

Our ref: TH/KL/TR/Q250174
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Date: 29th April 2025



Planning Services
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Submitted via Planning Portal (ref. PP-13952461)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Jewson, Bensley Saw Mill, Cuckfield Road, Goddards Green, Hassocks BN6 9LG
Reconfiguration of existing builders' merchant
Application submitted on behalf of STARK Building Materials UK Ltd

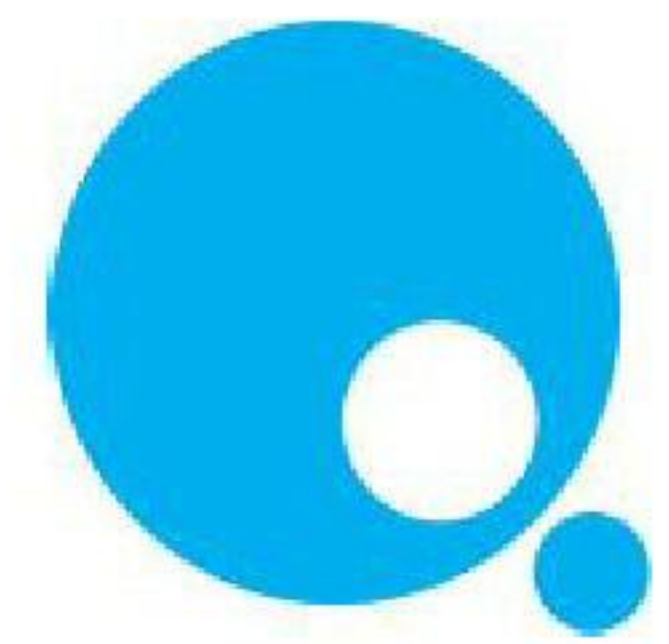
We are instructed by our client, STARK Building Materials UK Ltd (the 'Applicant'), to submit the enclosed full planning application for the reconfiguration of the existing Jewson branch at Bensley Saw Mill, Cuckfield Road, Goddards Green, Hassocks BN6 9LG ('the Application Site'). Specifically, full planning permission is sought for the following development:

"Reconfiguration of existing builders' yard (sui generis) including revised external storage (including storage racking) and servicing arrangements, and associated works."

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-13952461) and includes the following documents and drawings in line with the Council's validation requirements.

- **Application forms, duly completed;**
- **Certificate A & Agricultural Holdings Certificate;**
- **Site Location Plan (dwg. 0733-STK-ZZ-DR-K-0001 V2.0); and**
- **Existing and proposed planning drawings, prepared by STARK Building Materials UK Ltd:**

Drawing Title	Drawing Number	Scale
Existing Site Plan	7330019B	1:250 @ A0
Proposed Site Plan	0733-STK-ZZ-DR-K-1003 V5	1:250 @ A0



A biodiversity net gain assessment does not form part of the application on the basis that the development does not impact a priority habitat or a non-priority onsite habitat. The development is therefore exempt from the mandatory 10% requirement to demonstrate a net gain.

The requisite planning application fee of £298 and Planning Portal service charge have been paid to Mid Sussex District Council ('MSDC') on the day of submission.

1 Introduction

STARK Building Materials UK Ltd are the parent company of Jewson. Jewson has operated successfully from the existing branch on Cuckfield Road for a significant period. Despite this, as part of their "Trust in Better" strategy, Jewson is implementing a comprehensive investment programme to improve existing branches across the UK to deliver an enhanced customer experience. One strand of this development approach is through the reconfiguration and retrofitting of existing sites, to optimise operational capacity and functionality.

The Site is strategically located, and it has long been an aspiration of the Applicant to improve the offering in this important industrial location. In line with their growth strategy, Jewson is proposing modest reconfiguration of the yard layout to regularise the existing branch. The existing branch has become constrained, as Jewson have sought to grow sustainably whilst the yard layout has become dated. More simply, Jewson have outgrown the existing layout and seek a revised operation to meet their requirements as a modern builders' merchant.

The enclosed application comprises the second phase of works, following the grant of Prior Approval for Demolition of the existing sawmill building in April 2025. This application signifies a commercial commitment by Jewson and will contribute positively to the local economy, securing the long-term tenancy of a strategically located unit and protect the jobs at the existing branch.

