

**Meeting:** Planning and Development Committee    **Agenda Item:**  
**Date:** 4 August 2026  
**Author:** Linda Sparrow  
**Lead Officer:** Alex Robinson  
**Contact Officer:** Linda Sparrow

**Application No :** 26/00424/FPH  
**Location :** 4 Nursery Cottage Symonds Green Lane  
**Proposal :** First floor rear extension over existing single storey rear extension  
**Drawing Nos.:** 1003-02-EBP; 1003-01-SLP; 1003-03-PBP; 1003-04-EPE ISSUE C; 1003-05-EPE ISSUE C;  
**Applicant :** Gavin Davies  
**Agent:** n/a  
**Date Valid:** 1 June 2026  
**Recommendation:** GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION



## **1. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 1.1 The application site is a three-bedroom semi-detached dwelling located at the southern end of Symonds Green Lane and within the Symonds Green Conservation Area. The property is one of 4 (2 pairs) dwellings that were constructed to house local workers in the 1940's. They are considered to make a positive contribution towards the character of the conservation area.
- 1.2 The modest semi-detached pairs are of brick construction, rendered at first floor level with a gabled tile roof and a shared central gabled roof to front and rear elevations. The rear of no. 4 is not visible from Symonds Green Lane due to the close proximity of the adjacent dwelling to the south but would be visible from the access drive to the rear.

## **2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 18/00649/FPH Single storey rear extension. Granted 11.12.2018.

## **3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION**

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a first-floor rear extension over the existing single storey rear extension that was built under planning permission reference number 18/00649/FPH.
- 3.2 The application comes before the Planning Committee as the applicant is related to a member of staff at the Council.

## **4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1 Following notification of the application via letters to neighbouring landowners, a site notice, and a press notice, no comments have been received.

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1. BEAMS (Council's Conservation Advisor)
  - 5.1.1 BEAMS provided pre-application advice on the proposal, and the proposal was amended. The extension is large and does unbalance the pair when viewed from the rear. However, the eaves line of the extension now corresponds with the eaves line of the property and external materials are to match existing. The extension will not be visible from Symonds Green Lane due to the position of housing either side and, on balance, the proposal is considered to preserve the significance of the Symonds Green Conservation Area in accordance with National and Local Plan Policy. A condition requiring materials to match existing is recommended.

## **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 (updated 2026)
  - 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 Planning Practice Guidance**

- 6.3.1 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.

## **6.4 National Design Guide**

- 6.4.1 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.

## **6.5 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Updated 2026)**

- 6.5.1 The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2019 and partially updated in 2026. 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).
- 6.5.2. The policies most relevant to determining this application are:

Policy SP8: Good design;  
Policy SP13: Historic Environment;  
Policy IT5: Parking and access;  
Policy GD1: High quality design;

- 6.5.3 All of these policies are considered to be fully consistent with the NPPF.

## **6.6 Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 6.6.1 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);
  - Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (February 2025);

## **6.7 Community Infrastructure Levy**

- 6.7.1 Stevenage Borough Council adopted its revised Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL2) Charging Schedule 22 July 2026. This allows the Council to collect a levy to fund infrastructure projects based on the type, location and floor space of a development.

## **7. APPRAISAL**

7.1 The main issues in the assessment of the application are design and visual impact on designated heritage assets, impact on neighbouring amenities, 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 Design and visual impact on heritage assets**

7.2.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires development to respect and make a positive contribution to its surroundings. Policies SP13 and NH10 of the adopted local plan require developments affecting conservation areas to be determined in accordance with national policy, having regard to any relevant conservation area management plan.

7.2.2 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas in the exercise of their functions, whilst Chapter 16 of the NPPF (2024) requires Local Planning Authorities to place great weight on preserving historic assets and their significance. Paragraph 213 states: 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

7.2.3 Additional to the above, Policy SP13 of the Local Plan relates to the historic environment. This states that the council will preserve and enhance the most important areas and characteristics of Stevenage.

7.2.4 The significance of the conservation area is as the remnant of an 11th century agricultural hamlet, which evolved over subsequent centuries into what is now a suburb of Stevenage New Town. It has a distinctive rural character and contains a number of listed and locally listed buildings.

7.2.5 The proposal seeks to erect a gabled roof first floor extension over part of the existing single storey extension. The proposed works would contain a bedroom and en-suite bathroom and would measure proximately 4m wide and 6m deep; it would be set off the shared boundary by approximately 1.7m. The eaves and ridge line of the proposal would be in line with the eaves and ridge line of the shared gable roof to mitigate the visual impact.

