fence, in particular the fact the plans annotate this as "18m high close boarded fencing", it is acknowledged any fence in a residential area this height would be completely unacceptable. However, this is a typographical error and should read as 1.8m. Notwithstanding this, it is considered prudent to seek details of all boundary treatments (where these are being altered) prior to commencement via a planning condition to ensure these are neighbourly and acceptable in appearance.
- 7.5.13 On this basis the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of impact on the amenities of neighbouring dwellings. Whilst it would not comply with adopted Local Plan policy GD1 in terms of the poor outlook for the occupiers of flats 4, 5 and 6, it would comply with the updated policy in the partial update, which carries significant weight.

7.6 Highway Safety and Car Parking

- 7.6.1 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD 2025. The policy has not changed under the local plan partial update. The SPD requires one off street parking space to be provided per flat, and four parking spaces measuring 5m x 2.5m are provided within a proposed parking area at the rear. The site just falls within accessibility zone 3 where 75% to 100% of maximum provision is allowed, however it is on the boundary with zone 2 where a lower 50% to 75% of maximum provision is allowed. Given the site is within a 10-minute walk to the High Street bus stops, shops and other services and is on the boundary of zone 2, it is considered there can be some flexibility over parking provision and 67% provision is considered acceptable here. It is noted the applicant is providing 100% provision for cycle parking which would encourage non-car use.
- 7.6.2 Representations from residents regarding the existing pressure for on street parking on Basils Road are noted. However, given the site's location on the boundary of accessibility

zone 2 where a minimum of 50% provision is allowed, it is considered 4 spaces or 67% provision would not lead to an unacceptable increase in the demand for parking as to create further parking problems or highway safety issues on Basils Road. The layout and size of the parking spaces have been agreed with the Highway Authority and would be subject to a condition requesting final details to be submitted prior to commencement. They have requested the bay parallel to No. 44 should be 2.7m in width as the fence would act as an obstruction.

- 7.6.3 With regards to cycle parking, there is a requirement for one bike space per flat. Secured and covered communal storage is provided for 6 bikes within the rear car park and covered under croft area. The proposed arrangements are considered acceptable. A condition has been requested by the Highway Authority for final details of the cycle stores to be provided prior to commencement.
- 7.6.4 With regards to highway safety and impact, no changes are proposed to the existing access off Basils Road which benefits from a dropped kerb and sufficient sight lines. The Highway Authority have raised no objection and consider this level of development is unlikely to generate any extra movements which would ultimately lead to demonstrable harm to the highway network in terms of free flow and capacity. Planning conditions have been requested to ensure the access visibility complies with highways legislation.
- 7.6.5 In terms of refuse and recycling, the Council's Design Guide requires new developments to make provision for the storage and collection of waste. The submitted plans show two designated bin stores within the covered vehicular access for the proposed flats with space for four bins in each. Residents would be responsible for wheeling the bins to the site frontage on collection day, as per most residential properties.
- 7.6.6 Turning to the comments received from the neighbour at No.44 querying whether the bike and bin stores would be fixed to the shared boundary wall (side wall of No.44) and concerns over noise and disturbance associated with their location here, details have been provided on drawing no.25115-100C. The stores would be constructed of timber and built around the brick pillars and up against the boundary wall. Access to the bike store would be provided by two 1.2m high double doors. It would provide storage for 4 bikes. Access to the two bins stores would be via a single 1.2m high double door.
- 7.6.7 Siting bin and bike stores up against neighbouring dwellings or property boundaries in a high-density residential area is not unusual. Bin collection day would be once a week, where bins would be wheeled out to the front of the building as per the arrangements for every other dwelling on Basils Road. The rest of the time any noise would be associated with opening the timber doors and depositing rubbish in the bins or parking or removing a bike. These activities are not inherently noisy, or unusual for a residential area. It is not considered noise associated with such activity would cause material harm to justify a refusal of planning permission.
- 7.6.8 With regards to the representations raising concerns over the management of the bins, a planning condition has been added requiring the submission of a Waste Management Plan. The Plan would include details of the refuse and recycling stores including the number and type of bins, and details of who would be responsible for managing the bins on waste collection day. This would ensure the refuse stores would be big enough for all of the different types of bin and arrangements would be in place for taking the bins out and back in again on collection day to avoid clutter or obstruction on the pavement.
- 7.6.9 Having regard to the above, the proposed development would provide adequate parking and not raise any highway safety issues. In this respect, the proposal accords with Policy IT5 of the local plan and partial update.

7.7 Trees

- 7.7.1 Policy NH5 of the Local Plan (2019) and Local Plan Partial Update requires development to protect and retain trees, providing new planting where appropriate. The proposal would not impact on any trees within or adjacent to the application site. Having regard to the

above, the proposed development accords with Policy NH5 of the local plan and partial update.

