Our ref: HA/2011/111876/01-L01
Your ref: BE/81/10

Date: 03 August 2011

Arun District Council
Development Control
1, Arun Civic Centre Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

Dear Sir/Madam

SEASONAL POLYTUNNELS FOR SOFT FRUIT PRODUCTION (THIS APPLICATION IS THE SUBJECT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
LAND SOUTH OF GROVES FARM BERSTED

Thank you for consulting us on the above planning application.

Environment Agency Position
We consider that planning permission should only be granted to the proposed development as submitted if the following planning condition is imposed as set out below. Without this condition, the proposed development on this site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and we would wish to object to the application.

Condition
Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for the provision and management of a buffer zone alongside the watercourses shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and any subsequent amendments shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The scheme shall include:

- plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone
- details of any footpaths, fencing, lighting etc.

Reasons
Development that encroaches on watercourses has a potentially severe impact on their ecological value. This is contrary to government policy in Planning Policy Statement 1 and Planning Policy Statement 9 and to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Land alongside watercourses is particularly valuable for wildlife and it is essential this is protected. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive also stresses the importance of natural networks of linked corridors to allow movement of species between suitable

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habitats, and promote the expansion of biodiversity. Such networks may also help wildlife adapt to climate change.

The buffer zone needs to be a minimum of 3 metres wide measured from bank top for the whole extent of the site. Bank top is defined as the point at which the bank meets normal land levels. This zone should be without structures, hard standing, footpaths, fences or overhanging development such as balconies and should not include domestic gardens or formal landscaping. The buffer zone needs to be designed and managed to develop this natural character and left as a natural area for wildlife.

Planning Informative:
It is also noted that there is a small section of drainage ditch in the southern part of the site between grid references SU91224 01378. It is unclear from any of the plans whether this ditch will be impacted upon by the development. Please note that if it is proposed to culvert, infill, obstruct or divert a watercourse then under the terms of the 1991 Land Drainage Act (Section 23) the prior written consent of the Environment Agency will be required. It should be noted that there is a presumption against culverting unless it is required for access.

Advice: Flood Risk
Based on the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) I can confirm we have no objection to the means of surface water run off control.

Whilst the outfalls do not require land drainage consent we recommend they should be designed and constructed to ensure they do effect flows.

I trust that the above comments are satisfactory but if you require any further information please contact me.

Yours faithfully

Miss Catherine McLeod
Planning Liaison Officer

Direct dial 01903 703858
Direct e-mail PlanningSSD@environment-agency.gov.uk

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