

Consultation Survey October 2021 - Full Responses

a) Statistical Data

Total number of surveys returned: 66

1 Do you agree or disagree with the draft vision as set out in the survey?

Agree	64
Disagree	1

3 For each of the sites set out in the survey do you agree or disagree that they should be designated?

- Mowsbury Hillfort	Agree	65
	Disagree	0
- School playing field	Agree	65
	Disagree	0
- All Saint's Churchyard	Agree	65
	Disagree	0
- Charity Field	Agree	60
	Disagree	7
- Northfields Woodland	Agree	63
	Disagree	2
- The Green Lane	Agree	64
	Disagree	0

6 Do you agree or disagree that there should be no significant further residential development in the Plan?

Agree	66
Disagree	0

8 For the two possible development sites identified in the survey do you agree or disagree they should be allocated for housing?

- Butler Street ☐	Agree	62
	Disagree	4
- Cleat Hill	Agree	51
	Disagree	10

11 Do you agree or disagree that there should be design guidance/codes in the Plan?

Agree	66
Disagree	0

14 Do you agree or disagree with the draft objective concerning community and employment facilities as set out in the survey?

Agree	65
Disagree	1

16 Do you agree or disagree with the draft objective concerning travel and transport as set out in the survey?

Agree	64
Disagree	1

b) Qualitative Data as Verbatim Comments

2 Please set out your reasons or any other comments on the draft Vision

It is difficult to disagree with the draft vision. It is somewhat all things to all people.

Can we add a fourth vision option to cover the community: to maintain and develop a diverse residential community to strike a balance between those working in and around the community and those mature/retired elements of the community. Both are key attributes of a strong village community.

I think the vision strikes the right balance between caring for our environment and ensuring our rural area continues to meet local needs

Rural villages are gradually being absorbed into the tentacles of Bedford. the peace and tranquillity of Ravensden is appreciated by those who live in the town as well as local residents.

The fragmented nature of the village (all ends and no middle) is a challenge, as is the proximity to Bedford expansion. The visions' goals are laudable and invite support.

Retains current character whilst guiding the inevitable future development

"Which meet local needs" otherwise totally agree with the vision.

The buffer to the large scale expansion is very important.

Utopian perhaps but a praiseworthy aim.

Am also concerned about growth in Renhold - Salph End - impacting on Ravensden. Also Dennybrook ie growth not just from Bedford.

I feel it is very important to keep and protect the rural nature of ravensden parish. Whilst adapting to meet the needs of future generations, it remains important to maintain the existing landscape, protect the historic sites and sites of special scientific interest and the diverse flora and fauna of the area.

No additional comments. The vision is spot on.

I totally agree with the draft vision - very well thought out.

Access to attractive countryside and climate change would be my highest priorities.

4 If you disagree with any of the proposed designations please set out your reasons

Whilst agree that Charity field should remain green space I consider it should be an amenity for the whole village to enjoy.

Charity field should be used as a community space not solely for keeping horses.

In its present state Northfields Woodland does not make an attractive area.

Northfields is a small area and we do not feel there would be significant detriment to the rural feel of the village if it were not a designated green space.

Charity Field: part of this field could be allocated for a small (maybe three dwellings) development of bungalows - 2 beds. Many people in Church End are living alone or in couples in big houses and would potentially like to downsize or stay in the village. The sale would have to be subject to dwellings being made available to "village people" in perpetuity. The cash raised for the charity would be invested back into the village subject to consent by Charity Commission.*

Charity Field: disagree as this is the only asset that the village has.

Charity Field: as this is the only asset we hold we should keep it as is.

Limited development to the front of Charity Field could provide much needed revenue for local projects.

Charity Field: should be held in case of future funding requirements (planning permission for housing etc).

Charity Field: the front of the Charity Field could be tastefully developed in keeping with the area being of an asset to the village community whilst leaving the rear as green belt.

There is no public access to Charity Field.

