

APPLEHANGER

Planning Statement

May 2026



Site:

Applehanger
Lewes Road
Ashurst Wood
RH19 3SX

Project:

Proposed Detached Garage at Applehanger

Revision Audit

<u>Date</u>	<u>Rev</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Check by</u>	<u>Comment</u>
07/03/26	-	SN		
12/03/26	A	TC	TC	
30/04/26	B	TC		Updated to include wood store



30 April 2026



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1. Rubix Planning – Chartered Town Planners

- 1.1. Rubix Planning Ltd is an independent Chartered Town Planning consultancy providing professional planning and development advice across London and the South East of England. The practice is regulated by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and operates in accordance with the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct.
- 1.2. This Planning Support Statement has been prepared under the supervision of an MRTPI Chartered Town Planner.
- 1.3. The advice contained within this Statement is based on a review of the site context, the proposed development, and the relevant planning policy framework.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. This Planning Support Statement has been prepared to accompany a householder planning application for the erection of a detached garage in front of Applehanger house in Lewes Road, Ashurst Wood, RH19 3SX.
- 2.2. The proposal comprises the erection of a detached garage building positioned at the front of Applehanger, Lewes Road, Ashurst Wood. The garage is proposed as an oak-framed structure with attached covered wood store, designed in accordance with the specifications prepared by Trade Oak, and would provide secure covered parking and domestic storage associated with the host dwelling. The building is intended to serve purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, including the parking of domestic vehicles and the storage of household and garden equipment. The proposed structure would remain clearly ancillary and subordinate to the main dwelling and would sit within the generous residential curtilage of the property.
- 2.3. This Statement describes the site and its context, summarises relevant planning policy, and assesses the proposal against the main planning considerations. It concludes that the development is appropriate in scale, appropriately sited and designed, and would not result in material harm to the character of the area or neighbouring residential amenity.



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- 2.4. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached garage and wood storee within the residential curtilage of Applehanger House. The proposed building would provide domestic garaging and ancillary storage associated with the existing dwelling. The structure would be modest in scale and positioned within the established curtilage so as to remain clearly subordinate to the host dwelling.



Figure 1 – Site Location – not to scale



Figure 2 – photo of the site



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3. Site Description & Context

- 3.1. The application site forms part of the residential curtilage of Applehanger House, a detached dwelling located along Lewes Road / Luxfords Lane within the countryside south of Wivelsfield Green. The surrounding area is characterised by large detached dwellings set within generous plots with substantial vegetation and boundary landscaping.
- 3.2. The site lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The surrounding landscape is characterised by a verdant semi-rural character, with built development generally contained within spacious and well-landscaped residential plots. In this context, proposals must remain proportionate and sympathetic to their setting.
- 3.3. The application site comprises a large detached two-storey dwelling situated on the southern side of Lewes Road, located outside the built-up area of Ashurst Wood.
- 3.4. The surrounding area has a semi-rural character, with sizeable residential properties arranged in ribbon development along the road. The streetscape is generally defined by high boundary fences, walls and mature hedging, which often obscure the properties from public view and result in limited active frontages along the highway. Many of the dwellings are also accessed through front gates. The architectural style and design of buildings in the locality vary.
- 3.5. The host dwelling features a pitched, hipped roof with a catslide roof slope on the western elevation. It is constructed of brick at ground floor level, with hanging tiles at first floor level, plain roof tiles, and timber windows and doors. The property is set back from the highway and follows the established building line that continues eastwards along Lewes Road.
- 3.6. To the front of the dwelling is a large gravel driveway, enclosed by boundary hedging and solid timber gates that partially screen the property from the road. Along the western boundary lies Luxfords Lane, a private road that also accommodates a public bridleway. This route runs parallel to the site boundary at a lower ground level and is separated from the application site by mature trees and hedging.



- 3.7. The proposed garage would be located within the existing residential garden associated with the dwelling and would be well contained within the established site layout and surrounding landscaping. The structure would remain clearly subordinate to the main house.
- 3.8. Overall, the site context is one where ancillary residential development of an appropriate scale can be accommodated without undermining the character of the area or the established pattern of development, subject to appropriate siting and design considerations.

4. Relevant Planning History

<u>(Amended plans received 01/06/2021 and 15/06/2021) Single storey extension to rear of property with utility extension to north of west flank as permitted under ref DM/17/5115.</u> Applehanger Lewes Road Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: DM/21/0716 Received: Mon 22 Feb 2021 Validated: Mon 08 Mar 2021 Status: Approved
<u>Single storey extension to rear of property with utility extension to north of west flank.</u> Applehanger Lewes Road Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: DM/17/5115 Received: Thu 14 Dec 2017 Validated: Wed 20 Dec 2017 Status: Approved
<u>Entrance porch design changed.</u> Applehanger Lewes Road Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: 10/00476/NONMAT Received: Mon 29 Nov 2010 Validated: Mon 29 Nov 2010 Status: Refused
<u>Two storey extension to the flank and new front entrance porch together with ancillary landscaping to provide terrace to rear and additional parking to front, following demolition of existing utility room and detached garage</u> Applehanger Lewes Road Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: 10/00476/FUL Received: Mon 22 Feb 2010 Validated: Wed 24 Feb 2010 Status: Approved
<u>REPLACEMENT DOUBLE GARAGE.</u> Applehanger Lewes Road Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: GR/156/99 Received: Thu 10 Jun 1999 Validated: Thu 10 Jun 1999 Status: Approved
<u>THE ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION.</u> Applehanger Lewes Road East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SX Ref. No: GR/313/88 Received: Mon 19 Sep 1988 Validated: Mon 19 Sep 1988 Status: Approved

5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1. The statutory Development Plan for the purposes of determining this application comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 (adopted March 2018), together with



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any relevant made neighbourhood plans. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material consideration.

National Planning Policy Framework - February 2025

- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and provides the overarching policy context for decision-taking.
- 5.3. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that development proposals should be approved where they accord with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This principle underpins the assessment of the current proposal.
- 5.4. Section 12 of the Framework places strong emphasis on achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 131 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is fundamental to creating places that function well and add to the overall quality of an area. Paragraph 135 requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built and landscape context, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.
- 5.5. Paragraph 139 makes clear that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Conversely, well-designed development that responds appropriately to its context is actively supported.
- 5.6. Section 14 of the NPPF addresses meeting the challenge of climate change and sustainable development. Paragraph 159 requires development to be planned in a way that avoids increased vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and contributes to mitigation and adaptation where proportionate to the scale of development.
- 5.7. Section 15 of the Framework is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 180 requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Development should avoid unacceptable harm to landscape character and should be appropriately located and designed.



- 5.8. Paragraph 184 confirms that decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects on the natural environment and the character of the area.
- 5.9. In relation to residential amenity, paragraph 135(f) requires development to create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This includes consideration of privacy, outlook, noise, and general living conditions.
- 5.10. The NPPF supports development that is well designed, responsive to its context, and capable of being accommodated without harm to landscape character or residential amenity.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031

- 5.11. The Mid Sussex District Plan provides the local policy framework against which the application must be assessed. The most relevant policies are as follows.
- 5.12. **Policy DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside)** seeks to safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Development outside built-up area boundaries is restricted to appropriate forms of development that do not undermine rural character. Ancillary residential development within the curtilage of an existing dwelling is not precluded by this policy, provided it remains subordinate and does not result in material harm to the countryside.
- 5.13. **Policy DP16 (High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)** seeks to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, landscape character and scenic quality of the High Weald AONB. The policy requires that development within the AONB respects the distinctive landscape features and settlement pattern of the area and ensures that proposals do not result in harm to its character or appearance. Proposals should be sensitively designed and appropriately scaled, using materials and forms that respond positively to the rural context. Development that conserves the landscape qualities of the AONB and integrates well within its setting may therefore be considered acceptable where it does not undermine the special qualities of the designated landscape.

