



27 November 2018

Chief Executive, Warwick District Council

Cc:

Chief Planning Officer, Warwick District Council

Dr S Harvey,

Mr B Burdett,

Mr M Eliot-Higgit,

Mr J O'Shea,

Councillor M Foster,

Development Brief for Land East of Kenilworth/ Flooding in Ashow village

Dear sir,

I am concerned that there is insufficient recognition in the Brief of the implications of building in east Kenilworth for flooding in Ashow. There is equally a failure to recognise the opportunity substantially to reduce flooding risk by separating that part of the catchment of the Ashow stream that falls west of the A46, from the rest of the catchment. The aim must be to ensure that any precipitation that falls west of the centre line of the A46 stays west of the centre line of the A46.

I would like to see WDC prepare a comprehensive drainage plan to achieve this end. **No building must be allowed in the Ashow stream catchment in east Kenilworth until the drainage plan is implemented in full and is signed off by a senior officer of the council.**

I am writing to you as chief executive to ensure that your council is aware, at the highest level, of the continuing risk of flooding in Ashow, and the opportunities for substantial mitigation that the development of east Kenilworth presents.

Flooding in Ashow

Properties in north Ashow are at risk of flooding from the Ashow stream. This rises in east Kenilworth, flows in a pipe under the A46, through Thickthorn Wood, alongside Rocky Lane, and through a narrow Victorian culvert in the village. The stream did not evolve to drain the built-up area of east Kenilworth and the A46. The culvert is unable to cope in periods of heavy rainfall.

The risk of flooding was increased substantially when Knight's Meadow in east Kenilworth was built some thirty years ago, and when the Highways Agency 'improved' the drainage of the A46 in 1997. Ashow stream was a convenient drainage channel. In neither case did the responsible authorities (WDC and the Highways Agency) consider the implications for those who live downstream.

Properties in Ashow were flooded on:

13 January 1993
20 August 1996
9 April 1998
8 August 1999

We were close to being flooded in June 2007 when the highest daily rainfall since January 1900 was recorded.

Looking at the dried-up stream this morning it is difficult to imagine the situation on 8 August 1999 when the village was cut off, and over a metre of water was flowing through my house and those of four of my neighbours.

Flood mitigation

Following this event, WDC coordinated mitigation measures. It installed a by-pass culvert in the village, to which householders made a substantial financial contribution. The Highways Agency promised to create holding ponds in Thickthorn Wood, but this never happened. Despite intervention from our MP, it simply walked away from a problem for which it had been partly responsible. The by-pass culvert has certainly helped, but it was only ever seen by WDC as part of the solution.

East Kenilworth must be made drainage-neutral by the creation of holding ponds and the blocking of the pipe under the A46. This would enable the catchment of the Ashow stream to be halved in size. I am convinced from my study of local hydrology and rainfall that this will end the risk of flooding once and for all. I trust that your council will take the necessary steps to ensure that this outcome is achieved.

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter, by email if you wish, to [REDACTED] It will be added to a very thick file on flooding in the village!

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Professor David Clark