7.8 Climate Change

7.8.1 Policy FP1 of the adopted Local Plan (2019) stipulates that planning permission will be granted for development that can incorporate measures to address adaptation to climate change. New developments will be encouraged to include measures such as:

- Ways to ensure development is resilient to likely variations in temperature
- Reducing water consumption to no more than 110 litres per person per day, including external water use
- Improving energy performance of buildings
- Reducing energy consumption through efficiency measures
- Using or producing renewable or low carbon energy from a local source; and
- Contributing towards reducing flood risk through the use of SuDS or other appropriate measures.

7.8.2 Under the Local Plan Partial Update, Policy FP1 has been revised to cover sustainable drainage and Policy SP1: climate change, is the new relevant policy in this regard. The fundamental objective of Policy SP1 remains the same as previous policy FP1, however, it sets out in more detail the objectives to adapting to climate change. This policy requires, amongst other things off setting of emissions targets if not met on site, water usage targets, rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, use of sustainable materials and practices on site, ultra-low and zero carbon combined heat and power systems and urban greening (green roofs and walls).

7.8.3 This policy is further supported by a suite of new climate change policies, CC1 through CC6 which cover a broad range of topics but which, through the partial review and examination in public should be applied flexibly as they may not always be appropriate, and it should be noted that Policy CC1 requires only major planning applications to provide an energy statement.

7.8.4 The Council's Design Guide SPD (2025) sets out additional requirements with respect to climate change. The guide states that all developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy.

7.8.5 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that sets out the ways in which the development would be constructed to meet or exceed the relevant Building Regulations. The following measures would be used:

Resource Recovery: The construction process would utilise prefabricated components to minimise waste generation. The contractor would implement a site waste management plan, prioritising the recycling of materials and aiming to avoid landfill disposal whenever possible.

Water: The residential units would be fitted with low-water-consumption appliances, including dual flush toilets and aerated shower heads. This setup would limit water consumption to less than 105 litres per person per day, aligning with the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 criteria.

Buildings and Wildlife: The application site currently holds no ecological value. However, the proposed development would enhance ecological opportunities through new planting and garden spaces.

Form and Orientation: The design of the proposed development would be strategically oriented to maximise sunlight and solar gain.

Ventilation and Lighting: The design maximises glazed openings to provide adequate natural ventilation and daylight. Additionally, low energy light fittings would be installed throughout the development. Proximity and timer controls for lighting in common and external areas would further enhance energy efficiency.

Energy: Each dwelling would be fitted with either an electric or gas-fired condensing boiler for heating and hot water.

Green Travel: The development site benefits from excellent public transport links, which are expected to encourage the use of public transport and reduce car dependency. A

dedicated cycle store is provided at ground floor level to support and promote cycling. Provisions for electric-vehicle charging would be included within the car park area. **Materials:** The development would utilise high quality, durable materials that align with aesthetic and economic considerations. These materials would be selected to have a low environmental impact, in accordance with the BRE's Green Guide to Housing Specification, wherever feasible.

7.8.6 It is considered the above measures are acceptable and could be secured by planning condition should the development be found acceptable in all other respects.

7.9 Flood Risk and Drainage

7.9.1 Policy FP2 of the adopted local plan requires development proposals to be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment, where appropriate. It also requires the use of SuDS to be maximised so as not to increase and where possible, reduce flood risk.

7.9.2 As this is a minor category application for the conversion and extension of a residential property within flood zone 1, the application is not accompanied by a flood risk assessment or drainage strategy. However, the application form advises the building is connected to the existing drainage system and mains sewer and there would be no change to these arrangements.

7.9.3 Having regard to the above, the proposed development would benefit from adequate drainage and would not increase flood risk. In these respects, the proposal accords with Policy FP2 of the local plan.

7.9.4 In the Local Plan Partial Update, Policy FP2 is replaced by Policies FP1 and FP2, which are more comprehensive policies relating to drainage and flood risk respectively. Among other things, they introduce a SuDS hierarchy and a surface water disposal hierarchy to local plan policy. These new policies are considered to have a high degree of consistency with the NPPF and are therefore afforded significant weight. The proposal is considered to accord with the policies.

7.10 Biodiversity Net Gain

7.10.1 With some exceptions, all development in England must now provide for a 10% net gain in biodiversity. At the application stage, proposals for development which would not be exempt must include details of the pre-development biodiversity value of the site, including a plan showing on-site habitats and a completed biodiversity metric. The current application proposal would be exempt from providing a 10% net gain, as the area of the proposed extension would impact less than 25m² habitat and 5m hedgerow due to the site comprising hard surfacing only. Additional planting is proposed through the creation of the grassed communal amenity space; therefore, the site would benefit from ecological enhancement.

