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Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands
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9th December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use or Development
Class E(g)(iii) light industrial use together with secondary Class E use of kart track and associated car parking at Unit 26, Panattoni Park, Gothard Green Way, Goddards Green

On behalf of my client, Austin Racing, I am applying for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use or Development (CLPUD) for the use of Unit 26 for Class E (g)(iii) light engineering, r&d and testing of parts on a track.

This letter provides information that in our opinion supports the grant of the CLPUD.

The application should be considered alongside the accompanying documents:

- Site Layout Plan
- Unit 26 – Floor Plan
- Photograph of Unit 26

Austin Racing - Background

Austin Racing has been Ltd since 2015. It specialises in exhaust component assembly for motorcycles. To support this, the business needs sufficient space for the assembly operation together with space for storage and packaging and administration. Since 2015, the business has expanded by 45% per annum. It has now outgrown its premises and requires more storage areas for stock and packaging along with a larger less cramped office and working areas.

Since 2015 Austin Racing has been given four grants by Locate East Sussex to help with its expansion and machinery requirements. 95% of the turnover is export throughout the world and Austin Racing is seen as being at the cutting edge of British engineering and design.

The business has been operating from a building at Downview Farm – under various temporary planning permissions (Reference LW/17/0735, LW/18/0825 and currently LW/20/0503).

The key operations taking place within the building are as follows;

- The assembly and packaging of motorbike exhaust systems, component fitting and polishing.
- Assembly work is limited to the exhaust systems only which ensures that no noisy machinery is required in the process.

It has been accepted by Lewes District Council that the current business operates within the Class E(g)(iii) (formerly B1) light industrial use in the grant of temporary planning permission outlined above.

There is no testing of the exhaust systems at Downview Farm. We are advised by the applicant that the only means of testing the exhaust systems that they install would be on a proper testing track which does not exist at Downview Farm or on surrounding land.

The proposed operation

Our client wishes to occupy Unit 26 of the Panattoni Park Industrial Estate granted planning permission for B1/ B2 and B8 use (now Class E, B2 and B8 use) under Permission Reference DM/19/2461. The primary use of the site will be for employment under E(g)(iii) for the same use that has been operating at Downview Farm. At Panattoni Park, Austin Racing will also assemble electric kart chassis to supplement the existing operations carried out at Downview Farm. This venture will bring approximately 30 jobs to the Burgess Hill area with scope for further expansion.

Our client also wishes to install a testing track within Unit 26 and wishes to test the electric kart chassis and performance parts on the proposed kart track within Austin Racing working hours. They also wish to operate the kart track outside of working hours running for 1 day per working week from 4pm to 9pm and weekends from 2pm to 10pm. These sessions will be 30 minute pre-booked sessions for 8 people.

The unit has a total internal floor area of approximately 28,000 square feet. The entire area will be utilised for E(g)(iii) light engineering, r&d and testing of parts on track. There will also be a canteen and office area.

The kart area will use approximately 18,500 square feet of this area - 2,500 square feet to sign on and use the canteen and viewing area. The kart track will utilise approximately 16,000 square feet of the total floorspace. The uses are set out in the attached floor plan.

The proposed unit number 26 as shown in the attached plan and photograph has 16 parking spaces currently delineated outside Unit 26. However, the large loading door area to the unit can be utilised for a staff parking area as these doors will not be in regular use. We estimate an additional 18 spaces can be organised here giving a total of 34 spaces which our client considers an ample amount to accommodate the current and proposed staff levels. In addition, the additional parking needed for the proposed track use which will operate outside normal working hours when the staff spaces are not required.

The primary use of the site will remain as E(g)(iii) light industrial and the kart track use will be an ancillary use operating on the reduced hours identified above.

The application

Our client submitted a request for pre-application advice and met with Mid Sussex District Council's Planning Officer on 18th November 2024 to discuss the proposed operation outlined above. This request included the potential extension of the mezzanine level however our client has subsequently decided not to pursue this option at present as feels he has sufficient floorspace to incorporate the proposed uses outlined.

The advice stated;

'I am of the opinion that the proposed use of the building would fall within Class B1(c) (now E(g) (iii)) with the kart track as an ancillary use provided this is being used to test parts produced on the site. However, this is subject to the industrial processes of the motorbike and electric kart parts being the main part of the business. If the leisure use of the kart track were to expand and operate for longer hours, a change of use application to sui generis would need to be submitted for consideration.'

Our client seeks certainty on this advice before proceeding with the occupation of the site hence this application for the Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use or Development.

Please make contact if you require any further information.

Yours faithfully

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