



Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

Parish Clerk – Mrs Carol Bilverstone. Kilimanjaro, 9 Meadow Road, Upwood, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE26 2QJ
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A meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council was held on Monday 02 December 2019 at 7.00pm at Upwood Village Hall.

Present: Councillors M. Bacon, J. Edwards, R. Howe (Chairman), J. Noble, A. Perkins, G. Slater, I. Ward.

In Attendance: Mrs. C. Bilverstone (Clerk), Councillor Rogers (County Council), Councillor Bull (District Council) and 12 members of the public.

Minutes

96-12/19 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Councillor Twose: Maternity Leave

Councillor Tavener (District Councillor): Attendance required at other meetings.

97-12/19 To receive declarations of interest.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary and other interests in items on the agenda as required by Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations of interest.

98-12/19 To receive and approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 04 November 2019.

The minutes of the meeting of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council held on 04 November 2019 had been circulated in advance following the informal approval of the chairman. Councillor Ward proposed that the minutes be approved. Councillor Slater seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

99-12/19 To consider applications for one casual vacancy.

There have been no applications to date. Residents are invited to apply to the clerk or to seek further information from members. The chairman noted that the parish council would particularly welcome applications from the Raveleys, Farm Close and Fairmead to provide effective representation of all areas of the parish.

100-12/19 Public participation.

To allow up to 10 minutes (2 minutes per person) for any members of the public and councillors declaring the existence and nature of a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to the business on this agenda. The chairman offered to open the meeting later in the proceedings for discussion on item 103-12/19.2. There was no other public participation

101-12/19 To receive reports from county and district councillors.

Councillor Rogers noted that some progress has been made regarding public rights of way matters within the parish (although there has been little progress on securing a date for the work to the footpath leading from Bentley Close towards Upwood Meadows). He confirmed that regulations regarding the re-instatement of road markings further to highway repairs have changed and that there is no requirement to re-instate the white lines. He explained that where a central white line is present, motorists tend to stay to the left, aligned with the side of the road. This is supposedly causing damage to the edges of the road and the verges. Councillors expressed concern for this logic which would seem to favour head-on collisions!

Councillor Bull announced his retirement as Executive Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council on 04 December but confirmed that he will continue to serve as a District Councillor with a seat on the Development

Management Committee. The chairman and members wished him well and thanked him for his continued support.

The chairman noted his attendance at the recent Bury Neighbourhood Plan meeting and re-iterated ongoing concerns from this parish that there is little mention of plans to improve infrastructure despite the proposed development of 1200 – 1500 new homes in the Ramsey/Bury parishes over the next 10 – 20 years; and that there is no joined up plan for local parishes. He asked that district and county councillors coordinate a parish forum whereby issues surrounding infrastructure which impact on the wider community may be considered. Councillor Rogers and Councillor Bull agreed to take this forward. Councillor Perkins expressed concern for the shortage of school places and noted what he felt was a flippant response from the developer who suggested that children could be taken by bus to another locality for schooling. Councillor Bull confirmed that this is a county council issue although it is unlikely that a development of this size would result in the provision of more schools.

Councillor Slater quoted data from the speed indicator devices which provides clear evidence of a significant enduring problem with traffic speed and volume which will only be exacerbated by further development.

102-12/19 Matters arising or carried forward from the previous meeting.

102-12/19.1 Further to minute reference 88-11/19.2, to receive an update regarding broadband provision in this parish.

The chairman confirmed that migration (the configuration of lines to the new DSLAM (green fibre cabinet) took place on 19 and 20 November. The Open Reach Contract Manager has confirmed that all but one subscriber has had their service improved to contracted levels; although this only applies to super-fast broadband subscribers. Standard service customers may consider upgrading their service to access faster broadband speeds.

103-12/19 Notification of planning items.

103-12/19.1 19/02069/FUL | Amendment of Plot 8 into a pair of residential dwellings and Plot 9 into a pair of dwellings.

Reference: 15/00049/FUL | Land at Church Farm, Church Lane, Upwood.

Councillors agreed to the proposed amendments in principle but on condition that there is some variation to the building materials utilised on the additional properties (for example the sympathetic use of heritage red brick and barge boarding) and that the properties are furnished with traditional windows and doors in keeping with the original street scene and its environs. Councillors commented on the property which remains on the market and suggested that the black door and green windows are not aesthetically pleasing and not in keeping with the surroundings. Councillor Perkins proposed that the application be approved subject to these conditions. Councillor Noble seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

103-12/19.2 19/02145/OUT | Outline application for 9 self-build and custom-build dwellings with access road and supporting infrastructure. Appearance, landscaping and scale matters reserved | Land at The Paddock, Great Raveley.