7.11 Other Matters

Matters raised in representations not covered in main report

7.11.1 The planning application was publicised in accordance with the Legislation and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), that is, letters were sent to adjoining landowners and a site notice was placed outside the site. Accordingly, the Council has fulfilled its legal obligations in this matter.

7.11.2 The following matters raised are not material planning considerations as established by case law:

- Impact on house values
- Legal covenants within property deeds
- Issues regarding damp and access for maintenance to neighbouring property

- Impact on water and sewerage infrastructure (NB the development would be CIL liable and would mitigate its impact on local infrastructure)
- Fire safety and evacuation would be a matter for Building Control
- Vermin associated with refuse and recycling bins would be a matter for the Council's Environmental Health team.
- Construction traffic and the management of the site during construction would be covered by the construction management plan condition should planning permission be granted.
- Matters relating to wiring or lighting attached to shared boundaries would be a matter for the developer and respective neighbour to resolve privately.

7.11.3 Separately, concerns have been raised that the property will be an HMO (house of multiple occupation) and not self-contained flats. The application has been assessed against the submitted plans which show 6no. 1-bedroom self-contained flats. Possible alternative uses are not a material consideration with respect to this application. However, given the adoption of an Article 4 Direction in September 2017, separate planning permission would be required to use the property as an HMO.

Community Infrastructure Levy

7.11.4 The Council adopted CIL on 1 April 2020 and the CIL Charging Schedule specifies a payment for new floorspace in line with the following rates (plus appropriate indexation):

Development Type	CIL Rate (£ per square meter)	
	Zone 1: Stevenage Central, Stevenage West Urban Extension and North of Stevenage Extension	Zone 2: Everywhere else
Residential		
Market housing	£40/m ²	£100/m ²
Sheltered housing	£100/m ²	
Extra care housing	£40/m ²	
Retail development	£60/m ²	
All other development	£0/m ²	

7.11.5 CIL is a non-negotiable charge. The exact charge will be determined by the Council's CIL officer after an application has been granted in accordance with the CIL Charging Schedule and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Opportunities for relief or exemption from the CIL charge exist and will be taken into account in the calculation of the final CIL charge.

7.11.6 CIL replaces the need for S106 agreements to specify financial and/or land contributions for non-site-specific infrastructure projects. This allows infrastructure to be planned on a borough-wide scale rather than on a site-by-site basis as mitigation against the impacts of individual proposals. A CIL Form 1: Additional Information has been submitted along with the application. The development would be CIL liable at £100/m².

7.12 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

7.12.4 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.

- 7.12.5 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristics and persons who do not.
- 7.12.6 In this case, the development would not have any apparent impact on persons with characteristics protected by the Act. Likewise, it would not conflict with the council's Equality Policy or Equality Objectives. It is therefore considered that the Public Sector Equality Duty has been discharged in this case.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The application proposes the provision of housing and the council's latest Housing Delivery Test score was below 75%. The policies most relevant for determining the application are therefore considered to be out of date and the 'tilted balance' as set out under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged.
- 8.2 The development would make a small but nonetheless positive contribution towards meeting the borough's overall housing need and would also help to address a structural imbalance in the existing housing stock. The quality of the proposed accommodation would be acceptable; however, it is acknowledged the rear outlook from flats 4, 5 and 6 would be sub-optimal. Notwithstanding this, all flats would receive good levels of daylight and ventilation and the adverse impact on outlook is considered acceptable in this instance to protect the privacy of the neighbour at the rear.
- 8.3 In these respects, the proposal accords with Policies HO5, HO9 and GD1 of the local plan (except outlook), as well as the emerging versions of these policies within the local plan partial update where relevant and discussed above which carry significant weight. The provision of good quality housing on a suitable site at a time when housing delivery is constrained carries significant weight in favour of the proposal.
- 8.4 In all other respects, including parking provision, impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and to accord with relevant policies. These are neutral matters.
- 8.5 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan when read as a whole. The NPPF is a material consideration, but its application does not warrant a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.
- 8.6 Taking national and local planning policies into account, and regarding all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 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.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS/REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
25115-100 C; 25115-110 B; 25115-120 B; 25115-130 B
REASON:- For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
REASON:- To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3 No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including elements of the CLOCS standards as set out in the Highway Authority's Construction Management template. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Management Plan / Statement shall 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, loading / unloading and turning areas);
 - 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
- REASON:-** In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 4 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a scheme for the parking of cycles including details of the design as found in Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (Department for Transport Local Transport Note July 2020), level and siting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use and thereafter retained for this purpose.
REASON:- To ensure the provision of adequate cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018)
- 5 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a plan should be submitted which shows parking details for cars and cycles in accordance with the HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance (P&MPDG-2023) and in accordance with (Cycle Infrastructure Design) DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020) and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to first occupation the approved scheme shall be fully implemented and thereafter retained for this purpose.
REASON:- To ensure the provision of adequate cycle and vehicle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 6 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted any access gate(s), shall be installed to open inwards, set back, and thereafter retained (in perpetuity) at a minimum distance of 5.5 metres from the edge of the highway.
REASON:- To enable vehicles to safely draw off the highway before the gate(s) or obstruction is opened and/or closed in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018)