Charity Field: at the discretion of the Community Trust.

Agree with all of them.

Ravensden Community Trust relies on the income from Charity Field to fulfil its constitutional duties. It should not relinquish control of its land.

I think all of these are important as wildlife habitats. Also as an established entry to our village and important green spaces for mental health and wellbeing.

While I agree with the designations 5 of the 6 are located in Church End. Is there nowhere else in the Parish that could be designated?

5 Other comments about the proposed local green spaces (or want to suggest others)

Green spaces should be preserved wherever possible for physical and mental health. We left city/town life many years ago to enjoy the benefits of the countryside and want this preserved for future generations.

All green spaces should be protected and safeguarded from development.

The great wood should be preserved as a nature reserve with access to walk around.

Northfields Woodland is a particularly important space for our wild life, including bats, badgers, foxes, pheasants, owls, deer and various corvids,

Should the land on which the village hall stands also be included?

A comment: lucky old Church End. It is right that all of the sites should be protected but they are not easily accessible to other residents of the village.

Surely there is LGS area in the Wood End/Graze Hill Lane area or on Sunderland Hill? Currently very centred on Church End, which does not reflect true value or character of rural area.

Land adjacent to road leading from Oldways Road to Church End (past caravan site and village hall).

With green space now at a premium, only brown field sites within the Borough should be considered for development.

Charity Field should be open in the future for residents' leisure - presumably why it was given by the charity in the first place. Is my understanding not correct?

Other woodlands are also important such as behind "Roselea" (agree not so open for public view) and also the Plantation.

The parish has many rights of way, bridleways, footpaths and permissive footpaths crossing it. These rights of way need to be protected for future generations and must be identified and mapped before the government deadline of 2026. After this date it will no longer be possible to add these rights of way to the official record. Either of the proposed EWR routes through Ravensden will contribute to further the loss of accessible footpaths. Should the safeguarding of these paths be included in the plan?

Additional reasoning for the protection of green spaces for residents/visitors has been understood and especially emphasised in the last couple of years for its importance to our mental health and wellbeing whether used for leisure or visually. It's also fundamental for sustaining and saving the planet.

The country park extension should be included.

Nothing to add since the online consultation.

7 If you disagree with proposed housing development please set out the reasons

Agree - but must be reviewed frequently to reflect local needs.

*Agree subject to comments at question 4.

I agree that there should be no significant residential development or we become an overspill of Bedford and lose our tranquillity - so valuable to the residents here.

I think that a small plot for larger bungalows could be found on Church End, for example on the right hand side of Green Lane.

9 If you disagree about either of the two proposals for development please set out your reasons

If it's only 5 units I agree, any larger could be dangerous because of access.

The Cleat Hill farm barns are historic and provide a rural attraction and amenity to the area. They should be converted to housing not demolished.

Cleat Hill Farm - road access would be a high risk accident black-spot unless alternative access can be identified and agreed.

Additional access to dwellings here would compound the already extremely dangerous situation on these blind bends. It is only a matter of time until there is a fatality here.

Hopefully these would be smaller units for either first time buyers coming to the village or others who want to remain but maybe downsize.

I agree that satisfactory access to the highway must be achieved for the Cleat Hill Farm barns site.

The development at Cleat hill Farm would need access onto a dangerous section of the road. Of course, we already have that as a site entrance to Graze Hill development! Hence a car in the ditch on Sept 27.

Disagree to both proposals: concerns regarding traffic and construction work plus pollution.

Disagree to both: concerns over increase of traffic and pollution during construction and afterwards.

Disagree to both: too near to the existing Cleat Hill Farm and Willow Farm.

Well done for all the work put in to developing the plan so far.

(on Cleat Hill Barns) Some concerns about residential traffic impacting on road safety. Also this development to the north of Cleat Hill means more lights on the skyline.

10 Other comments about future housing development

More housing will mean more services are required, water, electric, gas etc. