

Planning and Building
Oaklands
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

18 September 2026

Submitted via planning portal: PP-15190337

Dear Officer,

Arden Grange, Albourne, BN6 9BJ
Application for Full Planning Permission

On behalf of our client, LKQ Electriq (hereafter ‘the Applicant’), please find enclosed an application seeking full planning permission for the following description of development at Arden Grange, Albourne. BN6 9BJ (hereafter ‘the site’).

“Change of use from Use Class B8 to Use Class B2”

In addition to this planning cover letter, this application is accompanied by the following plans and documents:

- Community Infrastructure Levy Form 1;
- Completed Planning Application Forms;
- Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Logika;
- Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Clarke Saunders;
- Suite of plans, prepared by Turner and Townsend; and
- Transport Statement, prepared by Rovia.

The application fee of £759.00 (inc. Planning Portal Fee) has been paid under separate cover.

The Site

The site comprises an industrial unit which is currently vacant, having formerly been occupied by Fed Ex. The site benefits from a 1,910.7sqm warehouse with an internal two storey ancillary office located within the building. There is also a large service yard and car park to the rear of the site. Please see an aerial view of the site set out below.



Figure 1: Aerial View of the Site

The site is not currently in operation and has been vacant since 2025, albeit the use class the unit operates under is Use Class B8 through the former use as a distribution unit.

Existing access into the site is taken from London Road (B2118). The access road enters the warehouse through an opening on the western elevation and following this leads to the service yard and car park to the rear of the site.

The Mid-Sussex District Plan (adopted March 2018) designates the site as being situated within a Local Gap and within the 'Protection and Enhancement of Countryside' area. The site is also situated within the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan Area, with the Neighbourhood Plan made in 2016. This does not include any further site designations.

The site does not comprise a Statutory Listed Building nor does it comprise a locally listed building. The closest listed building is the Grade II Listed Hillbrook House which is situated c.260m north of the site.

The surrounding area is characterised by a variety of uses, including residential dwellings and commercial uses. To the north, the site is bound by a kennels and a greenfield. To the east the site is bound by a greenfield, separated by dense vegetation and tree coverage with the A23 beyond this. To the south, the site is immediately bound by Culter's Brook with greenfields situated beyond this. To the west the site is immediately bound by a residential dwelling and kennels with the B2118.

Planning History

The following planning history has been highlighted at the application site following a review of the Council's Online Planning Register. The site has an extensive planning history, so given the longevity of the planning history, this is not reproduced within this application.

We would note there are no applications that relate to the use at the site. However, the following application at the adjacent Kennels is of relevance.

Arden Grange, London Road, Albourne, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9BJ

LPA REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	DECISION & DATE	COMMENT
09/02722/OUT	Outline Application for Demolition of Redundant Kennels and Catteries and Construction of 986 sq. m. Warehouse	Refused 17 th December 2009 Reason for Refusal: Lack of infrastructure to serve the development	The Officer's Report attached to this decision states that the Fed Ex Building is in use as a warehouse which is a B8 use.

Development Proposals

The proposed description of development is as follows:

“Change of use from Use Class B8 to Use Class B2”

This application seeks permission for a change of use of the vacant unit from Use Class B8 to Use Class B2.

We would note that the proposed development does not include any external alterations and the scope of this application relates to a change of use only.

Proposed Use

The site would be used by LKQ Electriq as a specialist high-voltage battery and electrical component testing and repair facility. They are relocating from their existing site from a neighbouring authority, bringing investment and jobs into the District.

The business is focused on the testing, repair and refurbishment of electric vehicle battery packs, high-voltage components, electrical motors, associated control units and related electrical systems. The operation is clean, workshop-based and technical in nature, with a strong focus on diagnostics, repair, sustainability and extending the life of expensive electrical assets rather than replacing them unnecessarily.

The proposed use would include:

- Inspection, testing and repair of high-voltage batteries and electrical components.
- Storage of batteries, components, tools, equipment and associated vehicles, including aviation-related applications where appropriate.
- Technical support and training for the wider repair sector.
- Support, testing and research and development relating to electrified aviation, UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), drones and airport-based electrical systems where commercially and technically appropriate.

Although the current core business is primarily automotive, the skills, equipment and processes used support high-voltage and electrified systems across multiple transport sectors, including automotive, aviation-related applications, UAVs, drones, marine and emerging future transport technologies.

The premises would not be operated as a general vehicle repair garage, bodyshop or high-volume customer-facing workshop. The B2 use would instead be a specialist technical repair, testing and support facility focused on high-voltage batteries and electrical components.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section outlines the Development Plan and material considerations which the Proposed Development will be assessed against.

The Development Plan for Mid Sussex District Council comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) Mid Sussex Site Allocations Document (2022) and the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan (2016).

The site is designated within the Local Plan as being situated within a Local Gap and a 'Protection and Enhancement of Countryside' area. According to the Environment Agency, the site is situated within Flood Zone 1, albeit an area of the rear service yard and car parking is at risk of surface water flooding.

This application will also be determined in accordance with material considerations. These include the Emerging Local Plan, National Planning Policy Framework (published August 2026), Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

The Emerging Local Plan is at examination stage and a consultation on the schedule of main modifications closed on 7th September 2026. Within the Emerging Local Plan, the site is designated as being situated within an area identified for 'Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside'.