- 7 Prior to the first occupation within the vertical plane, there should be no obstruction to visibility 2m high down to a point 600mm above the carriageway, the latter to ensure that small children can be seen (MfS 7.6.3), passing along the footway.
REASON:- To ensure that the level of visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is satisfactory in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 8 The parking space parallel to No 44 Basils Road shown on the approved plans shall be provided with minimum dimensions of 5.0 metres in length and 2.7 metres in width, measured internally, to account for obstruction along one side of the bay.
REASON:- To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).
- 9 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.
REASON:- In the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
- 10 The external materials used in the development to which this permission relates shall be those detailed on the approved plans and in the accompanying planning submission documents unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
REASON:- To ensure the development has an acceptable appearance.
- 11 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, a Waste Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include details of the refuse and recycling stores including the number and type of bins, and details of who would be responsible for managing the bins on waste collection day. The approved Waste Management Plan shall thereafter be adhered to for the lifetime of the development.
REASON:- To ensure the storage and management of refuse and recycling is acceptable.
- 12 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, measures to ensure adaptability to climate change shall be installed in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved measures shall be permanently retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
REASON:- To ensure that the development is adaptable to climate change.
- 13 The rear first and second floor windows of the extension 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.
REASON:- To safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of No.47 Grove Road.
- 14 Notwithstanding the details shown in this application 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.
REASON:- To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of amenity and that it has an acceptable appearance.

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

- 1 Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. 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.

INFORMATIVE

1 **Community Infrastructure Levy**

Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 27 January 2020 and started implementing CIL on 01 April 2020.

This application may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Team for clarification with regard to this. If your development is CIL liable, even if you are granted an exemption from the levy, please be advised that it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) that CIL Form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Stevenage Borough Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you risk losing the right to payment by instalments and a surcharge will be imposed. NB, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted.

Stevenage's adopted CIL Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk.

2 **Building Regulations**

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

To make a building regulations application please apply through our website portal at <https://www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk/contact-us/> payment can be made online or by phoning the above number after the application has been uploaded. Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control for fees guidance on 01438 879990.

Hertfordshire Building Control can also be contacted by post at Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

Once a building regulations application has been deposited with relevant drawings and fee building work may commence. You will be advised in their acknowledgement letter of the work stages we need to inspect but in most instances these are usually:

- Excavation for foundations
- Damp proof course
- Concrete oversite
- Insulation
- Drains (when laid or tested)
- Floor and Roof construction
- Work relating to fire safety
- Work affecting access and facilities for disabled people
- Completion

Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control on 01438 879990 before 10.00am to ensure a same day inspection (Mon - Fri).

3 Party Wall etc. Act 1996

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

4 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Parking and Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that all areas for parking, storage, and delivery of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

5 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

6 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

7 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

Avoidance of surface water discharge onto the highway: The applicant is advised that the Highway Authority has powers under section 163 of the Highways Act 1980, to take appropriate steps where deemed necessary (serving notice to the occupier of premises adjoining a highway) to prevent water from the roof or other part of the premises falling upon persons using the highway, or to prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, surface water from the premises flowing on to, or over the footway of the highway.

8 Environmental Protection Act 1990

The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit nuisances arising from dust, smoke, artificial light, and a range of other pollutants that may arise on construction sites. The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 to restrict noise generating construction (including demolition) activity audible beyond the development site boundary.

9 Biodiversity Net Gain

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

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Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses. A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 1 The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item. Online copies may be obtained at <https://publicaccess.stevenage.gov.uk/online-applications/>
- 2 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan>
- 3 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2025
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-partial-update/submission-to-secretary-of-state>
- 4 Stevenage Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents: Parking Provision SPD 2025; Design Guidance SPD 2025; Developer Contributions SPD 2025.
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-library>
- 5 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 2018-2031
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/ltp4-local-transport-plan-4-complete.pdf>
- 5 Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 7 Representations made by statutory consultees and other interested parties referred to in this report. Online copies can be found on Public Access.