- 5.14. **Policy DP26 (Character and Design)** requires all development to demonstrate high



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quality design that responds positively to the character, scale, and appearance of the surrounding area. Development should integrate well with its site and surroundings and should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

- 5.15. **Policy DP29 (Noise, Air and Light Pollution)** seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of nearby residents. Proposals should avoid generating noise, disturbance, or activity that would be inappropriate in a residential or rural context.
- 5.16. **Policy DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows)** aims to protect trees, hedgerows, and woodland that contribute positively to landscape character. Development should avoid unnecessary loss of vegetation and should integrate sensitively with existing landscape features.
- 5.17. **Policy DP38 (Biodiversity)** requires development to protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity interests. The level of information and mitigation required should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal.
- 5.18. **Policy DP39 (Sustainable Design and Construction)** promotes sustainable development principles, including efficient use of resources and appropriate design responses, proportionate to the scale of development proposed.

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

- 5.19. The Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document provides detailed guidance on the delivery of high quality, context-led design and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It places emphasis on understanding the site, its surroundings, and the relationship between new development and the host property.
- 5.20. The Design Guide makes clear that new buildings within residential plots should respond to the character of the site rather than impose a generic or standardised form. Design is expected to arise from the specific qualities of the plot, including its size, layout, landscape structure and the appearance of the main dwelling. Paragraphs 2.3 to 2.5 require development to respond positively to local character, landscape features and



settlement pattern, particularly in rural parts of the District where dispersed development and openness are defining characteristics.

- 5.21. Residential outbuildings are expected to remain secondary to the host dwelling. The Design Guide emphasises that ancillary buildings should be clearly subordinate in scale and visual presence, avoiding excessive height, bulk or architectural emphasis. Paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2 confirm that extensions and ancillary buildings should respect the scale, form and character of the host dwelling and should not result in overdevelopment of the site. Outbuildings are expected to read as supporting structures within the curtilage, rather than competing elements or focal features.
- 5.22. The positioning of outbuildings within a plot is treated as a key design consideration. The Design Guide advises that ancillary structures should be carefully located to reflect the established layout of the site and to avoid a sense of overdevelopment. Appropriate separation from boundaries and neighbouring properties is expected, allowing the host dwelling to remain the dominant element within the plot.
- 5.23. In rural and semi-rural locations, the Design Guide highlights the importance of responding to landscape character. Development is expected to respect the openness of the countryside and the dispersed pattern of buildings, avoiding forms or detailing that would introduce an urban or suburban appearance. New structures should sit comfortably within their setting and, where appropriate, be softened by existing or proposed landscaping.
- 5.24. The Design Guide also addresses scale and proportion, noting that the cumulative effect of development within a residential plot should be considered. The addition of outbuildings should not erode the spacious qualities of a site or result in an overly intensive arrangement of buildings, even where individual elements are modest in isolation.
- 5.25. Materials and detailing are expected to complement the host dwelling and its surroundings. The Design Guide encourages a restrained approach for ancillary buildings, with simple forms and finishes that sit quietly within the site. In rural contexts, materials should weather naturally and avoid drawing unnecessary attention.



- 5.26. Residential amenity is identified as a core consideration throughout the Design Guide. Ancillary buildings should be designed and sited so as not to result in overlooking, loss of privacy, an overbearing presence or undue disturbance to neighbouring occupiers. Careful attention to orientation, separation distances and the placement of openings is encouraged.
- 5.27. A consistent theme throughout the Design Guide is proportionality. Ancillary development should be appropriate to its stated purpose and should not incorporate features that suggest independent or self-contained occupation. This approach reflects the wider objective of ensuring that residential plots are not incrementally intensified in a manner that would undermine planning control.

Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan (made June 2016)

- 5.28. **Policy ASW14 – Design and Character of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan** seeks to ensure that new development within the parish responds positively to the established character of Ashurst Wood. The policy emphasises the importance of high-quality design that respects the scale, form, materials, and setting of surrounding development. It also seeks to ensure that proposals maintain the distinctive semi-rural character of the village and integrate sensitively within the local streetscape and landscape context.

6. Assessment of the Proposed Development

- 6.1. The proposed development comprises the erection of a detached residential outbuilding within the established domestic curtilage of Applehanger House. The assessment below considers the proposal against the principal planning considerations arising from the site context and the relevant planning policy framework.
- 6.2. The proposal comprises the erection of a detached garage building positioned within the existing forecourt area to the front of the dwelling. The building would have a simple rectangular footprint with a hipped roof form, reflecting the traditional architectural



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language commonly associated with rural domestic outbuildings.

