

NEWS

Couple's relief over £70k planning charge appeal



Rebuilding part of his home left Steve Dally with a bill for £70,000 from his council.

Cash Boyle

BBC News, South East

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A retired couple from Godalming who were charged £70,000 by a Surrey council for "a small home improvement" have spoken of their lengthy struggle to appeal the fee.

Steve and Caroline Dally were granted planning permission to replace an existing house extension which was exempt from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), but they did not realise an additional application to make minor amendments was subject to the charge.

Mr Dally accused Waverley Borough Council of "relentlessly" going after repayments which the couple said led them to increase their mortgage payments by £400 a month.

The council has now agreed to allow householders previously subject to CIL liability to request a discretionary review. Council leader Paul Follows confirmed CIL issues were being investigated.

He said they had been inherited from the previous administration.

While the decision to open up an appeal route does not guarantee refunds for those affected, Mr Dally said it was a "milestone moment".

"It's taken us five years until we've got to this stage," he told [BBC Radio Surrey](#).

"There's no way a retired person trying to do a small home improvement can find £70,000."

Councillor Jane Austin, whose Conservative party put forward the motion agreed last week, described the couple's story as "sobering".

"As it's been published more and more people have come out of the woodwork and come to us asking for help, because we're talking about huge amounts of money here," she said.

Affected householders can request a discretionary review within a window from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026.

Councillor Liz Townsend, portfolio holder for planning and economic development, said: "We sympathise with Mr Dally and appreciate that it must have been a tremendous shock to receive such a large bill unexpectedly.

"Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liabilities are legally binding, and leave the council with very little flexibility, but we are doing everything we can to help Mr Dally resolve this issue as soon as possible."

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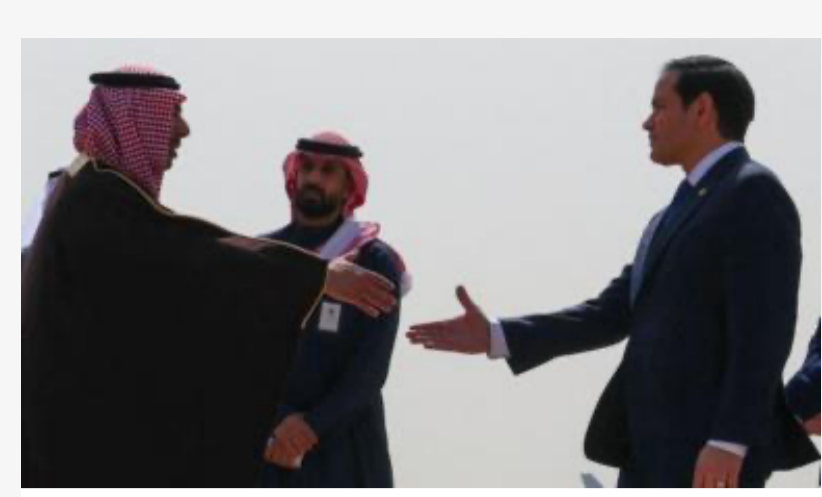
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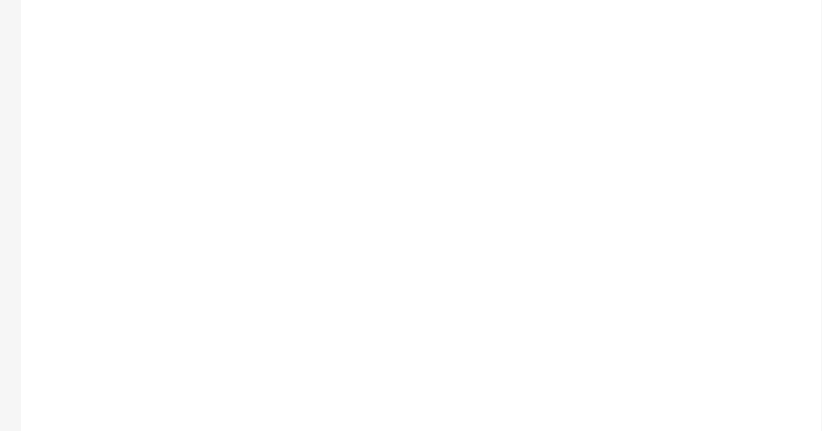
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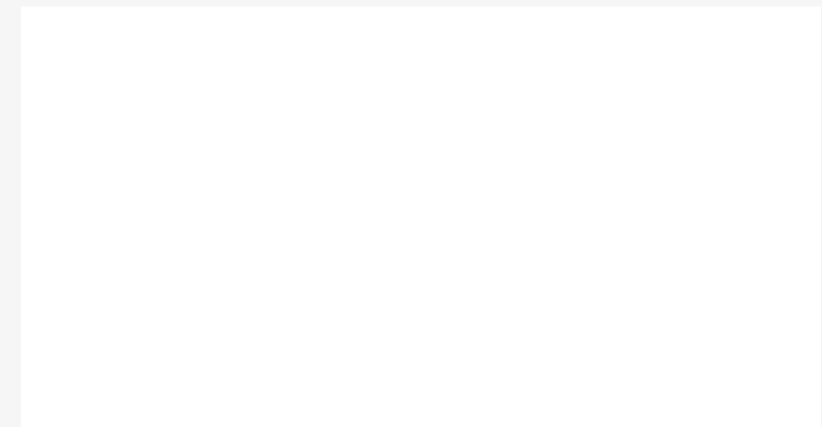


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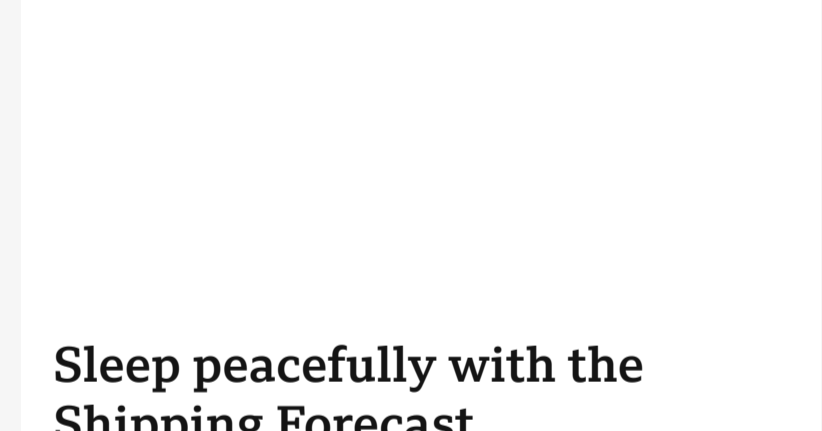
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