The chairman opened the meeting to allow parishioners and councillors to participate in meaningful discussion. Parishioners and councillors reflected on a similar application made in 2018 where the parish council noted that *“it would be tragic if the district council were to approve a planning application of this nature as it would be in direct opposition to the advice of the parish council; the unanimous wishes of residents; and planning legislation. Such a development would cause “significant harm” to Great Raveley”*. These sentiments are still firmly held and there remains strong opposition both from residents and from the parish council. The meeting was closed.

In summary, councillors agreed that this proposed development would fundamentally breach planning requirements of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 in several areas, namely:

1. there is no provision in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 for such development outside the village envelope on countryside land.
2. the significant impact on local infrastructure (highways, sewerage and drainage, the lack of services and opportunities for sustainable travel).
3. the impact on the intrinsic character of the immediate locality, the settlement and its street scene.
4. the adverse affect it would have on residents (noise, odour and light issues).
5. the proposed use of agricultural land.
6. there are significant environmental and ecological concerns.

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 states:

LP9: “a proposal that is located within a built-up area of a small settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the: a. level of service and infrastructure

provision within the settlement. There are no services within the settlement, the nearest shops, schools, and access to health services are in Ramsey, approximately 3.5 miles away.

b. opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport. There is no public transport provision to Great Raveley. There are no pavements within the hamlet therefore walking is hazardous, walking or cycling the 3.5 miles to Ramsey would not be practical or safe along extremely busy countryside roads.

c. effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole. There are currently just 26 homes on Raveley Road, in the heart of the hamlet. An additional 9 homes situated outside the built limits would increase the housing capacity by one third; it would have a negative impact on the street scene; and change the character of the community which is essentially ribbon development.

LP10: "All development in the countryside must: a. seek to use land of lower value in preference to land of higher agricultural value: i. avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible. Five years ago, this land was a wildflower meadow with a traditional hawthorn hedge boundary. It remains grade three pasture-land despite the controversial removal of the hedge and the addition of a large stone gateway. *b. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and c. not give rise to odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.* Concerns were reiterated regarding the lack of infrastructure to address sewerage and drainage (which continues to be problematic, particularly in the summer months); and the intrusion into the countryside. The impact of the initial independent construction of 9 dwellings, which could take years, would be hugely intrusive on the day to day lives of residents. The increased traffic pre and post construction would significantly impact the volume of traffic which is already problematic (evidenced by data from two Speed Indicator Devices and a successful bid to the Local Highway Improvement Initiative which will see traffic calming measures installed on Raveley Road early in 2020).

Councillors expressed environmental and ecological concerns and questioned quality of the work undertaken by the ecology consultant, and the subsequent information given by the applicant pertaining to biodiversity on the site. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) has not taken due consideration of a number of protected and priority species which have the potential to be present on this site.

Councillors understand that the PEAR should provide the baseline data for a site and identify the need for follow up surveys. If surveys are required, they should be undertaken, and an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) should be used to inform a planning application. A PEAR is not sufficient to allow stakeholders to make an informed decision on the potential impacts arising from development, and it is not sufficient to result in the applicant stating that protected and priority species are not likely to be adversely affected. The need to include an EclA rather than a PEAR was raised by the Wildlife Trust at the Town/Parish forum in March of this year.

Within 250m of the site boundary are three ponds, one of which lies adjacent to the site to the north. Within 500m of the site are a further three waterbodies, including a moat which tend to have strong links in supporting great crested newts. Councillors questioned why these waterbodies have not been subject to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) in order to assess the potential to support great crested newt, a European protected species (standard practise for a scheme of this size). Councillors also asked why no follow up surveys been recommended, such as eDNA and or presence/absence surveys etc. If the consultant had undertaken HSI, they could conceivably scope them out, but as no HSI was undertaken, then follow up surveys would be anticipated. The PEAR acknowledges that there is suitable amphibian and reptile habitat onsite, therefore there is the potential that legislation for this species could be breached if they are present. Habitats onsite such as rubble piles and tall ruderal are particularly favoured by amphibians. If this species is present onsite, then works will need to be licensed by Natural England.

The boundary hedgerow provides linkage and connectivity for foraging/commuting bats which could be roosting in any number of potential sites within the village. Therefore, potential impacts arising from development, e.g. loss of habitat and/or lighting impacts should be considered. No mitigation measures have been included in this report.