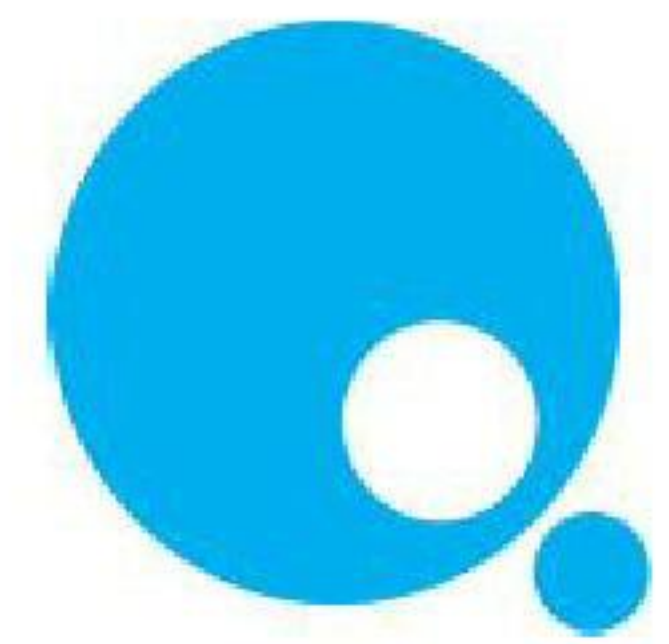
The application is advanced on this basis.

2 Site and Surrounding Area

The Site extends to 0.98 hectares and comprises an existing builders' merchant yard area comprising external storage areas, including storage racking, and associated servicing arrangements.

The Site is bound by Cuckfield Road to the east which provides the sole means of access and egress. Cottages, a public house car park, and dense trees and shrubbery form the southern boundary of the Site, with Gatehouse Lane beyond.

The Site is neighboured immediately to the north by a scrap metal specialist and Panattoni Park Burgess Hill to the east. The Site is allocated as an Existing Employment Site within the Development Plan.



There are no other landscaping or areas of ecological value within the site boundary. This application is therefore not supported by a landscaping scheme or Ecological Appraisal.

The entirety of the Site is within Flood Zone 1 and falls within an area of Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside.

3 Relevant Planning History

Due to the age of the historic planning history, Decision Notices are not publicly available, however we understand the planning history of the existing builders' merchant operation to comprise the following.

Planning permission was granted on 27th May 1980 (ref. HP/045/80) for a single storey building to be used as a trade and retail showroom.

Planning permission was subsequently granted on 2nd September 1980 to expand the builders' merchant (ref. HP/055/80) for the following:

“Construction of single storey building to be use as a trade and retail showroom. Change of use of two bays only of existing warehouse from the storage of timber and showroom to storage of timber and builders merchants materials, and alterations of external elevations by construction of continuous timber cladding.”

This permission was amended under permissions ref. HP/055/80/AP1 and HP/076/84/AP1, which included alterations to the façade, floor layouts, and use of bays in the warehouse.

Planning permission was then granted on 16th January 1985 (ref. HP/076/84) for the demolition of existing offices, construction of new offices and trade collection centre, and construction of new storage sheds.

Most recently, Prior Approval for Demolition was granted on 1st April 2025 (ref. DM/25/0623) for the demolition of the existing sawmill.

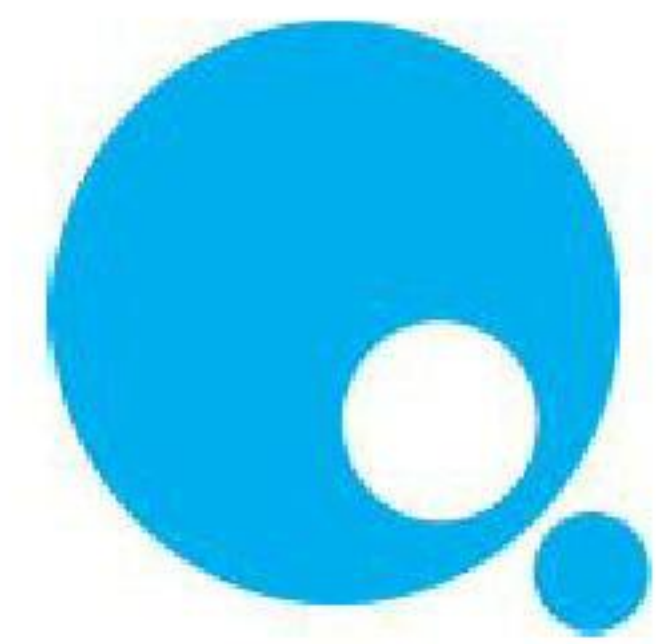
There is no other planning history of relevance.

4 Proposed Development

Full planning permission is sought for the following development:

“Reconfiguration of existing builders' yard (sui generis) including revised external storage (including storage racking) and servicing arrangements, and associated works.”

For the avoidance of doubt there is no change in floor area to the existing warehouse.



As noted above, the proposal is being brought forward following approval to demolish the existing sawmill building under Prior Approval for Demolition ref. DM/25/0623. This work has since been undertaken and has created additional yard space to reconfigure the layout as required by the Applicant.

The extent of the changes proposed comprise reconfiguration of the external yard only. This chiefly relates to the bulk storage of goods and external racking up to a height of seven metres. The external storage of goods is a pre-requisite of all Jewson branches and the areas of external storage are clearly indicated on the enclosed planning drawings.

Importantly, the external storage of goods is an existing arrangement on Site and the application simply seeks to regularise these areas in accordance with Jewson's needs as a modern builders' merchant.

Similarly, larger HGV servicing zones are proposed to meet the requirements of Jewson's improved operation. The existing entrance / egress onto Cuckfield Road are retained and utilised in their current form to support a one-way system throughout the Site. This format is typical of Jewson's new and refurbished branches to ensure safety for customers and staff.

This comprises the full extent of works proposed under the enclosed application.

5 Proposed Occupier

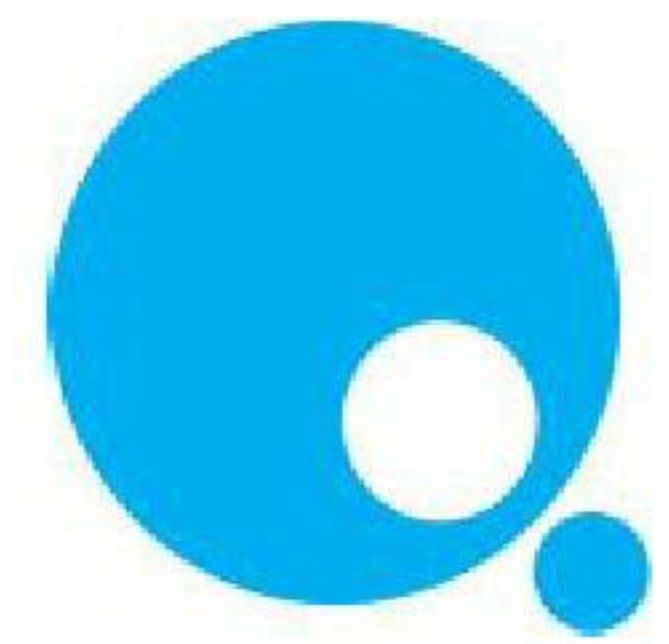
Jewson

Jewson is a household name when it comes to providing local professional tradespeople with the high-quality products and services they need to grow their own local businesses. Jewson is also a business with deep roots in supporting local communities, from working with schools and colleges, to sponsoring grassroots sports clubs and hosting local events. As a significant and inclusive local employer, Jewson is committed to ensuring its workforce reflects and represents the communities it serves.

As part of its parent company STARK Building Materials UK's "Trust in Better" strategy, Jewson is implementing a comprehensive investment programme to optimise its branch network across the nation. Jewson actively asked customers for their feedback and the changes now being made are in direct response to that feedback, ensuring the company is providing the products and services professional tradespeople require. It is under this strategy that Jewson is seeking to optimise their yard layout at their Goddards Green branch to both suit their operational requirements and continue meeting their clientele's needs.

6 Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate



otherwise. In this instance, the statutory development plan principally comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (adopted March 2018); the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022); and the Hurstpierpoint Sayers Common Parish 2031 Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015); and associated policy maps.

Material considerations comprise the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (December 2024) and the supporting Planning Practice Guidance. MSDC submitted the District Plan 2021 – 2039 for examination in July 2024 and it can therefore be afforded weight.

Development Plan

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018)

Policy DP1 ('Sustainable Economic Development') states that effective use of employment land and premises will be made by permitting appropriate intensification, conversion, redevelopment and/or extension for employment uses.

Policy DP26 ('Character and Design') requires all applicants to demonstrate that development is, *inter alia*, of high-quality design and layout; protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area; creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible; and optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.

Policy DP12 ('Protection and Enhancement of Countryside') states that development will be permitted in the countryside provided it is supported by a specific policy reference elsewhere in the Development Plan.

Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022)

Policy SA34 ('Existing Employment Sites') protects the Site for employment uses. It states that redevelopment for employment use within the boundary of Existing Employment Sites will be supported where it does not result in the overall loss of employment floorspace.

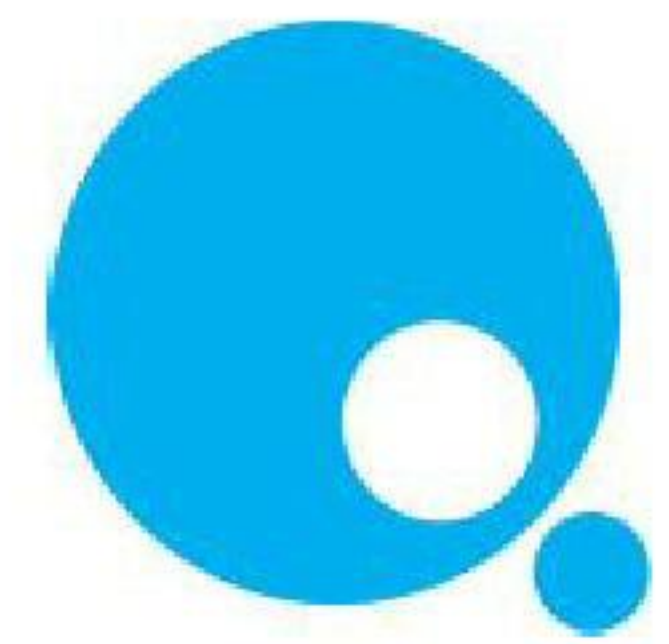
Hurstpierpoint Sayers Common Parish 2031 Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015)

Policy Employment Hurst E1 ('Business Park') states that land at Goddards Green will be safeguarded for high-quality employment development.

Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan (2021 – 2039) (Regulation 19)

Emerging Policy DPE1 ('Sustainable Economic Development') states that sustainable economic development will be achieved by, *inter alia*, encouraging high value employment development of appropriate land and premises to meet the needs of 21st century businesses; and supporting existing businesses and allowing them room to expand.



Emerging Policy DPE2 ('Existing Employment Sites') protects the Site for employment uses. It states that redevelopment and intensification for employment use within the boundary of Existing Employment Sites will be supported where it does not result in the overall loss of employment floorspace.

Emerging Policy DPB1 ('Character and Design') requires all applicants to demonstrate that development is, *inter alia*, sensitive to the countryside including the topography; incorporates well integrated parking and servicing areas; optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

At the heart of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 refers to the overarching objectives for achieving sustainable development including the economic objective which seeks to:

“to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;”

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved 'without delay'.

The NPPF affords significant weight on the need for the planning system to support economic growth. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that 'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.'

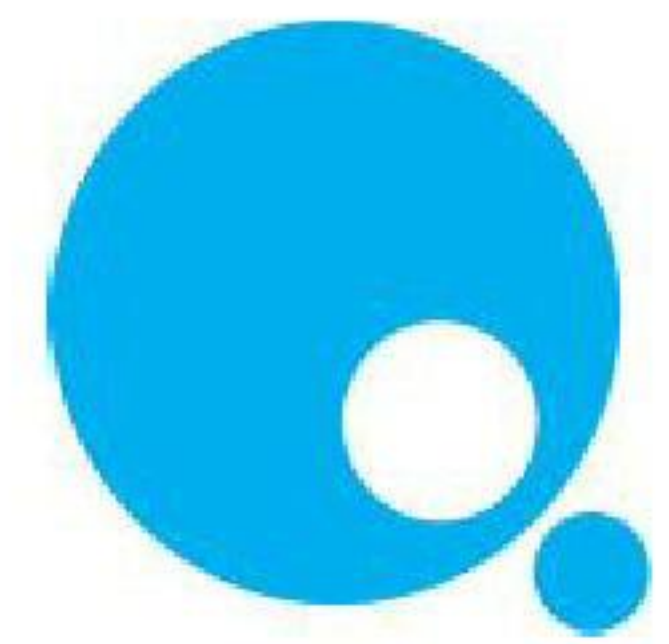
The government's growth agenda specifically supports the delivery of sustainable economic development, particularly paragraph 86(a) of the revised NPPF advises LPAs to pursue development:

“which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth.”

