

THAMES FARM ACTION GROUP (TFAG) UPDATE 12

Sent to the residents who registered on the TFAG database.

No News Isn't Necessarily Good News!

In January, when the last Update was distributed, following the decision by SODC to reject Taylor Wimpey's application for a Lawful Development Certificate to permit their proposed groundworks, TFAG cautioned against any assumptions that the battle against the Thames Farm was over and won .

Whilst the decision by SODC requiring Taylor Wimpey to apply for a new planning permission for their proposed groundworks was undoubtedly good news, TFAG is aware of activity behind the scenes strongly suggesting that although Taylor Wimpey is facing considerable challenges to develop the site, they have not gone away. TFAG is keeping a watching brief on developments and providing input where possible to ensure due process, by means of requests for information and building contacts within the various agencies.

TFAG has in the meantime, also objected to the 2 Planning Applications in respect of the r/o Crossways site next door to Thames Farm. The Appeal for 20 units was subsequently withdrawn, but the Appeal for 11 units went to an inspectors hearing last week and was attended by TFAG representatives. We will let residents know when there is an outcome to report.

So as of now there is nothing substantive to report upon regarding Thames Farm itself, and the situation is as it was in January with no further planning applications or legal challenges from Taylor Wimpey to date.

The Neighbourhood Plan.

You may have seen on the Shiplake Parish website and elsewhere, that there is an updated Neighbourhood Plan, and which is approaching the local referendum stage due on 28 July.

Many in the village have been sceptical of this process, not least because of the Thames Farm debacle where the planning permission when originally granted appeared to run roughshod over the Local Plan and residents wishes. The primary reason for this consent being granted then, was that SODC were proven to fall short of their 5 year land supply targets. This failure effectively negates Local Plan policies in the main, hence why the site was approved.

It is not in TFAG's remit or mandate to promote the new plan, however TFAG does believe that on balance the residents would be better served supporting the new plan because if nothing else, not having a plan endorsed by the community at all would be one less hurdle for potential developers to overcome. Having an approved plan should, if SODC meet their land supply targets going forwards, enable the community to have a greater say in future developments and hopefully prevent another Thames Farm.

We therefore suggest that you use your democratic rights and vote on 28 July

Thank you for your continuing support.

TFAG