

## Planning Statement

Change of use from B8 (storage) to E (g)(i)

The Store, Goods Yard, Nightingale Road, Horsham

Prepared by

**WPS Planning**

Planning Statement  
The Store



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| Prepared by:    | Doug Wright |
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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application at The Store, The Goods Yard, Nightingale Road, Horsham seeking planning permission for the change of use of the existing building from B8 (Storage & Distribution) to Office Use (Use Class E(g)(i)).
- 1.2 The proposal relates solely to a change of use, with no operational development, no external alterations, and no increase in built footprint or height. The intention is to bring the building back into productive use by providing a small, modern, flexible office unit suitable for a local business within the urban area of Horsham.
- 1.3 This Statement sets out the site context, planning history, details of the proposal, relevant planning policy, and an expanded planning assessment based on the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## **2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA**

- 2.1 The site is located within The Goods Yard, a small cluster of commercial units on Nightingale Road, Horsham. The immediate context comprises a mix of light industrial units, workshops, small offices, and storage facilities. The wider area includes residential dwellings along Nightingale Road, while the site itself is well screened and accessed from the existing commercial yard entrance.
- 2.2 The application building is currently occupied by BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd, who use the premises for storage in connection with their wider operations. BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd also occupy a larger neighbouring unit within The Goods Yard, and the current building functions as secondary overspill storage to support their roofing business. The building is modest in scale, single-storey, and well integrated into the commercial yard.

- 2.3 The site lies within the built-up area of Horsham, where development is guided by Policy 3 of the HDPF and where the principle of re-use and intensification is strongly supported.

### **3.0 PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 The wider Goods Yard has historically been used for a range of commercial activities, including storage, workshops, roofing-related business operations, and small-scale employment uses. The current building has been used by BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd for B8 storage, in association with their primary, larger unit within the same yard.
- 3.2 There is no relevant planning history that constrains the proposed change of use from storage to office accommodation.

### **4.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use from B8 Storage to Office Use (Use Class E(g)(i))
- 4.2 The existing building is currently used for storage purposes by BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd, who maintain a larger operational unit immediately adjacent. The smaller unit subject to this application represents ancillary storage space to the main roofing business, and its proposed re-purposing to office use provides an opportunity to optimise the site and improve the commercial offer within The Goods Yard.
- 4.3 The proposal would include re-instating a blocked-up door on the northern side elevation and change the rear elevation door to a window to match the existing windows. It is also proposed to install an external insulation system and then finish with a white render. There would be no changes to access arrangements, and no increase in servicing requirements. The building will be internally fitted to provide a small office space suitable for one or more local businesses.

- 4.4 The proposed change of use represents a qualitative uplift in employment floorspace and delivers modern business accommodation within an already established commercial cluster.

## **5.0 PLANNING POLICY**

### **National Planning Policy**

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this should run through both plan-making and decision-taking. In terms of the determination of planning applications this should mean the approval of developments that accord with the development plan without delay, and that where the development plan is silent or relevant policies are out of date, that permission be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or policies of the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Sustainable development is seen within the NPPF as having three roles, namely an economic, social and environmental role which should be a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.
- 5.3 The following sections within the NPPF are important factors in the assessment of the proposal:
- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
  - Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
  - Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
  - Section 11 – Making effective use of land
  - Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

### **Local Plan**

5.4 In terms of the local planning policy context for the Application Site, the adopted Development Plan for the Horsham District is composed of the following relevant documents:

- Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) – Adopted November 2015.
  - Policy 1 - Sustainable Development
  - Policy 3 – Development Hierarchy
  - Policy 7 – Economic Growth
  - Policy 9 – Employment Development
  - Policy 24 – Environmental Protection
  - Policy 32 – The Quality of New Development
  - Policy 33 – Development Principles
  - Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
  - Policy 41 - Parking
  
- Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)
  - Policy 1 - Sustainable Development
  - Policy 2 – Development Hierarchy
  - Policy 19 - Development Quality
  - Policy 20 – Development Principles
  - Policy 24 – Sustainable Transport
  - Policy 25 – Parking
  - Policy 29 – New Employment
  - Policy 30 – Enhancing Existing Employment

## 6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### Principle of Development

6.1 HDPF Policy 3 (Development Hierarchy) establishes Horsham as a Tier 1 settlement where sustainable development and redevelopment of existing sites

is actively encouraged. Policy 7 (Economic Growth) seeks to support employment uses that strengthen the local economy, while Policy 9 (Employment Development) supports proposals that expand, regenerate, or intensify employment floorspace.