The proposals are considered against these policies below.

7 Planning Considerations

Planning permission is sought for operational development comprising reconfiguration of the yard only. There is no change to the use of the site which is to remain as a builders' merchant (*sui generis*) and, in light of this, the application does not raise any matters of principle.



The proposal only seeks to reconfigure the storage layout and HGV servicing area, and as such does not give rise to any highways concerns. The key development management consideration therefore relate to matters of design, amenity and highways.

Policy DP26 is the key policy of relevance regarding the design of the proposed development. Crucially, the area is of industrial and commercial character, and there are no noise or visually sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity. The Site will continue to contribute positively to the Existing Employment Area and secure its long-term occupation. The 'levelling-up' of the site is wholly supported by Policies DP1 and SA34 and Emerging Policy DPE2, all of which promote the redevelopment and intensification of existing employment sites.

In terms of yard layout, the ability to store goods externally is a pre-requisite for any Jewson's builders' merchant, as is currently the case on Site. The enclosed proposal simply seeks to reconfigure and regularise these areas following the demolition of the former sawmill, establishing areas for the storage of goods up to a height of seven metres.

The reconfigured yard layout gives the operator the degree of flexibility required, as an essential feature of a builders' merchant utilised by customers looking for available materials to take to construction sites in and around Goddard's Green. The format of these areas does not impede the circulation of vehicles on site and creates additional space for the manoeuvring of HGVs.

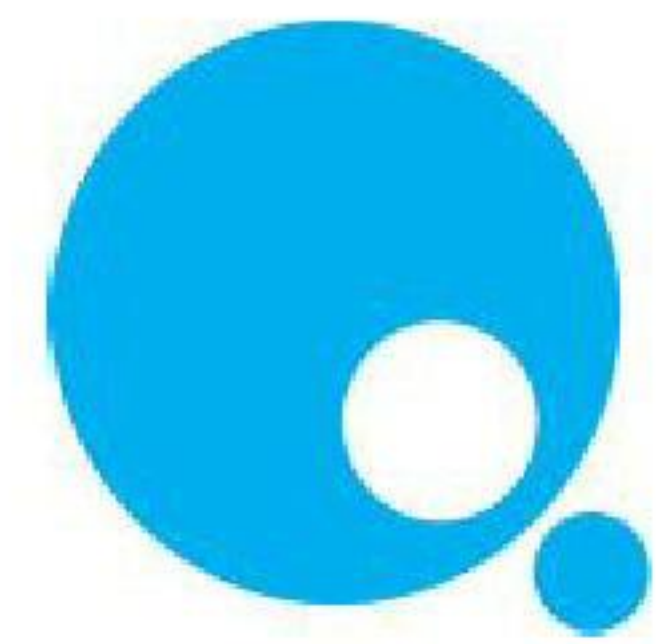
Whilst the external storage areas are situated across the Site, the storage of goods is an existing arrangement that will be rationalised by the proposed development. As a result, it is considered that there will be no impact on visual amenity from adjoining sites, particularly given the established industrial function of the surrounding area. Further, there are no sensitive noise receptors nearby and the site is bound by dense planting and similar commercial uses, therefore raising no concern regarding acoustic or visual amenity.

With regard to highways, the changes can only be viewed positively, in so far as they create a large HGV servicing area centrally within the storage yard. HGV will be able to enter and exit the branch in forward gear, and customer vehicles will continue to be accommodated on the site, without any determinant to highway safety.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is wholly acceptable from a design, amenity and highways perspective in accordance with Policies DP1, DP26, SA34 and emerging policies DPE1 and DPE2.

8 Conclusion

We are instructed by our client, STARK Building Materials UK Ltd, to submit the enclosed full planning application for the reconfiguration of the existing Jewson branch at Bensley Saw Mill, Cuckfield Rd, Goddards Green, Hassocks BN6 9LG.



The proposal raises no matters of principle and all relevant development management considerations have been assessed and have been found to be acceptable without the need for mitigation. The proposal gives rise to no design, amenity or highways concerns and will bring planning benefits including future-proofing existing employment land. Accordingly, we conclude that the development accords with the Development Plan and is offered full NPPF support given the weight afforded to economic growth.

We trust the enclosed information is sufficient to ensure that the application is validated and subsequently registered, though if you require any additional information or clarity on any point, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Rainbird
Senior Director

Encs.

cc. STARK Building Materials UK Ltd