

November 2025

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Conversion of Existing Ancillary Use Garage within sheltered housing scheme to form Ancillary Use Site Manager's Office and Associated Works

Stanford Orchard, Warnham, West Sussex, RH12 3RF

Prepared by Invictus Building Consultancy
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Retirement Lease Housing Association (RLHA) and in support of a Full Planning Application for the conversion of an existing garage within an established age-restricted retirement housing scheme / sheltered housing scheme to form a site manager's office.

The proposal includes minor external alterations to the west elevation of the coach house block (beneath Flat 33), comprising the addition of a pedestrian entrance door and window at ground-floor level. No extensions or increases in footprint are proposed. The existing garage door is to be retained to avoid any change to the appearance of the principal elevation.

The development will continue to be ancillary to the existing use of the site and used solely for the management and administration of the existing sheltered housing scheme and remains fully ancillary to the lawful residential use.

1.2 This statement considers the following:

- The Site and Surroundings**
- Planning History**
- Description of Proposed Development**
- Planning Considerations**
- Impact on the Conservation Area**
- Access**
- Conclusion**

2.0 Site and Surroundings

2.1 The application property forms part of a purpose-built age-restricted retirement housing development known as Stanford Orchard which comprises 33no. residential units, communal areas, and associated parking/garaging.

2.2 The garage subject to this application sits within the coach house block to the east of the site and directly beneath Flat 33 and is identified in the images below. The particular garage to which this application pertains is identified as "Garage 1" in Figure 4 below and on the supporting drawings.

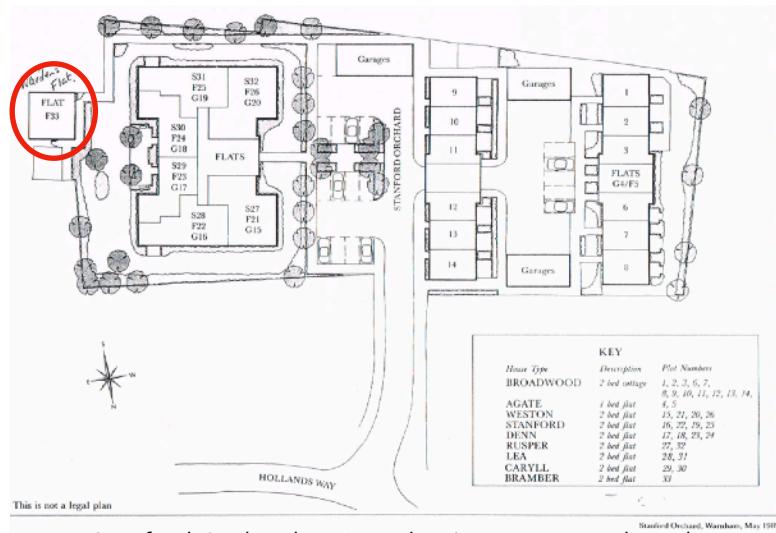


Figure 1: Stanford Orchard Layout Plan (Note reversed north orient.)



Figure 2: Google Earth Image

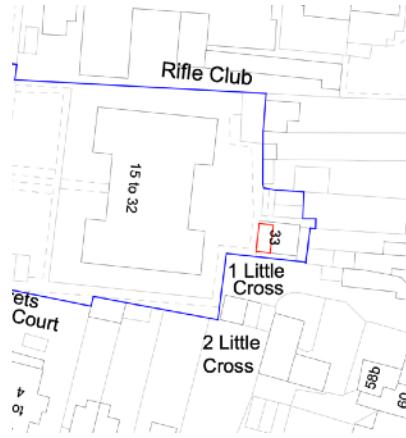


Figure 3: Ordnance Survey Image

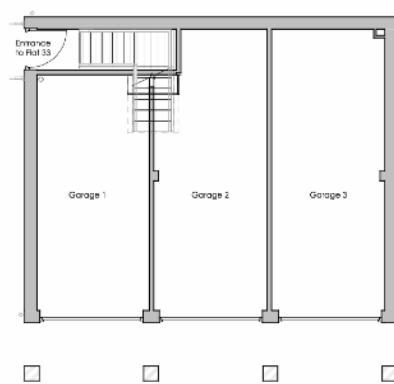


Figure 4: Existing Floor Plan - (Garage to which works are being undertaken identified as 'Garage1')