- 6.3. The proposed garage is constructed as a traditional oak-framed structure using heavy timber members. The primary structural frame consists of solid oak posts measuring approximately 195 × 195 mm, which support oak tie beams and headplates of similar dimensions to form a robust structural grid. Oak rafters (approximately 145 × 60 mm) span between the headplates and rise to form a full hipped roof with a pitch of around 35 degrees.
- 6.4. The proposed building would be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling. It would not operate as a separate planning unit, would not provide facilities enabling independent occupation, and would remain functionally and physically subordinate to the host dwelling.

Principle of Development

- 6.5. The principle of ancillary development within the curtilage of an existing dwelling is well established in planning terms. The proposal does not introduce a new dwelling, a separate unit of accommodation, or a commercial use, nor does it alter the lawful residential use of the site.
- 6.6. Although the site lies within a rural setting, countryside protection policies are primarily concerned with resisting new and isolated residential development or the unjustified expansion of built form beyond established residential curtilage. The proposed outbuilding is located wholly within the defined domestic curtilage of Applehanger House and serves a clear and justified ancillary residential function.
- 6.7. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle, subject to considerations of scale, siting, design and impact.

Scale, Siting & Design

- 6.8. The scale of the proposed outbuilding is appropriate when assessed in the context of the size, layout and functional requirements of the site. While the building has a substantial



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footprint, this is directly related to its intended use, including the accommodation of two vehicles associated with the residential use of the dwelling.. The proposal does not represent overdevelopment of the site.

6.9. The siting ensures appropriate separation from site boundaries and neighbouring properties, and avoids any encroachment into adjoining lands.

6.10. In design terms, the outbuilding adopts a simple, utilitarian form appropriate to its ancillary function. The proposed construction and external finishes ensure that the building reads as a functional domestic structure rather than a focal or dominant element.

Impact on Character & Appearance of the Area

6.11. The surrounding area is characterised by dispersed residential properties set within generous plots, with ancillary buildings commonly associated with larger rural dwellings. Development is typically filtered by landscaping and boundary treatment, contributing to a settled residential character within a wider countryside setting.

6.12. The proposed outbuilding would not undermine this character. Its siting within the established residential curtilage, combined with its functional appearance and modest height, ensures that it would not appear incongruous or visually intrusive. The simple form and restrained materials allow the building to sit quietly within its setting and avoid undue prominence.

6.13. Any visual change arising from the development would be localised and contained within the site. The proposal would therefore preserve the character and appearance of both the immediate area and its wider rural context.

Residential Amenity

6.14. The proposed development has been carefully assessed in relation to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

6.15. The height, scale and positioning of the outbuilding ensure that it would not appear overbearing and would not result in loss of privacy, overlooking or unacceptable



overshadowing. The use of the building would remain incidental to the residential occupation of Applehanger House and would not generate activity, noise or disturbance beyond that typically associated with a single dwelling and its associated domestic maintenance.

- 6.16. The relationship with neighbouring properties is therefore such that residential amenity would be preserved.

Landscape & Visual Considerations

- 6.17. The site benefits from an established landscape framework and boundary treatment which already provides a degree of visual containment. The proposal has been designed to sit within this framework without the need for the removal of significant vegetation.

- 6.18. The proposed evergreen hedging will provide both immediate and long-term screening, helping to soften views of the outbuilding from the street scene. Over time, the planting will further integrate the development into the landscape and reinforce the sense of containment. The original hedging was previously cut back; however, it is now regenerating and is expected to reach a height of approximately 2.4 metres. Once established, it will provide effective screening and help obscure views of the proposed garage.

- 6.19. With this mitigation in place, the proposal would result in no material harm to landscape character or visual amenity.

7. Planning Balance

- 7.1. The determination of this application requires an assessment of the proposal against the adopted Development Plan, having regard to other material considerations.
- 7.2. The proposal comprises a detached ancillary residential outbuilding located wholly within the established domestic curtilage of Applehanger House. It does not introduce a new dwelling, an independent residential unit, or any form of commercial use, and it



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does not extend built form beyond the defined residential plot. The development is therefore fundamentally different in nature from the forms of development that countryside protection policies seek to restrict.

