

Daniel.Holmes

From: James lord [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 June 2026 19:19
To: Daniel.Holmes
Subject: DC/26/0185 | Regrading of land levels to form a hardstanding area associated with horticultural use. Response to concerns form James lord

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Dear Mr. Holmes,

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised regarding my retrospective planning application. I have carefully read the comments from third parties, and I would like to offer some clarifications—both for you and for them. While I’m not entirely certain which points strictly relate to planning policy, I will do my best to address each concern.

I shall list the points raised and provide an explanation for each:

1. The track was a dirt track—This is incorrect. The track was pre-existing and has been in place for approximately 40 years; its sub-base is predominantly sandstone.
2. Small tin turned large storage shed—This shed has also been present for about 40 years. It has only been maintained with similar materials after trees fell on it, making it unsafe.
3. Changes to a natural watercourse—Water continues to flow downhill to the southeast, as it always has. We did include a small ditch to channel water toward an existing ditch that leads to the Arun.
4. This is being developed for a builder’s yard—This is not correct. It remains a Christmas tree farm, as it has been for many years, though it became overgrown. Google Earth confirms this.
5. The hardstanding is not necessary—This is inaccurate. The ground is clay and becomes extremely muddy in winter; thus, a stable surface is required for safe parking and work.
6. The owner is a builder and stores machinery—While it is true I work in construction alongside farming, the machinery is mostly horticultural and for land prep. This does not relate directly to the hardstanding.
7. There is a caravan—Currently, a small mobile caravan is used as a welfare facility. It is not static accommodation and regularly moves between sites, including a larger planting site.
8. Flooding—While groundwater runs over the land from uphill properties, it does not flood. The water flow is as it has always been.

9. Small brick hut (2m by 3m)—This is incorrect. The hut is larger, though previously obscured by spruce trees. It also had a brick chimney I subsequently removed.
10. Boundary affected by earth—This is not correct. A deer fence, about 1 meter in from the boundary, has been installed, and all earthworks are entirely on my side.
11. Character and appearance—The hardstanding is mostly hidden from view, and I am actively improving the site. I have recently planted 1,800 new trees. I am working through each issue step by step—water supply is now a priority, as we currently rely on a well. It's important to note we were ordered by the government to remove the spruce trees due to the IPS beetle, and this was a costly and urgent process. In fact, Joe Court Forestry used my land to remove trees from a neighboring field (Colts Bushes), to prevent damage—this was done purely as a goodwill gesture.
12. Lorries and diggers moving late at night—This is not correct. The hardstanding was installed in November, when it gets dark early. This was a one-off occurrence, and access is typically by car or small van.
13. The entrance has been widened—This is not accurate. The entrance has always been between two mature trees, similar to Mulberry House.
14. Noise—No significant noise is generated.
15. Light—No light is generated
16. Tank visible—Yes, the irrigation tank is visible; it is a new addition, but it's only been on site a few weeks and is not in its final position yet.
17. Comments from 18 Speedwell Way, Horsham—These statements are purely speculative and incorrect. I am unsure why someone so far away would comment, as the land is not accessed daily.
18. 20 Bluebell Close, Horsham—These claims are also incorrect, such as the creation of a new road. The track has served the woodland hut for 40 years, as confirmed by Google Earth. When enforcement investigated, it was easily disproved that we were illegally accessing the highway.
19. Mud on highway—This is not correct. Since installing the hardstanding, we avoid mud entirely, as the tires no longer come into contact with it.
20. Quad track—This is incorrect. There is no quad track on the land.
21. The owner has ignored multiple planning requirements—This is not correct. I have respected the planning process. It was my understanding that, under permitted development rights, the hardstanding was allowed, given that the total farm is about 19 acres. However, when concerns were raised, enforcement requested a full application, which I submitted promptly, following the SPHN and completing the necessary surveys.

I am a law-abiding, local family man who deeply respects the planning system. On a personal note, I was very upset to have to remove the trees—this was not my choice, and I hope neighbours do not hold this against me. I am doing everything I can to restore the land responsibly.

Thank you again for your time and careful consideration.

Kind regards,
James Lord