

THAMES FARM ACTION GROUP (TFAG)

UPDATE 2

Sent to all residents who have registered on the TFAG Database.

In the last update on the 6th November TFAG laid out its plans as to what steps were going to be taken in order to fight the application from Taylor Wimpey to make its site impermeable and dig a large drain down Station Road, into Mill Road to discharge surface water from Thames Farm into the Lashbrook. TFAG is working closely with the Parish Council, which has also made clear its strong opposition to Taylor Wimpeys plans.

Our plans were;

- 1) TFAG decided that to commission its own Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in order to counter that being produced by Taylor Wimpey would be premature; until the exact plans, design and route of the drainage system are known we would not know what to assess and could waste a lot of time and money.

It was decided that the better course of action was to wait for the Taylor Wimpey FRA and obtain a professional critique of it. TFAG has obtained quotations from suitably qualified professional advisors to carry out this critique.

- 2) To obtain legal advice as to the feasibility of challenging the reserved matters application, on the basis that the variation to the original planning application is a material change to the scheme and should be open to public consultation or better still a complete revocation of the permission. TFAG was to obtain quotations for this advice and have received quotes from 3 firms of solicitors having the necessary expertise.

- 3) To engage the Environment Agency(EA), in particular, to review its recognition that the discharge of water will be into a high risk flood area even though they claim they should not be involved as the site itself is not in a high risk flood area.
- 4) To engage the local community to complain to SODC, Taylor Wimpey, Thames Water, John Howell, The Parish Council and The Environment Agency.
- 5) To create a petition to demonstrate the local concern to Taylor Wimpey's plans and to try to mobilise our local MP into action, which to date has been a limited engagement with the regulatory authorities.
- 6) To open a bank account to enable those residents who expressed a willingness to support TFAG with funds for professional and legal costs.
- 7) To approach the Parish Council for a financial contribution to the professional and legal costs.

What has been achieved?

- The Parish Council has agreed to appoint and fund environmental consultants to advise on and prepare a response to Taylor Wimpey's Flood Risk Assessment. The Parish Council will also consider commissioning and funding further specific / defined tasks if and when this becomes necessary, subject to its governance procedures related to the use of public funds.
- Quotations from legal firms have been received and TFAG has retained Polly Reynolds, a partner in Temple Bright, to advise in this matter.
- The local community has continued to express their concerns to SODC and Taylor Wimpey, with over 150 letters received by SODC alone.
- The petition has now been signed by well over 1,000 people, a large majority being from the local community.

- Nearly 200 residents who joined the TFAG database have expressed a willingness to contribute to the fighting fund.
- The Parish council has sent letters of complaint prepared by TFAG to SODC and the senior management of Taylor Wimpey, objecting to the application and the effect it will have on the environment and flooding. Also, how Taylor Wimpey are ignoring their stated and published company social responsibility objectives and commitments.
- Communications have been sent to the major shareholders of Taylor Wimpey again pointing out how they are ignoring their social responsibility and environmental commitments.
- The BBC interviewed Cllr David Bartholomew and local residents on a South Today programme on the 9th November. They are likely to do a further follow up piece as well.
- A social media campaign has been started by TFAG to raise the awareness of the community, the press and other media and to access and pressurise some of the organisations involved. Local residents, journalists and a Henley Councillor are assisting in this messaging by supporting with tweets and retweets.
- John Sawbridge has joined the TFAG Steering Group.
- The Henley Standard continues to follow developments and is running a regular update on the progress of the campaign each week which TFAG is feeding as appropriate.
- A 'flyer' drop was circulated throughout the villages emphasising the seriousness of the situation and the need to support TFAG via the petition, the website and social media contacts.
- A bank account has been established for those residents who wish to contribute to the fighting fund.

The Bank Account and the Fighting Fund.

A bank account has been established which will have 3 signatories for any withdrawals. One of those signatories is the Vice Chair of the Parish Council (in a personal capacity).

Win, lose or draw, should there be any funds remaining, having paid out the professional and legal costs, then any monies left over will be returned pro-rata to the contributors.

We have received a number of very generous offers of financial support, and in addition to those pledges which may now be deposited in our Bank Account below, in the first TFAG update it was suggested that other households that had expressed a willingness to support TFAG financially might each pay £100, or more if affordable, to the campaign fund. This, together with the funds the Parish Council has committed in commissioning the environmental consultants, should provide a good fighting fund.

Please deposit your fighting fund contribution to:

Nat West Bank Henley

Account Number; 17453259

Sort Code; 60-10-35

**PLEASE PUT YOUR SURNAME AS A REFERENCE SO MONIES CAN BE RETURNED
IF NOT UTILISED.**

Communication.

Please can everyone on the TFAG database, who has not done so already, please register on the Shiplake Villages Website as this will become the main method of communication with residents and with all social media links etc.

The Next Steps.

- Having got ourselves in a relatively organised state we are now waiting to see the FRA from Taylor Wimpey before mobilising the professional critique. We have also asked SODC to dismiss the planning application on technical grounds
- Our Lawyer will also be writing to SODC asking for an extension to the additional time given for consultation on the 23rd October.
- The EA has clarified it's position and must allow OCC as the Lead Flood Authority in this situation to take the matter forwards. As such we have specifically requested OCC to take the matter up vigorously and assess the situation fully and diligently
- The petition has been presented to John Howell who is trying to arrange a parliamentary question for us, and a draft of this has been approved and returned to him.
- Please continue all social media activity
- Please contribute to the fighting fund.

Thank you for your continuing support.

TFAG.