- 7.3. Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to protect the character and appearance of the countryside by resisting inappropriate development outside built-up area boundaries. In this case, the proposal represents a proportionate and justified form of ancillary development, directly related to the lawful residential use of the site. The outbuilding is required to accommodate domestic vehicles and there are no existing buildings within the site capable of meeting these functional needs. The proposal does not undermine the objectives of Policy DP12 and results in no material harm to countryside character.
- 7.4. Policy DP26 requires development to achieve a high standard of design and to respond positively to its context. The proposed outbuilding is subordinate to the host dwelling in both visual and functional terms, and its scale, form and restrained appearance ensure that it sits comfortably within the site. The development respects the established pattern of dispersed residential development along Lewes road and Luxford's Lane and does not introduce an incongruous or dominant feature.
- 7.5. Residential amenity has been carefully considered, with particular regard to the relationship with Applehanger. The siting, scale and height of the outbuilding ensure that it does not give rise to overbearing effects, loss of privacy or unacceptable disturbance. In addition, the incorporation of purpose-designed boundary screening provides effective mitigation of potential visual impacts when viewed from neighbouring land and from the public realm. As a result, the proposal accords with Policies DP26 and DP29 in safeguarding residential amenity.
- 7.6. Policies DP37 and DP38 seek to protect landscape features and biodiversity. The proposal does not require the removal of significant vegetation and is supported by new boundary planting that reinforces landscape structure and visual containment. No biodiversity harm arises from development within an established residential garden, and the scale of the proposal is such that no further mitigation is required.



- 7.7. Policy DP39 promotes sustainable design and construction principles in a manner proportionate to the scale of development. The proposal represents a contained and efficient use of land within an existing residential plot and avoids unnecessary environmental or visual impacts, consistent with the aims of this policy.
- 7.8. National planning policy strongly supports well-designed development that responds appropriately to its context and can be accommodated without harm to landscape character or residential amenity. The proposal aligns with these objectives and does not give rise to any adverse impacts that would justify refusal.
- 7.9. When assessed as a whole, the proposal represents an appropriate, proportionate and well-considered form of ancillary residential development. It meets a clear domestic need, is contained within the residential curtilage, incorporates effective mitigation, and accords with the relevant policies of the Development Plan. There are no material considerations that indicate planning permission should be withheld.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. This Planning Support Statement has assessed the proposed ancillary residential outbuilding at Applehanger House against the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and other material considerations.
- 8.2. The proposal comprises a detached rectangular outbuilding providing two vehicle bays to meet the functional domestic needs of the occupiers. The building is intended solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling, including the storage of domestic vehicles. There are no existing buildings within the site that are suitable to accommodate these requirements.
- 8.3. The development is located wholly within the established residential curtilage of Applehanger House and does not extend built form into the surrounding countryside. It would not function as a separate planning unit and would not introduce any independent or commercial use. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.
- 8.4. The scale, siting and design of the outbuilding ensure that it remains clearly subordinate



to the host dwelling and sits comfortably within the layout of the site. The form, limited height and restrained appearance reduce visual bulk and prevent the development from appearing dominant or incongruous within its setting.

- 8.5. There are no adjoining neighbours that would be affected by the proposal. The proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity through overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing effect or disturbance. In addition, existing boundary screening provides effective mitigation of potential visual impacts when viewed from the public realm.
- 8.6. The proposal would not result in harm to landscape character or biodiversity and does not require the removal of significant vegetation. The development accords with national planning policy and with the relevant policies of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan, and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) including those relating to countryside protection, design quality, landscape character and residential amenity.
- 8.7. The proposed outbuilding would have a maximum height of approximately 4 metres, which is consistent with the height typically permitted for domestic outbuildings under Schedule 2, Part 1, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) where a building incorporates a dual-pitched roof. As such, the proposed height is considered modest and proportionate within the residential curtilage and would not appear excessive or visually dominant in relation to the host dwelling or the surrounding streetscape.
- 8.8. When assessed in the round, the proposal represents an appropriate and proportionate form of ancillary residential development that meets a clear domestic need and can be accommodated without material harm. On this basis, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

