



PLANNING STATEMENT BE/90/12/CLP

Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed use, Permitted Development enquiry – Shripney, Manor Farm

This statement accompanies the application form and describes the proposed development. The purpose of the application is to establish whether the proposal is “Permitted Development”. The references to pictures 1 – 4 are referring to the pictures which accompanied the application BE/90/12/CLP.

1. The proposal is to grow fruit trees up to a maximum height of 3.5m.
2. The “structures” comprise vertical poles set at regular intervals which do not exceed the height of the trees and are arranged in rows along with the trees themselves. These poles provide anchoring points for cables which then in turn support the various coverings required throughout the year.
3. In April/May/June the trees would be flowering and protection is required during that period. This protection would comprise black netting to provide protection from frost and birds. This is then rolled back and stored on the frames as per picture 1 on the attached sheets. Picture 2 shows how the ends of the rows are fixed being simply cables anchored into the ground to provide support. No single row of trees would have netting over it for the whole of that three months as the netting is used row by row as different rows flower at slightly different times, but the netting for flowering protection is not used outside those months.
4. In June through to September the crop is harvested, again sequentially, with different rows of trees arranged to come into fruiting at different times. At this time they require protection from rain and for that purpose they will have some rain protection, again possibly netting or sheeting being of the open mesh type shown on the picture marked H on the attached sheet. Pictures 3 and 4 show how these are open along the length of the rows to provide rainwater runoff and passive ventilation. Pictures 3 and 4 show a slightly different design from 1 and 2 although the effect of it in visual terms would be much the same.
5. These systems are rather akin to the Hop Fields of Kent with which officers may be familiar. The plan would be to have the poles in the ground all year round and the coverings would be removed during the winter months for safe keeping thus, the only permanent structure would be hidden by the trees and depending upon the exact system used would either rely upon poles “planted” amongst the trees themselves or alongside the rows as shown in pictures 1 and 2.
6. The poles are fixed into the ground in removable steel sleeves OR augured in, they are not expected to be concreted in.
7. The cross section schematic diagram shows poles at 3.5m and trees at average maximum of 3.0m, with cable stays to the end of each row and transient netting shown with open sides.
8. Trickle irrigation would be needed sporadically and this would be laid on the ground meaning that irrigation booms would not be required as presently seen in, say, lettuce fields. This, we believe, would be an effective use of water resources.
9. It is important to point out that these systems are not as visually intrusive as poly tunnels and are used only for a brief period of each year for each row of crop.



10. Further, the introduction of fruit trees into the landscape would be welcomed and would indicate a significant investment in the land. There would be an argument for reduction in imported fruit, this becoming more and more important and relevant to the end consumer.
11. The system is designed to have a 15 year life span, again, underscoring the long term view commensurate with expected tree life.
12. It is likely that the system used will rely upon posts as shown in figure H rather than the hoops as shown in figures 1,2,3 and 4 rather than, necessarily, a hooped system.
13. It is important to point out that these systems are NOT polytunnels and do not involve the erection of “structures” as such, merely the only visual aspect for the vast majority of the year will be the supporting poles, detailed earlier and as shown on the photographs.
14. The site area measuring around the perimeter is 53 hectares gross. Within the site area is a reservoir, tracks and irrigation infrastructure, all existing structures. The net area of fruit trees will be 40ha maximum. (400,000 sq metres)
15. Accompanying this Planning Statement are the following additional documents:
  - 3 paper copies of a revised location plan at 1:10,000 showing the position of the proposed works, a North Point, applicants owned land edged in blue, and showing named roads.
  - 3 paper copies showing a cross section of the proposed pole and transient net system.
  - The local authority has requested 3 paper copies of a block plan at 1:500 showing the position of the proposed works and a North Point. To do this would require a single sheet of paper 20x A4 and thus we trust that in the spirit of saving paper this requirement can be relaxed.

ENDS