7.2.6 The application is accompanied by a heritage statement which has been reviewed by the Council's Heritage Advisor, BEAMS. They have raised no objections although noting that the proposal would visually un-balance the appearance of the semi-detached dwellings when viewed from the rear. However, they go on to conclude that the development would preserve the character of the conservation area in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF and Policy SP13 of the Local Plan. Officers find no reason to disagree with this assessment.

7.2.7 In this regard, the proposal is considered acceptable as it complies with the relevant Local Plan policies and the NPPF.

### **7.3 Impact on Neighbouring residential amenity**

- 7.3.1 Policy GD1 of the local plan requires that development does not lead to an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.3.2 The extension would be south-east of the attached neighbour and would give rise to some level of impact to this neighbour through its depth and height. The submitted plans confirm that the extension passes the 45-degree test on the neighbouring bedroom window on the elevation plans but fails the same test on plan form. Any extension over 3m deep would result in the same impacts. In this regard, and in line with the guidance in the Design Guide SPD (2025), the impacts on the neighbouring property are considered to be within acceptable limits.
- 7.3.3 Turning to No.5 to the south, this property is built staggered from the application property such that the proposed extension would be roughly in line with this neighbours' rear elevation. With no habitable room windows on their side elevation facing the application site, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on this neighbour.
- 7.3.4 The property's own bedroom 2 adjacent to the extension fails the 45-degree test on plan form and elevation form and is therefore likely to have its levels of daylight and sunlight significantly impacted. However, as mentioned above, bedrooms require less natural light than other types of habitable room and given that the applicant would be impacting their own property, this would not be a sufficient reason for the Local Planning Authority to refuse permission on this basis alone.

### **7.4 Car Parking Provision**

- 7.4.1 Policy IT5 of the local plan requires developments to provide parking in accordance with the council's Parking Provision SPD (2025).
- 7.4.2 The number of bedrooms in the property is not changing and as such no assessment of the car parking provision is required.

### **7.5 Biodiversity, Ecology and Protected Species**

- 7.5.1 Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the 'biodiversity gain condition' requiring development to achieve a net gain of 10% of biodiversity value. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply in some circumstances.
- 7.5.2 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.
- 7.5.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

## **7.6 Other Matters**

### **Sustainable construction and climate change**

- 7.6.1 Under the Local Plan Partial Review, 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). 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.
- 7.6.2 The application is accompanied by a Climate Statement with a sustainability section that states the development will be designed to meet or exceed where possible, the requirements of Approved Document L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) under the Building Regulations, including achieving relevant u-values, thermal bridging, relevant window energy ratings, and low energy lighting. Further the new bathroom will be fitted with water efficient devices to comply with Building Regulations Part G of 110l per person, per day.
- 7.6.3 The proposed development is therefore considered to be able to adapt to climate changes and is acceptable in this regard.

## **7.7 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

- 7.7.1 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.
- 7.7.2 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 7.7.3 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 7.7.4 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

- 7.7.5 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. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The development plan policies most relevant for determining the application are considered to be up to date. Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore not engaged and the proposal falls to be assessed against a straightforward planning balance.
- 8.2 The development is considered to be acceptable in all respects, including its impact on the character and appearance of the area, and on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.
- 8.3 Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan when read as a whole. In the absence of any other material considerations indicating that permission should be refused, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 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:  
1003-02-EBP; 1003-01-SLP; 1003-03-PBP; 1003-04-EPE ISSUE C; 1003-05-EPE ISSUE C;  
**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 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.
- 4 No access shall be provided to the roof of the existing single storey extension by way of windows, doors or staircases and the roof of the existing extension shall not be used as a balcony or sitting out area.  
**REASON:-** To protect the amenities and privacy of the occupiers of adjoining properties.

## **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 early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage 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 Public Information on Planning Applications**

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

### **2 Community Infrastructure Levy**

Stevenage Borough Council adopted its revised Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL2) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 10 June 2026 and started implementing SCIL2 on 22 July 2026.

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 may be imposed. NB, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted.

Stevenage's adopted SCIL2 Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at [www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL) or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at [CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk).

### **3 Building Regulations**

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at [building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk](mailto: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).

**4 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>

**5 Biodiversity Net Gain**

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as application is for householder permission.

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 which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

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>

## 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://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.