

Email to Gary Palmer, Planning Manager (Development)
sent 6th August

Dear Gary

Mount Dairy Farm - 2014/1163

I am writing ahead of Cheswick Green Parish Council's formal response to express some of our concerns about the lack of opportunity given to residents and other parties to respond to this application.

The key issue is that of flooding. Without mitigation, this development will increase flooding in to up to 100 houses in Cheswick Green. This is not a theoretical problem; although only a few houses have been flooded to date, many more have had flood water within the footprint of the building only a few centimetres below the internal ground floor. It is, therefore, absolutely essential that residents are consulted and are given the opportunity to understand the severity of this risk, or the effectiveness of any mitigation measures, before they can be expected to respond knowledgeably to your consultation.

The 2013 application would have caused increased flooding, and the Council rightly refused it. The current application was lodged with the same information, many hundreds of pages of it. As you know, there are now 26 superseded documents and 28 amended documents among the 72 now available for inspection - 1 was added towards the end of last week. They are mainly unnumbered and undated, some repetitious and some incomplete. It is unclear in most cases how they have changed. Even the red line delineating the application area has been altered, though this is shown differently on different plans, without explanation.

The applicants now appear to claim that they have resolved the flooding problem - in that respect it would certainly be significantly different from the 2013 application. Yet they have carried out no public consultation and have refused to meet with the Parish Council. They merely continue to report the exercise they carried out before the previous application.

We now understand that your hydrological consultants hope to receive, on 18 Aug, further information that would clarify the forecast flooding impacts. No doubt it would be a day or two later before this was made public. And who knows what other documents could be added or altered - we get no warning of this.

This is far too late for the Parish Council or residents to be consulted and to respond to you on this vital matter before a decision is made. The planning process requires the public and directly affected parties to be consulted and for them to be able to make their views known. Your present timetable seems to be set to deny them this lawful opportunity.

I look forward to your response

Chris

Chris Noble
Chairman Cheswick Green Parish Council