The developer failed to commission a desk top report from either Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biological Records Centre, and/or the local bat/mammal groups. The lack of such a study means valuable information regarding the potential presence of protected and priority species within the area may have been missed and thus goes against good practice.

The presence of Elm and Elm suckers onsite should have been a trigger for the ecologist to consider the potential presence of white spotted pinion moth and white letter hairstreak, both Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species,

and measures would therefore be recommended to survey for these species, and, or put in mitigation measures to prevent any impacts arising. Again, the report has not considered this.

Overall the PEAR has failed to adequately consider potential receptors onsite (protected and priority), and it is impossible to make an informed assessment of the likely impacts, some of which are material considerations, namely bats, great crested newt, white spotted pinion moth and white letter hairstreak. It is also impossible for the applicant to state that no protected/priority species are likely to be adversely affected without a full and proper impact assessment being undertaken.

Councillors suggested that the applicant needs to commission further survey work for a full and proper assessment of the site to be adequately undertaken. Once that has been achieved, stakeholders would be in a position to fully consider the potential impacts arising from the scheme.

The chairman proposed that the parish council objects to this application based on points 1 – 5 above: the fact that there is no provision in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 for such development outside the village envelope on countryside land; the significant impact on local infrastructure (highways, sewerage and drainage, the lack of services and opportunities for sustainable travel); the impact on the intrinsic character of the immediate locality, the settlement and its street scene; the adverse affect it would have on residents (noise, odour and light issues); the proposed use of agricultural land; and significant environmental and ecological concerns. Councillor Bacon seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

104-12/19 Finance

104-12/19.1 To approve accounts for payment: 02 December 2019

Reference	Description	Payee	Amount
SO	Clerk/RFO Salary	Mrs C. Bilverstone	£1,008.95
SO	Cemetery Officer Salary (Oct-Dec 2019) *	Mr B.C. Edwards	£119.09
DD	Employee & Employer Pension Contribution	SALVUS Master Trust	£111.16
DD	Pension Administration Fee	SALVUS Master Trust	£24.00
SO	Clerk/RFO/Cemetery Officer Salary. PAYE/NI	HMRC	£76.72
761642305	Clerk's Expenses: Working from Home Allowance, Stationery, travel	Mrs C. Bilverstone	£39.69
780982069	Parish Grant (minute reference 90-11/19.3)	Upwood and the Raveleys Newsletter	£1,254.00
294584976	Parish Grant (minute reference 90-11/19.4)	Upwood and the Raveleys Village Hall	£1,000.00
490295421	Parish Maintenance. Invoices 7 & 8**	The CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd.	£1,836.60
929137167	Tree work in Charter's Spinney	Global Tree Solutions Ltd.	£660.00

*Cemetery Officer's Salary includes back pay to 01 August 2019 of £5.68

** The clerk confirmed that discrepancies in the paperwork from the parish maintenance contractor have been corrected and revised invoices had been received.

104-12/19.2 To note income received: 02 December 2019.

Reference	Description	Received From	Amount
000032	Exclusive Right of Burial & Interment Fee	Dignity Funerals Ltd.	£110.00

Councillor Noble proposed that the accounts be approved for payment. Councillor Perkins seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so. The chairman signed the list of payments on the agenda. Two signatories signed each of the invoices and authorised the online payments after the meeting. The chairman signed the bank reconciliation, and this was counter-signed by Councillor Noble.

104-12/19.3 Further to completion of a 30-day free trial of "Parish Online" (a digital mapping package) to consider an annual registration of £100 + VAT.

Councillor Bacon proposed that the parish council subscribes to this service. Councillor Perkins seconded the proposal. All were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.

104-12/19.4 To receive a summary of the clerk's hours of work during November 2019.

The clerk confirmed that she has worked 45 of 50 contracted hours during November. During this financial year she has worked 416.25 of 345.5 contracted hours to date.

