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## Apple supplier Laird downgraded by JP Morgan Cazenove

The mid-cap team at JP Morgan Cazenove got its teeth stuck into Laird plc (LON:LRD), which provides components for the iPhone, after its warning on Wednesday.

It has gone to 'neutral' from 'outperform' on the stock and lowered its pre-tax profit forecast by 37% and 27% for this year and next.

Laird, it seems, was the canary in the coal mine for the FTSE 250 - host to most of our home-grown talent.

Earlier, we had earnings alerts from metal bashers Keller (LON:KLR) and Senior (LON:SNR), whose shares took a beating, while security specialist NCC Group (LON:NCC) also sounded the alarm.

There was research on the trio, although all of it was simply commentary. The red ink will likely flow after the analysts speak to management later on Thursday.

Aggreko plc (LON:AGK), which is one of the bigger companies listed on the 250, was on the receiving end of a downgrade as Credit Suisse cut its rating to 'underperform' from 'neutral'.

It said last year's results from the provider of temporary generators were flattered by foreign exchange 'tailwinds'. It also cited competition concerns.

Sticking with the Swiss bank; it had good news for the staffing group SThree (LON:STHR). It has moved to 'outperform' from 'underperform' on the stock while lifting its price target to 285p from 240p.

It says Shree has been left behind during the recent rally of the sector.

Finally, there was a little support this morning for builders' merchant Travis Perkins (LON:TPK) after it guided down earnings slightly on Wednesday.

JP Morgan Cazenove repeated its 'overweight' stance on the stock, although it cut its price target 60p a share to £17.15.

That's still well ahead of the current price, which is bobbling along below £15. JPMC points out Travis is trading on a fairly cheap multiple of less than 12-times' forward earnings

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