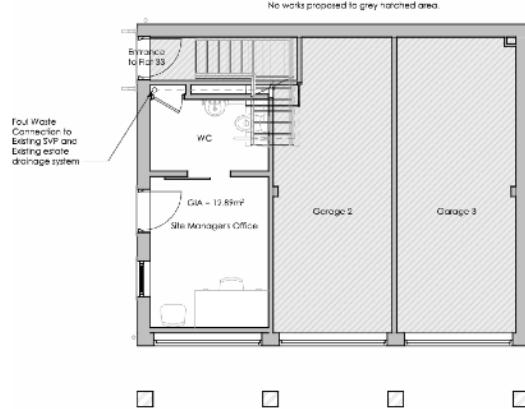


Figure 5: Proposed Floor Plan

The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The site borders/lies partially within the Warnham Conservation Area boundary, although the Stanford Orchard development (late 1980s/early 1990s) is not a designated or non-designated heritage asset.

3.0 Planning History

- 3.1 The relevant planning history pertaining to this application is identified as follows:
 - **WN/57/87** - Erection of 33 sheltered residential units consisting of 12x 2 Bed Houses, 12 x 2 bed flats, 8 x 1 bed flats, 1x Warden flat & gardens at Stanfords Builders Yard, Church Street, Warnham
 - **DC/24/0035** - Application to confirm use of flat as sheltered residential accommodation (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed) at 33 Stanford Orchard, Warnham, West Sussex, RH12 3RF
- 3.2 The original permission imposed 16 conditions; none relate specifically to the use or retention of the garages.

4.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 4.1 The works comprise:
 - Conversion of an existing garage to a small site manager's office.
 - Introduction of a new pedestrian entrance door and window to the west elevation.
 - Minor internal reconfiguration to provide an office, welfare area and storage.
- 4.2 No change to the building footprint, height, massing or roof form is proposed.
- 4.3 No increase in staffing is proposed. The office will be used solely by the existing site manager and will not intensify activity at the site.
- 4.4 Use will remain ancillary to the wider Stanford Orchard site.

5.0 Planning Considerations

5.1 Use and Principle of Development

Both the existing garage and the proposed office serve ancillary functions associated with the lawful sheltered housing use. The conversion supports on-site management, resident welfare, maintenance and compliance functions that are integral to a scheme of this type.

As both existing and proposed uses are ancillary to the primary residential use, the proposal does not constitute a material change of use or constitute development in respect of Section 55(2)(f) TCPA 1990 (which) excludes from what constitutes "development" for the purposes of the Act:

"in the case of buildings or other land which are used for a purpose of any class specified in an order made by the Secretary of State under this section, the use of the buildings or other land...for any purpose of the same class."

On-site management facilities are common within sheltered housing schemes and aligns with good practice for resident safety and building management.

5.2 Design and Appearance

- 5.2.1 The external alterations are modest and sympathetic to the host building and its surrounds. The proposed door and window match the scale and character of existing openings and will use materials consistent with the existing building.
- 5.2.2 Changes are confined to the west elevation, facing internally towards the Stanford Orchard development, and are not highly visible from public viewpoints. The proposal has no adverse effect on the street scene or wider character.



Figure 4: View of the existing coach house / garage block from the south south west.

5.3 Parking Provision

5.3.1 The proposal results in the loss of one on-site parking space, reducing provision from 34 to 33 spaces across the Stanford Orchard site, representing a reduction of approximately 2.9%.

However;

- There are no specific conditions on the existing permission requiring the garage to be retained for parking.
- It is an established planning principle that Sheltered housing developments characteristically generate lower levels of car ownership than typical residential development and therefore are not held to the same standards.
- The proposal will not increase staff numbers or traffic associated with the site.
- The loss of a single space will not materially impact parking demand or highway safety,
- The resulting parking provision on site remains sufficient for this type of development

5.3.2 **Modest Reduction**

The parking provision currently provided at the site comprises a total of 34no. spaces split between 16no. garage units and 18no. car parking spaces. The proposal comprises only a modest reduction of parking provision by only 2.9% across the site.

