

Myriad Organics by Order  
22 Corve Street  
Ludlow  
SY8 1DA

12<sup>th</sup> January 2010

To whom it may concern

RE APPEAL REF APP/L3245/A/09/2117970/NWF

I am writing in support of the proposed Karuna polytunnel which is the subject of the above appeal.

For the past 14+ years I have lived and worked in South Shropshire – as an organic grower, organic box scheme operator and now an organic shop owner. Over this period I have carefully observed the move towards sustainability in the South Shropshire area and in truth it has been at snail's pace. The Karuna Project is one of the very few sustainable projects in this area and should be supported for that reason alone.

As an experienced commercial organic grower of 13 years or so (previously with growing experience on the Pennines at 1000 feet above sea level,) I can testify to the fundamental importance of polytunnels in the commercial viability of growing organic food for others to eat. Some of the advantages for organic production using polytunnels include:

- extending the season,
- growing on plants prior to transplanting in order to enable to give them a chance against pests in a pesticide free environment
- the ability to grow a wider range of more sensitive crops (eg tomatoes).

At this altitude and geographical position covered cropping is in my view essential for viable production.

From the point of view of both vegetable box scheme and retail shop selling vegetables I know that the entire South Shropshire area is incapable of supplying even my small retailing businesses with in season organic produce. In the past I have talked with optimism with the Karuna project about the possibilities of buying organic produce from them; this would reduce my need to buy from Herefordshire, Wales, Cornwall, Lincolnshire and the considerable amounts of produce which have to be imported. Needless to say buying from Karuna would significantly reduce food miles and aid the local economy.

Looking at the wider picture I find it hard to believe that a benign polytunnel with no concrete foundations to desecrate the land should be refused at this time. We are at a critical time in history in Britain (and the world) as climate change, peak oil, population pressures and the pressures of over consumption ally to threaten our food security. I note that even DEFRA – not normally noted for their environmental awareness - in the guise of Hilary Benn has recently acknowledged the need for sustainable farming methods, noting that food production methods must change. Food

production methods will not change if the application of antiquated planning laws prevents the commercial adoption of sustainable food production methods.

I will be pleased to expand upon any of these points at the hearing. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours faithfully

Dr Graham Lambert