



From: Kathryn Welch
Sent: 29 June 2026 15:23
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: Highdown Garden Centre - Proposed Canopies

Please upload. Email from agent.

Thanks,

Kathryn Welch
Senior Planning Officer, Planning Department

Please note: My working hours are currently split between Development Management and ADC Engineers, which may result in extended response times. **Development Management:** Tuesdays and Thursdays **ADC Engineers:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

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From: Graeme Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 June 2026 18:15
To: Kathryn Welch <Kathryn.Welch@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Chris Primett <[REDACTED]> Luke Whitehall [REDACTED] George Lisher [REDACTED]
Subject: Highdown Garden Centre - Proposed Canopies

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Kathryn

The planning application for Highdown has been positively received by everyone and it would be a great shame if drainage continues to be the only stumbling block particularly when the scheme will without doubt offer massive betterment to the existing drainage of canopy and external sales, it has got to be in the public interest to agree a practical solution. We have answered the limited response to our last submission in the attached document where we have added your Engineer's last comments in red and ours in purple but I want us to try avoid the drainage becoming even more protracted so will summarise the most salient points where we are and hopefully you can get this last item over the line.

- Firstly, we are not sure whether your Engineer has received and reviewed all the information we have sent, since there are quite a lot of sections that have no comments and they are not referenced on page 2, but really want to concentrate on the crux below
- In response to our very detailed explanation of reuse of rainwater your engineer has requested that some reuse of rainwater should be incorporated and the only practical solution for us would be to introduce some water butts, and we would like to offer that as a fair compromise.
- We previously issued a lot of information about the ground conditions and reasoning why the attenuation is the only viable route including a borehole for the existing ground conditions .
- Please bear in mind that we have physically built on site and carried out 2 m deep Building Regulations Percolation test witnessed by our Site Manager and Client which completely failed. 2m depth being used for standard soakaways.
- As an established (1877)/very reputable commercial building contractor there is no way we would introduce attenuation unless it was the only way, the costs are considerable. Even now the volume required has nearly tripled to an incredibly high volume and offers enormous betterment which will aid the council's problem on Hangleton Lane but only if it gets built. Really think we need to consider what is reasonable and proportionate and whether going further places an undue and unfair financial burden on the scale of development. These canopies are for sales of more outdoor plants all year round and at the very heart of the business. Garden centres really need these canopies to protect plants, and it will truly look amazing once completed (Happy to send you a video of one we recently completed) and far better than the old fabric canopies.

- Our Chartered Engineer has reviewed the comments on revised drainage scheme and wondered again whether your Engineer has been given the full revised design package which addressed his initial concerns. The drained area is shown crossed hatched on the drawing. Design peak discharged is agreed. Both the flow rate calculations and the greenfield runoff rate have total impermeable area of 0.149ha so we do not understand where you have a mismatch. We enclose the same drawing confirming the area and the calculations again. As far as we are concerned, this revised scheme is compliant as produced by our Chartered Drainage Engineer
- As you appreciate the application is at the core of the business and in truth adds by its nature a lot to wider biodiversity and environmental improvements and it would be such a shame if drainage held it back. The project is also extremely time sensitive as it can only be built during the quieter period of plant sales i.e. from July so any more delays will prejudice the business and cause them loses at a time when labour heavy businesses are facing huge increased costs.
- Our last resort would be to ask that some drainage conditions be attached but we have given you a fully compliant scheme to ensure key timing of the project is not prejudiced, conditions on drainage would set us back a year with all those implications. There is also some comment that a condition could not be attached as a solution may not be technically possible, but that is clearly not the case here and assume that this is a generic note and the reason we submitted with the drainage proposal in the first place.

I would welcome a phone call to discuss your thoughts and answer any further questions. Please don't hesitate to call me

Kind regards

Kind regards

Graeme Jones (Joint Managing Director)

For Geo Hodges & Son Ltd

 [Redacted]

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