

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Saffron Loasby.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01150/FP	Installation of external lift shaft with disabled access lift to facilitate inclusive access to first floor facilities.	Jackie's Drop-in Centre Broadway Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3PA

Submitted Plan Nos

LD743- E01A LD743- E02 LD743- E03 LD743- E04 LD743- E05 LD743- P01B LD743- P02 LD743- P03
LD743- P04 LD743- P05 LD743- P06

1.0 Policies

SP1 Sustainable development in North Herts

SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP13	Historic environment
T1	Assessment of transport matters
T2	Parking
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets

1.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

Section 4 – Achieving sustainable development
 Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change
 Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places
 Section 15 – Promoting sustainable transport
 Section 16 – Promoting healthy communities
 Section 18 – Managing flood risk and coastal change
 Section 19 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 Section 20 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

- 15/01973/1 – Change of use of 2-storey detached building (at southern end of The Old Grammar School site) from Class B1 (offices) to Class D1 (drop-in centre). Conditional Permission 02/10/2015
- 16/02104/01AD – Erection of one non illuminated sign to the front elevation of the building – Conditional consent – 07/10/2016

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice** erected 16/07/2026 **Publication advert** 16/07/2026 both expiring 08/08/2026. **Neighbour consultations** – no representations received.

3.2 **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application building is a standalone office block previously known as The West View Building positioned adjacent the Old Grammar School. The building comprises a detached two storey flat roofed building of approximately 230sq.m and sits adjacent the grassed amenity area known on Broadway Gardens. The building is screened to the east and south by hedging and mature trees. No 73 West View abuts the southwest boundary and along the western boundary sits three other residential properties in Gorst Close. Jackies Drop-in Centre was granted planning permission for a change of use in 2015.

4.2.2 The proposed development would be sited to the rear of the building on the west elevation, located in the car park area. The car park is accessed front the north of the property, where the front access door and ramp are also located.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the installation of an external lift shaft with disabled access lift to facilitate inclusive access to the first floor. The additions will comprise a brick built near square extension comprising 2.4 x 2.1m to the rear elevation over two floors. The materials proposed include facing brick to match that of the existing in terms of colour, texture, and bond with white boarded fascia to match the existing. The extension will match the height of the existing building and comprise a flat roof with a felt finish to match the existing roof.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- Principle
- The acceptability of the design and its impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- Impact on neighbour amenity
- The impact on car parking provision
- The impact on the environment.
- The impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Principle of the Proposed Development / sustainability:

4.3.2 The August 2026 NPPF seeks sustainable development and high-quality, healthy, inclusive and accessible places. Policies DP3, TR3 and TR4 support inclusive and accessible development and appropriate access for all users.

4.3.3 Local Plan Policies SP1 and SP9 support sustainable, well-designed development which responds positively to its context. Policy D1 similarly requires development to maximise accessibility and physical and social connectivity.

- 4.3.4 The proposal is a small extension to an existing building in an accessible urban location, specifically required to provide lift access to the first floor. It would improve accessibility without materially altering the use, scale or function of the site.
- 4.3.5 The principle of development is therefore acceptable and accords with Local Plan Policies SP1, SP9 and D1 and NPPF Policies DP3, TR3 and TR4.

Design and Appearance:

- 4.3.6 NPPF Policy DP3 requires development to respond appropriately to its context and be visually attractive. Local Plan Policies SP9 and D1 require high-quality design which responds positively to local character.
- 4.3.7 The lift shaft would be a modest, functional addition to the rear elevation. Its simple form, matching brickwork, fascia and flat roof would reflect the host building and remain subordinate to it.
- 4.3.8 Its rear position limits wider views, with further screening provided by mature vegetation to the south and south-west. Although visible from the west, its limited scale and matching materials would prevent undue visual prominence.
- 4.3.9 The proposal therefore accords with Local Plan Policies SP9 and D1 and NPPF Policy DP3.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity:

- 4.3.10 Local Plan Policy D3 seeks to prevent unacceptable harm to living conditions. NPPF Policy DP3 also requires development to function appropriately within its context.
- 4.3.11 The nearest dwellings are No. 73 West View and properties in Gorst Close. Although the latter would have the clearest views, the lift shaft contains no windows and, given its limited depth, scale and position against the existing building, would not cause unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, light or an overbearing impact.
- 4.3.12 The proposal therefore accords with Local Plan Policy D3 and NPPF Policy DP3.

Impact on Parking and Highways:

- 4.3.13 The rear car park provides 11 spaces. The development would result in the loss of approximately 1-2 spaces. Local Plan Policies T1 and T2 address transport and parking. NPPF Policies TR3 and TR4 seek appropriate access and parking having regard to the nature, accessibility and location of development.
- 4.3.14 The proposal would not intensify the existing use, and the site is in an accessible urban location. The limited parking loss is outweighed by the accessibility benefit of the lift and would not materially affect operation of the site. The works would not alter the existing highway access, affect highway safety or obstruct circulation within the remaining car park.
- 4.3.15 The proposal therefore accords with Local Plan Policies T1 and T2 and NPPF Policies TR3 and TR4.

Environmental Matters

- 4.3.16 The lift shaft would be constructed on existing hardstanding without removing trees or hedgerows. NPPF Policy N2 seeks to conserve natural features and minimise adverse biodiversity effects. Given its limited scale, location on existing hardstanding and retention of surrounding vegetation, no significant environmental effects are anticipated. The proposal also makes efficient use of an existing developed site. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policies SP1, SP9 and D1 and NPPF Policies CC2, DP3 and N2.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.17 The existing site is a car park with limited existing habitat space, as such the proposed development is 'de minimis' and would not exceed the threshold of 25 sqm of on-site habitat, or /and less than 5 meters of linear habitats. This application is therefore exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area

- 4.3.18 The site lies within Letchworth Conservation Area. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.
- 4.3.19 Local Plan Policies SP13 and HE1 seek to conserve the historic environment and designated heritage assets. NPPF Policies HE4–HE6 require proposals to conserve heritage significance and give substantial weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets. Policy HE9 specifically addresses conservation areas.
- 4.3.20 The existing building is of simple utilitarian design and differs from older buildings nearby. It has previously been identified as making a negative contribution to the Conservation Area, with previous consents granted for demolition as part of wider redevelopment proposals.
- 4.3.21 The lift shaft would be positioned on the less prominent rear elevation and designed to match the existing building. Its limited scale and location would not materially affect features contributing positively to the Conservation Area's special architectural or historic interest.
- 4.3.22 The proposal would therefore cause no harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved. No heritage harm/public-benefit balance is therefore required. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policies SP13 and HE1, NPPF Policies HE4–HE6 and HE9, and the statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 The proposed lift shaft is a modest addition providing improved inclusive access to the existing building. Its scale, siting, design and materials are acceptable and would not cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity, parking, highway safety, biodiversity, trees or the significance of Letchworth Conservation Area.
- 4.4.2 The proposal accords with Local Plan Policies SP1, SP9, SP13, T1, T2, D1, D3 and HE1 and relevant August 2026 NPPF Policies CC2, DP3, TR3, TR4, N2 and HE4–HE9.

4.4 Alternative Options

4.4.1 N/A

4.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

4.5.1 None

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The lift shaft hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing building unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 26 August 2026	