Planning Assessment

Principle of Use

Policy DP1 sets out that existing employment land should be protected unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of its use or continued use for employment purposes. The proposed change of use from storage and distribution (B8) to general industrial (B2) retains the site in active employment use. Both use classes fall within the definition of employment use under the Use Classes Order, meaning the site continues to contribute to the local employment land provision in the District. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DP1 with no loss of employment land proposed and the change of use will bring a vacant site, back into active employment use.

Policy DP14 of the Local Plan sets out that, subject to no conflict with Policies DP12 and DP13 (assessed below), development for new small-scale economic development will be supported where it supports sustainable growth and utilises previously developed sites. Additionally, Policy DP1 (Sustainable Economic Development) sets out that the Council will promote a place which is attractive to a range of businesses where local enterprise thrives. The Council will do this via encouraging inward investment supporting businesses. LKQ Electriq are seeking to occupy a currently vacant unit on previously developed land that will bring 10 full-time jobs to the District. Therefore, the proposed development accords with the principles of this Policy through facilitating a new business locating into the District and supports sustainable economic growth.

The recently published revised NPPF (2026) has a clear overarching theme of supporting economic development and enables businesses to invest and drive the local economy. Policy E2 of the NPPF sets out that substantial weight should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development to allow businesses to invest. As set out above, the Applicant are moving their existing operations from a neighbouring Borough and the proposal will provide 10 full-time jobs. This will drive economic growth within the area and thus substantial weight should be given to the proposal, especially given the site is currently vacant.

Further to this Policy E4 of the NPPF sets out that in rural areas sustainable growth should be supported through the conversion of existing buildings and utilise previously developed land. This change of use strongly complies with this policy.

The site is designated as being situated within an 'Area of Protection and Enhancement of Countryside'. Policy DP12 sets out that the Countryside will be protected and development will only be permitted where it is necessary for agricultural purposes or is supported by a specific policy in the Development Plan. The proposed development will utilise an existing employment building with no external amendments proposed, therefore the proposals do not provide any greater impact than the existing development, and will not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area.

The site is also situated within a Local Gap, which is to prevent the coalescence of Albourne and Hurstpierpoint. The proposed development does not result in coalescence as it seeks a change of use of an existing building and there is no additional built form proposed. This means there is no encroachment into the Local Gap and, as such, the development is in accordance with Local Plan Policy DP13 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy ALC3.

Design

Policy DP26 (Character and Design) sets out that all developments should be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the surrounding area. As set out, the proposed development does not seek to make external alterations and is therefore acceptable in design terms, with this not forming a consideration in the determination of the application.

Transport

Policy DP21 states that development should support a high quality transport network through being sustainably located, provide adequate car / cycle parking and mitigate any impacts on the highway. A Transport Statement accompanies this submission which assesses the transport impact of the development.

The Transport Statement concludes that the site is located in a well-connected location that benefits from nearby bus stops and footways connecting the site to Albourne. In terms of the trip generation impact, the proposed impact is deemed to be negligible, albeit a minor net increase in trips during peak hours. However, across a day the number of trips is lower than a B8 use as a B2 use tends to align more closely with conventional working-day patterns, concentrating trips within the AM and PM peak periods and resulting in higher peak-hour trip generation despite lower daily totals. As such, it is considered this would not have a severe impact on the local highway network, with regard to the tests within the NPPF. Additionally, we would note the proposed development complies with the relevant parking standards. As such, the proposal complies with the provisions of the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

Amenity

A key consideration associated with this application is the noise impact. As such a noise impact assessment has been prepared and accompanied by this submission.

Policy DP29 sets out that development will not be deemed acceptable where it will have an adverse impact on noise sensitive uses. It states that proposals should be designed to minimise noise impacts and incorporate noise attenuation measures where necessary.

A noise assessment accompanies this submission which sets out that proposal will result in a low impact in terms of noise and there is a low likelihood of an adverse impact. As such, the proposed development accords with Local Plan Policy DP29.

Flood Risk

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1, although part of the rear service yard is situated within an area at risk from Surface Water Flooding. Policy DP41 states that developments should not increase flooding elsewhere and should ensure it is safe for the lifetime of the development. This application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which sets out the proposed development is acceptable in flood risk terms.

Biodiversity

Policy DP38 states that biodiversity shall be protected and enhanced by ensuring there is no net loss of biodiversity, minimise habitat fragmentation and avoid damage to protected sites. The proposed development does not include any external alterations and is solely applicable to the change of use, and therefore does not result in any loss of biodiversity or cause habitat fragmentation. Given there will be no amendment to the existing situation on site the proposed development accords with the provisions of this policy, which is one of those specifically referred to within Policy DP12.

In terms of the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement, the proposed development meets the De Minimis exemption which is outlined in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 (as amended). This is because the application is solely for the change of use of the site, and the proposals do not meet the threshold of impacting more than 25sqm of non-priority on-site habitat or 5m of on-site linear habitats.

Conclusion

This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the site from Use Class B8 to Use Class B2. As demonstrated through this cover letter, the proposal accords with the provisions of the Development Plan and relevant material considerations. The applicant will deliver significant economic benefits to the District, which should be afforded substantial weight in the decision making of this application. The proposal will be a vacant site back into employment use, with a new employer in the district. As demonstrated, within the accompanying technical assessments, the proposed development is acceptable in noise, transport and flood risk terms.

The enclosed documentation supporting this application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref. PP-15190337).

We trust the above is sufficient to validate the application. If you have any queries regarding this application, please do not hesitate to contact Kelly Lippett on Kelly.lippett@cbre.com or me on 07901974788 / James.Tullett@cbre.com.

Yours faithfully,

James Tullett
Planner
CBRE Ltd