- 6.2 The application site is located within the defined built-up area of Horsham, the primary settlement for employment, services, and infrastructure within the District. As such, it represents an optimal location for the re-use and enhancement of existing commercial floorspace.
- 6.3 The proposal seeks to convert an existing, established B8 storage building, currently used by BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd as ancillary storage to their main neighbouring unit, into a small office unit under Use Class E(g)(i). This change of use represents a more efficient and productive use of land, aligning fully with the strategic objective of directing economic development to sustainable, accessible locations.
- 6.4 Employment floorspace within built-up areas is considered a valuable resource. Underutilised or low-intensity uses, such as small-scale storage buildings, can often be upgraded to deliver more meaningful employment benefits. This is exactly the situation here: the unit currently functions as overspill storage, but can be repurposed to create modern, flexible office space suitable for SMEs, start-ups, or professional services. Such uses make a greater contribution to local employment density and commercial diversity.
- 6.5 The Goods Yard is already a recognised business environment with mixed commercial character. The introduction of office use complements and enhances this context by diversifying the types of employment activity on offer, without introducing any conflict with existing users.
- 6.6 This proposal contributes positively to the vitality and economic competitiveness of Horsham, responds to local demand for small office units, and ensures that valuable employment land continues to function in a dynamic and beneficial manner.

- 6.7 Therefore, the principle of development is strongly supported by both the HDPF and NPPF and weighs significantly in favour of granting planning permission.

### **Economic Considerations**

- 6.8 HDPF Policy 7 (Economic Growth) requires new development to broaden the economic base, meet business needs, and maintain local employment opportunities. Policy 9 (Employment Development) supports the redevelopment, intensification, or change of use of existing commercial sites where this improves the District's employment offer. The NPPF (paragraph 82) calls for planning decisions to support innovation, flexibility, and productivity, including by enabling the supply of small-scale and flexible workspace.
- 6.9 The shift from B8 storage to office use represents a substantial qualitative uplift in employment potential. Storage units typically provide extremely low employment density, often accommodating only occasional users or relying on irregular vehicle-based activity. In contrast, office uses can support significantly higher employment numbers per square metre, making far more efficient use of the existing built form.
- 6.10 This proposal will introduce a form of employment that is aligned with modern working patterns, particularly small offices for professional services, consultants, online businesses, or local firms requiring administrative space. There is strong, continued demand for such spaces across Horsham District, driven by the growth of small businesses and remote-working companies seeking satellite bases.
- 6.11 The Goods Yard is an established cluster of commercial premises with existing utility infrastructure, on-site parking, and established access arrangements. The introduction of E(g)(i) office use adds further economic diversity and creates opportunities for shared business activity, collaboration, and mutual service

support within the cluster. Such diversification strengthens the commercial resilience of the area and supports the Council's wider employment strategy.

- 6.12 Furthermore, the re-use of this building enables BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd, the current occupier and a local employer, to consolidate their operations within their larger neighbouring unit. This supports the growth and operational efficiency of an existing Horsham business, aligning directly with the aims of Policies 7 and 9 to retain and support local employers.
- 6.13 The proposal therefore delivers clear economic benefits, optimises employment land, and meets the Council's aims for delivering flexible and modern employment spaces.

### **Design, Layout & Visual Impact**

- 6.14 HDPF Policies 32 (Design) and 33 (Development Principles) require that development should be well-designed, reinforce local character, and maintain a high-quality environment. NPPF paragraph 135 emphasises the importance of visually attractive development, appropriate scale, and sensitively designed proposals, including changes of use.
- 6.15 The proposal comprises the reinstatement of a previously blocked doorway on the northern side elevation, along with the alteration of the existing rear elevation door to a window designed to match the existing fenestration. An external insulation system will be installed across the building and finished with a white render, improving both thermal performance and external appearance.
- 6.16 No amendments are proposed to the existing access arrangements, and the development would not result in any additional servicing requirements. Internally, the building will be fitted out to create a small, flexible office space capable of accommodating one or more local businesses.

- 6.17 The Goods Yard has a utilitarian, commercial character, comprising a mix of light industrial units, workshops, and small employment buildings. The existing building is modest, low-profile, and entirely consistent with this setting. Its conversion to office use has no visual or spatial implications, as the change is wholly internal.
- 6.18 Because the building remains unchanged externally, the development cannot be considered to introduce any form of visual harm or character shift. The existing building already forms part of the established business yard, and its role within that context will remain visually identical.
- 6.19 The proposal therefore meets the highest level of compliance with Policies 32 and 33, as it delivers an enhanced employment use without any impact on design, visual character, or landscape context.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 6.20 HDPF Policy 33 (development principles) seeks to prevent development from having unacceptable impacts on the amenities of nearby residents or businesses. Issues include noise, disturbance, traffic generation, and other environmental effects.
- 6.21 The existing B8 use, as storage for BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd, has the potential for intermittent but sometimes noisy activity, including the movement of tools, roofing materials, and commercial vehicles. Although such activity is not excessive, storage uses inherently create operational patterns that can involve early morning or unpredictable vehicle-based movements.
- 6.22 The proposed office use represents a significant intensification in the quality of amenity compared to the existing storage use. Office uses are generally low-noise, predictable, and confined to standard business hours, significantly reducing the potential for disruption to nearby residential properties along Nightingale Road.

