

Planning Services
Development Management
Planning Division
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

23rd June 2025

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: SECTION 73 APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL OF CONDITION 8 ATTACHED TO BH/205/84 AT ASHWYN BUSINESS CENTRE, SHEDDINGDEAN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MARCHANTS WAY, BURGESS HILL, WEST SUSSEX.

This covering letter is submitted on behalf of Camper Sales Ltd (previously known as VW Camper Sales Ltd) in support of an application made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to remove Condition 8 attached to planning permission reference BH/205/84. This permission, granted on 25th October 1984, allowed for the erection of 10 starter industrial units at plot 1 Sheddingdean Small Industries Centre, London Road, Burgess Hill.

Introduction and Background

Camper Sales Limited is a small but very well-regarded local business that has grown steadily over the past 20 years to gain a solid reputation in the niche market of camper van sales. They have been located on the Sheddingdean estate since March 2008 and have established themselves within Unit G (being in unit K previously) on the estate. Due to their organic growth over the past years, they wish to formally occupy additional units within the Ashwyn Business Centre located nearby to their primary sales unit.

The occupation of these additional units has already occurred; Camper Sales Ltd occupies units 7-10. See below for the dates and order of occupation.

- Units 9 & 10 – 28th Feb 2020
- Unit 8 – 30th Nov 2023
- Unit 7 – 08th Jan 2025

In the process of buying the freehold of the property the applicant has been asked by the District Council solicitor to address the historical planning condition relating to the occupation of the units. Condition 8 attached to the original planning permission restricts the occupation of the units to single businesses. It is therefore the intention of the applicant to remove this condition allowing for the occupation of more than one unit by a single business.

Location

The application site is located on the Sheddingdean Industrial Estate on Marchants Way to the east of London Road.



Image of the Ashwyn Business Centre

The Ashwyn Business Centre is a single storey unit which was originally constructed in the 1980s. Units 7-10 were previously occupied by Heat Mat (underfloor heating company) since at least 2009.



The unit is a steel frame building with brick and profile clad elevations and a steel span clad roof. It contains 10 units in total some inclusive of mezzanine floors and ancillary office space. The application site is enclosed by a secure perimeter fence and includes several parking spaces to the front and side of the building.

The building is not listed or locally listed and is not located within a conservation area.

Planning History

A search of the Council's online planning history has been undertaken and revealed the following applications on site:

BH/205/84, Plot 1 Sheddingdean Small Industries Centre London Road Burgess Hill West Sussex - ERECTION OF 10 STARTER INDUSTRIAL UNITS.

BH/205/84/AP1, Plot 1 Sheddingdean Small Industries Centre London Road Burgess Hill West Sussex - AMENDED PLANS: ERECTION OF 10 STARTER INDUSTRIAL UNITS. AMENDED PLANS SHOWING: Path and kerb alterations.

BH/205/84/AP2, Ashwyn Business Centre Marchants Way Plot 1 Sheddingdean Small Industries Centre London Road Burgess Hill West Sussex - AMENDED PLANS: ERECTION OF 10 STARTER INDUSTRIAL UNITS. AMENDED PLANS SHOWING: Reversed one-way traffic system.

BH/184/85, Site 1 Sheddingdean Industrial Estate Burgess Hill - 1 NO NON-ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN.

BH/040/94, Unit 7 Marchants Way Burgess Hill West Sussex RH15 8QY - FITTING OF TWO WINDOWS INTO BRICK PANEL OF EXISTING BUILDING FRONTAGE.

08/01972/FUL, Units 1-10 Ashwyn Business Centre Marchants Way Burgess Hill West Sussex RH15 8QY - To erect a 2m triple point palisade fencing, with two leaf matching access gates across both access to Ashwyn Business Centre.

Condition 8

Condition 8 attached to BH/205/84 is set out below:

“Except with prior consent in writing of the local planning authority, no more than one factory unit having a floor area of 150 square metres or less shall be occupied at any one time by any one firm or subsidiary thereof

Reason: in order to maintain the availability of small units as starter factories in accordance with Structure Plan policy and the policies contained in the Burgess Hill District Plan”

Planning Policy

The relevant planning policies are listed below. The condition above does not refer to any particular policies within the reasoning, only referencing the relevant Local Plan and Structure Plan at the time. The policy documents noted in the condition above are no longer relevant and are outdated by way of the currently adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031). Relevant policies within this plan and the draft Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039) are listed below.

Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031)

DP1 - Sustainable Economic Development

Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039)

DPE1 (3) - Sustainable Economic Development - Sustainable economic development will be achieved by, “3. Supporting existing businesses and allowing them room to expand.”

DPE2 - Existing Employment Sites - Intensification Proposals for intensification within the boundary of Existing Employment Sites will be

supported providing it is in accordance with other development plan and national policies.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

NPPF Paragraph 85 states “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.”.

Planning Considerations

The applied condition was based on a local plan that has long since been deleted. Currently adopted Policy DP1 places strong emphasis on supporting existing businesses and enabling them to grow as a central pillar of sustainable economic development in Mid Sussex. Recognising that thriving local enterprises are essential to the health of the district’s economy, the policy seeks to create the conditions in which businesses can remain viable and expand over time.

This includes permitting the intensification, conversion, redevelopment or extension of existing employment premises, where such proposals are in accordance with other relevant policies in the District Plan. The policy also protects existing employment land and premises from being lost to alternative uses, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that continued employment use is unviable, or that the benefits of an alternative use would outweigh the loss. DP1 therefore provides a supportive framework that allows existing businesses the space, flexibility, and resources they need to expand and contribute to a balanced and sustainable local economy.

Policy DP1 specifically states that effective use of employment land and premises will be made by “Permitting appropriate intensification, conversion, redevelopment and/ or extension for employment uses providing it is in accordance with other policies in the Plan”. There are no other Policies within

the plan that seek to retain units for single businesses, the current plan therefore explicitly supports expansion of existing businesses.

The expansion of Camper Sales Ltd does not result in the loss of any employment floorspace and is therefore compliant with this aspect of the policy.

Moreover, the previous tenants (Heat Mats) had already occupied multiple units (7-10) since at least 2009. Camper Sales Ltd has occupied the units in a similar manner and this has not resulted in individual businesses being displaced. Camper Sales Ltd remains a small and local business in any event.

In summary the removal of condition 8 pertaining to planning permission BH/205/84 is supported by current policies in the Mid Sussex District Plan and the NPPF. All current policies support local businesses and their abilities to expand reinforcing that barriers that restrict growth should be removed.

The ability for smaller business to occupy starter units has not faltered in Mid Sussex. There are a number of new developments taking place that include options for starter units such as the Panattoni Park in north west Burgess Hill and alternative existing units in the Victoria Business Centre and others within the Sheddingdean estate. The removal of Condition 8 would therefore not negatively impact the market for smaller units within the locality.

Summary

This application seeks the removal of Condition 8 from planning permission BH/205/84, which restricts the occupation of industrial units to a single 150 sqm unit per business. The applicant, Camper Sales Ltd, a long-established and locally rooted business, has expanded organically since 2008 and now occupies Units 7-10 at Ashwyn Business Centre, having gradually taken on these units between 2020 and 2025.

The condition in question is based on outdated planning policies that have since been superseded by the current Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031)

and the paused 2021-2039 version, both of which prioritise sustainable economic development and the support of existing businesses seeking to grow.

Policy DP1 encourages the intensification and efficient use of employment land and premises, explicitly supporting expansion where compatible with other policies. Policy DPE2 also supports intensification within existing employment sites. The NPPF similarly gives significant weight to enabling local business growth and productivity.

The occupation of the Ashwyn Business Centre by Camper Sales Ltd does not displace other businesses nor reduce employment space; instead, it represents a similar continuation of a single-user occupancy pattern established by the previous occupant, Heat Mat. The change reflects a natural business evolution, rather than speculative development or the intrusion of a large-scale operator. Moreover, the availability of alternative starter units elsewhere in the district ensures that opportunities for small businesses remain unaffected.

In conclusion, the removal of Condition 8 is fully aligned with current national and local planning policy, which prioritises economic resilience, flexibility, and the growth of local enterprises. The condition is now outdated and no longer justified. Its removal will enable Camper Sales Ltd to regularise its continued use of the premises without compromising the broader availability of starter units. We therefore respectfully request that the condition be removed.

If you require any further information please contact Paul Burgess paul.burgess@lewisplanning.co.uk or Tobias Deacon toby.deacon@lewisplanning.co.uk at Lewis & Co Planning

Yours faithfully,
Lewis & Co Planning
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