105-12/19 Traffic, Highways & Road Safety

- 105-12/19.1 To receive an update regarding implementation of the traffic calming scheme for Great Raveley (LHI 2019/2020). Further to concerns from the farming community, the site of the build-out has been relocated to a wider (5.2m) part of the highway. It has been re-designed to look larger than it really is with white markings and a herring bone section just 15mm higher than the road surface. The available space between the edge of the road and the build out with the bollards will be 4.2m and the height of the build out containing Solarite (yellow and blue) or narrower black and white bollards will be 12.5cm which will allow agricultural vehicles with large tyres pass. The "Give Way" sign will be situated on the verge. All agreed that this would seem to be a fair but effective compromise and that work should be allowed to progress.
- 105-12/19.2 To receive an update regarding implementation of the traffic calming scheme for Little Raveley (LHI 2020/2021). There have been no further updates.
- 105-12/19.3 To review data gathered from the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) during November 2019.
SID 1 was positioned in Great Raveley to monitor vehicles approaching from Woodwalton. Of the 6312 vehicles recorded, 1774 (28.12%) were in violation of the 30mph speed limit. 878 vehicles were recorded travelling between 40 and 50mph and 11 between 51 and 59 mph.
Sid 2 was positioned on the junction of Meadow Road and Huntingdon Road, to monitor traffic approaching from Great Raveley. Of the 31,004 vehicles registered 4,207 (13.57%) were in violation of the 40mph speed limit with 45 vehicles registering speeds between 70 and 85mph.
Councillor Slater suggested that Cambridgeshire Constabulary should be asked to place mobile speed cameras on this section of the road. Councillor Bacon agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

106-12/19 Parish Maintenance.

- 106-12/19.1 To review the effectiveness of the parish maintenance contract and to consider a proposal and quotation from the contractor to reduce the height of the cemetery and allotments hedges adjacent to Meadow Road to a height of 1.5m.
Councillor Ward confirmed that improvements have been made in all areas. The chairman noted that councillors will continue to monitor the work into the new year. The clerk added that work to the hedge along the northern boundary of the allotments remains outstanding.
The contractor has suggested that reducing the height of the hedges adjacent to Meadow Road to 1.5m would assist future maintenance. The cost of this work would be £640 + VAT. The clerk confirmed that Upwood and the Raveleys Allotment Association would support this proposal providing the top of the hedge on the allotments side is left tidy. Councillors debated the finished height and agreed to compromise on 1.8m. Councillor Bacon proposed that the height be reduced to 1.8m. Councillor Ward seconded the proposal. Councillor Noble abstained from voting. All others were in favour and it was **resolved** to do so.
- 106-12/19.2 To consider an action plan for work to the trees, shrubs and undergrowth in Glebe Paddock.
Councillors debated various proposals but in view of the significant costs already incurred for parish maintenance, it was agreed that a strategy should be prepared for consideration in the next financial year.
- 106-12/19.3 Further to completion of the tree works (minute reference: 77-10/19.1), and acceptance of a quotation to clear vegetation (minute reference: 77-10/19.2), to consider a proposal from Global Tree Solutions for further improvements to the understorey of Charter's Spinney.
Further to debate councillors agreed that it would be prudent to clear the vegetation as planned prior to making any further commitment.

107-12/19 Community Matters

- 107-12/19.1 Further to debate in 2017, to re-consider the provision of a defibrillator in the parish.
Councillor Bacon confirmed that he had undertaken some research but asked that this item be deferred until the next meeting at which time he would be in a position to present a business case for this proposal.
- 107-12/19.2 To consider opportunities for youth involvement and engagement.
Councillors debated strategies for youth involvement and engagement including ideas for the provision of a youth club by an external agency with volunteer support. The chairman suggested that Councillor Bacon prepare a strategy for consideration at the next meeting. He also suggested that a grant application could be made to Ramsey Community Benefit Fund to cover the cost of such an initiative.

108-12/19 Correspondence and Communications.

- 108-12/19.1 Invitation to participate in: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Proposed Submission Plan Consultation - 15 November 2019 - 09 January 2020.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning-policy/emerging-minerals-and-waste-local-plan/>

108-12/19.2 An invitation for councillors to be involved in planning meetings for events at Grange Farm, Abbots Ripton.

108-12/19.3 Notification of a public consultation on Cambridgeshire County Council's draft Climate Change and Environment Strategy from 20 December 2019 to 31 January 2020.

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/climate-strategy>

109-12/19 To receive verbal reports from parish councillors on matters arising from their portfolio responsibilities and matters for future consideration. No decisions can be made under this item.

Councillor Ward asked for clarification on Neighbourhood Watch schemes in this parish. The clerk confirmed that there are currently two in operation: one in Helens Close, the other at Fairmead Park. Further details may be found at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>

Councillor Bacon expressed concerns for the stability and safety of sections of the wall alongside the pavement on High Street. Councillor Slater agreed to seek the advice of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways.

110-12/19 Date of next meeting: 06 January 2020 at 7:00pm

Close of meeting: 9:00pm



6-1-20