

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Mark Simmons.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01873/LBC	Installation of chairlift.	56A High Street Ashwell Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 5NR

Submitted Plan Nos

260-Q5133803 Location Plan

1.0 Policies

HE1	Designated heritage assets
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SECN20	Conserving + enhancing historic environment
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2.0 **Relevant History**

2.1 The only planning history relating to this site is the following:

N/270/48 – Alterations to shop for use as hairdressers' business.
Permitted development.

3.0 **Legislation**

3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant as are policies under Section 20 of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) and Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.0 **Representations**

4.1 **Ashwell Parish Council** – “resolved to approve the application”.

Press & Site Notices – Internal works only therefore no need to advertise and no comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site & Surroundings**

5.1.1 No.56 High Street is grade II listed and is located in the Ashwell Conservation Area. The list entry is provided in the link below:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102747?section=official-list-entry>

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 The proposal is: ***Installation of chairlift.***

5.3 **The Equality Act 2010**

5.3.1 Under Part 2 of the Equality Act 2010, “service providers” have a duty not to discriminate directly or indirectly against, among others, disabled people. This clearly has implications for the owners of older buildings. A “service provider” is effectively a person or organisation concerned with the provision of a service to the public or a section of the public (for payment or not). No.56/56A is in private ownership and therefore not open to the public by virtue of its use i.e. there is no “service provider.”

5.3.2 It should, however, be noted that all public authorities in carrying out their functions are to have due regard to “*the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.*” This duty must be balanced against the existing duties to have special regard to the preservation of historic buildings and areas.

5.3.3 I have not been to site, but photos submitted with the application indicate a relatively plain stair with straight, white-painted spindles and dark-stained newel posts and handrail. It is acknowledged that the staircase imposes a barrier to the applicant having reasonable and safe access to the first floor.

5.3.4 Generally, where such barriers exist in buildings with a public use such as a country house, a castle, hotels, railway stations etc. alternative means of accessing upper floors may be deployed such as a conventional lift, hydraulic platform lift, escalator, or other means. To propose an alternative means of accessing the first floor here would likely result in a significantly greater impact on historic fabric.

5.4 **Key Issues**

5.4.1 With reference to Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the following should be noted: *"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special interest or historic interest which it possesses"*. The key issue is to assess the impact of the proposal on the listed building's special character.

5.4.2 It is noted that the stairlift would have up to 5no. mechanical fixing point for each base plate and 6no. uprights are proposed. On a similar proposal elsewhere in the district, an image forming part of a Safety Notice was submitted with that application showing only 3no. screw holes being utilised for each base plate. The current proposal will require a minimum of 18no. and up to 30no. screw fixings into the softwood (pine) treads. There are no wall fixings.

5.4.3 By its very nature, when no longer required, the stairlift is readily demountable with the opportunity for the staircase to revert to its current appearance and if necessary, the treads can be repaired with the screw holes plugged.

5.5 **Conclusion**

5.5.1 Although the stairlift will impact upon the staircase, given i) the staircase has low significance; ii) the need for the installation, iii) its reversibility and iv) that the screw fixings are small enabling the treads to be relatively easily repaired, it is considered that the stairlift would not be a permanent installation and would not occasion harm to the listed building's special character.

5.6 **Alternative Options**

5.6.1 None applicable

5.7 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.7.1 None applicable.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 It is considered, therefore, that listed building consent can be **GRANTED** subject to the following condition.

1. The work to which this consent relates shall be begun by not later than the expiration of the period of 3 years from the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 22 September 2026	