- 6.23 As there are no external alterations, no roof plant, and no late-night or intensive commercial activities associated with E(g)(i) office use, the proposal does not introduce any form of amenity impact.

### **Highway Safety, Parking & Access**

- 6.24 HDPF Policy 40 (Sustainable Transport) encourages development that reduces reliance on the private car and supports access by public transport, walking, and cycling. Policy 41 (Parking) requires appropriate parking provision based on site-specific circumstances.
- 6.25 The Goods Yard benefits from an existing, well-established commercial access point, serving multiple employment units. The proposed change of use will not alter the access arrangements in any way.
- 6.26 Traffic generation associated with office use is typically lower and more predictable than that associated with storage uses. B8 uses, particularly those supporting a roofing business, often require delivery vans, trade vehicles, material transport, and occasional HGV visits. Office use, by comparison, usually supports small numbers of staff and visitors arriving in standard cars, and often with reduced vehicular activity due to modern hybrid working patterns.
- 6.27 Parking within the Goods Yard is already sufficient to serve the existing and proposed uses. The office use will not exceed the parking demand typically generated by the previous storage activity, and the site's sustainable location, walking distance to Horsham Station, bus routes, and Horsham town centre, makes it an ideal location for non-car travel.
- 6.28 There is no conflict with Policies 40 or 41, and the proposal will not result in any material harm to highway efficiency or safety.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed change of use from B8 Storage to Office Use (Use Class E(g)(i)) at *The Store, The Goods Yard, Nightingale Road, Horsham* represents a sustainable, policy-compliant, and beneficial form of development that aligns closely with the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The proposal is entirely consistent with the strategic approach to development within built-up areas and demonstrates clear economic, design, amenity and environmental benefits.
- 7.2 The site's location within the built-up area of Horsham ensures that the proposal accords directly with HDPF Policy 3 (Development Hierarchy), which encourages appropriate development inside established settlement boundaries. The proposal makes efficient and productive use of a modest commercial building within an existing employment cluster, supporting the Council's aim of concentrating development in the District's most sustainable locations. The re-use of a previously developed building also satisfies Policy 1 (Sustainable Development), reflecting a responsible approach to land optimisation and urban regeneration.
- 7.3 The proposed office use represents a clear uplift in employment value compared to the existing low-intensity B8 storage function. The transition from ancillary storage (currently supporting BJN Roofing (Contractors) Ltd) to a versatile office space will increase employment density and provide opportunities for local businesses, start-ups or SMEs. This approach fully aligns with HDPF Policies 7 (Economic Growth) and 9 (Employment Development), which support the modernisation, improvement, and intensification of employment premises to reflect the needs of a growing local economy. The proposal therefore contributes positively to the District's economic resilience and workplace offer.
- 7.4 The change of use results in no external alterations, ensuring full compliance with HDPF Policies 32 (Design) and 33 (Development Principles). The existing building already sits comfortably within The Goods Yard, and its unchanged appearance ensures that the character, scale and visual qualities of the area

remain entirely unaffected. The proposal therefore preserves the established commercial identity of the locality and maintains the visual coherence of the built environment.

- 7.5 The development will not result in any harmful impact on residential or neighbouring business amenity. Office use is inherently quieter, more predictable, and less intrusive than B8 storage, which may involve more variable deliveries, the movement of materials, or ad-hoc operational activity. The proposed use is therefore materially better for amenity and aligns with HDPF Policy 24 (Environmental Protection), which seeks to protect the living environment from noise, disturbance, and unacceptable impacts. The proposal establishes a calmer, controlled, and more predictable pattern of occupation.
- 7.6 The development raises no concerns in relation to access, parking, or transport impacts. The Goods Yard benefits from established vehicular access and on-site parking arrangements, and office uses typically generate fewer and more regular movements than storage operations. This aligns with HDPF Policies 40 (Sustainable Transport) and 41 (Parking), which require proposals to demonstrate safe access, proportionate parking provision, and support for sustainable travel where possible. Given the site's proximity to Horsham Station, bus routes and pedestrian connections, the location is exceptionally well suited to small-scale office use.
- 7.7 Finally, the proposal is environmentally sustainable by virtue of re-using an existing commercial building without the need for demolition or new construction. This results in reduced embodied carbon and low environmental impact, fully supporting the principles of HDPF Policy 24 (Environmental Protection) and national objectives relating to sustainable development. There are no emissions, contamination risks, or harmful operational effects associated with the proposed office activity.
- 7.8 In summary, these considerations clearly demonstrate that the proposal is a sustainable, compliant, and beneficial form of development. It meets the aims of the HDPF, supports local economic growth, protects amenity, maintains local

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### The Store

character, and ensures efficient use of land in a highly accessible location. For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that planning permission should be granted.