5.3.3 **Not an actively used parking space**

Furthermore, the garage subject to this application has, for a considerable period, been used for on-site storage associated with the sheltered housing scheme rather than for vehicular parking. As such, the proposed conversion does not remove an actively used parking space. The development will therefore not materially alter existing parking conditions on the site, which have operated satisfactorily without reliance on this garage for parking.

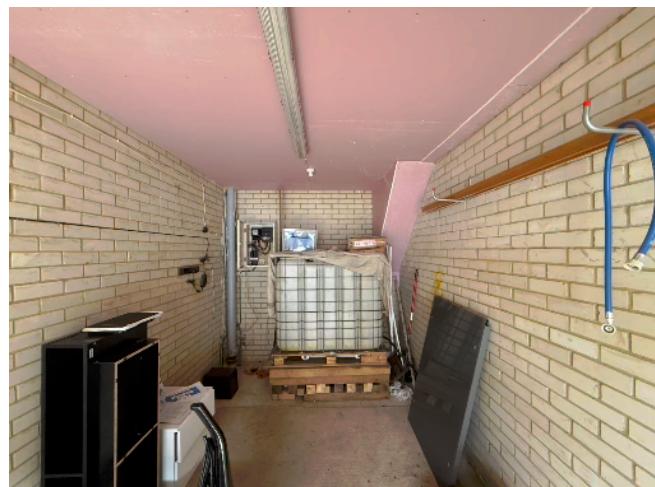


Figure 5: View of the interior of the garage unit currently used as storage.

5.3.4 **Sufficient Provision Remains**

Finally, sheltered housing schemes characteristically exhibit low levels of car ownership than typical residential properties, and the site has functioned effectively for a considerable period without reliance on the garage. The proposed level of parking comprising 33 total parking spaces is considered to remain adequate to serve the needs of the site, with no anticipated impact on highway safety or parking pressure.

5.4 Residential Amenity

The use is quiet and administrative in nature and will not result in noise, disturbance or changes in activity levels. No impacts arise regarding privacy, daylight, overshadowing or overbearing effects. Ground-floor openings are positioned on an elevation that already contains existing openings.

5.5. Sustainability

Re-using an existing structure avoids the material, energy and carbon costs associated with new-build development. The introduction of an on-site office improves operational efficiency.

6.0 Impact on the Conservation Area

The site lies on the border of and partially within the Warnham Conservation Area; the coach house building is a late 20th-century structure that contributes neutrally to the character and appearance of the area.

The proposed changes are minor, reversible, in keeping with the existing doors and fenestration and confined to the west elevation, facing into the site and not visible from the conservation area's principal viewpoints.

Key points:

- No external alterations are proposed to the conservation area facing elevations.
- A modest domestic-style pedestrian door and window are proposed to the west elevation at ground floor level. This elevation faces away from the conservation area and is not prominently visible from outside of the Stanford Orchard Development.
- There already exists a window and door to the west elevation which serve the first floor flat.
- Materials of the proposed window and door will match the existing building, in colour, style and material, preserving visual coherence.

- The proposal does not affect views, scale, massing, roofline, or the spatial character of the conservation area.
- No historic fabric or heritage features are affected.

In accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and NPPF, the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area and no harm is identified.

7.0 Access

Pedestrian access to the office will be safe and level. No changes are made to vehicular access, highway layout, or circulation within the site.

8.0 Conclusion

The proposal represents a small-scale, well-designed conversion that:

- supports the operation of the sheltered housing scheme;
- preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- Has no adverse impact on amenity or visual appearance;
- Results in only a negligible reduction in parking which does not affect site operation;
- remains wholly ancillary to the existing use;
- Delivers a sustainable re-use of an existing structure.
- accords with local and national planning policy.

For these reasons, the development accords with national and local planning policy and should be approved.