EA Flood Update #6 Sept 24 2024

The Environment Agency returns…….

The EA has resurfaced after their 'pause', which we informed you of back in May, saying they wanted to take time to review and reflect. They have now emailed some local stakeholders indicating they have been reviewing concerns raised by the community and will shortly be issuing Appraisal Reports and a new Engagement Plan. (We await a reply to our query as to whether the Appraisal Reports are going to be an analysis of the engagement process thus far, an analysis of the communities' concerns, or of the rationale and review of the basis of the whole project.)

Some but not all of the groups which have submitted objections have been invited to a **Focus Group meeting on 4th October.** The EA says that this first meeting will focus on the flood risk in the area and will be an opportunity where members can share experiences and define the issues that are important to them. We have asked for the full list of invited representatives, and requested that the missing groups be invited. They have still not sent out this list, agenda and papers little more than a week to go.

The EA has **taken down the webpage** relating to the Bourn proposals since issuing this statement, though not before several of us had checked and found that the proposals remained unaltered from the original plan, generating another question to the EA about whether they had revised their ideas in any way as a result of the input and feedback from the general public, action groups and stakeholders over the previous months.

Bournville Village Trust has informed us that they, and the Parks Manager, will be attending the Focus Group, and that they have recently had a meeting with the EA, They shared the key points made:

- The EA have drafted a detailed engagement plan which puts the engagement with local groups and stakeholders back at the forefront,
- Further work has been developed around risk mitigation, costs and the data behind the original concepts which will be shared at the focus group on 04.10.24,
- The EA reassured BVT that this first session, and subsequent ones are focusing on information sharing and engagement with groups, and so there are currently no further plans or concept designs to share – these won't come until they are confident that there is work that will actually take place,
- There are no immediate plans for exploratory works or timelines for any work at all outside of this engagement,
- BVT has shared the names and contacts of those 'missing' from the invite which the EA have agreed to add to their invite list,
- BVT will remain represented at these meetings as a stakeholder. BVT's position remains the same however they are happy that their new approach is what should've happened to begin with!

Save Our Parks alliance

Since the last briefing, and during the EA's 'pause', the local action groups from the three threatened parks met, agreed to work closely together and share information, and formed the **Save Our Parks** alliance, with shared branding moving forward. The residents from the Weoley Hill Park area have developed a constitution and will launch the **Weoley Hill Park Action Group** at an AGM in October.

Seeking support from allies

On behalf of the Save Our Parks alliance, we have written to the new **West Midlands Mayor, Richard Parker**, seeking his support, as was given by his predecessor. The response from his office was that we should brief him after the Focus Group as to what the EA's plans are and to what extend our input was valued in these discussions, after which he will discuss potential modes of support for us.

We have also renewed contact with local councillors for Weoley and Selly Oak Ward, **Jamie Tenant** and **Miranda Perks** who have confirmed their opposition to the EA's original proposals. The EA has arranged a separate meeting with them two days before the Focus Group and they have agreed to brief us after they've met.

We have also been in touch with the **Friends of Rea Valley Stirchley**, who have some interesting ideas about how to better manage the flood risk in this area.

Staying in touch

We will issue a **further update** after the first focus meeting so look out for a further update in early October.

If you are not already a member of the Friends of Manor Farm Park, you can join for just £5 a year. Contact fomfpmembership@gmail.com for more information.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

fomfpmembership@gmail.com for Friends of Manor Farm Park



Residents views on the EA proposals for Manor Farm Park, FoMFP survey, March 2024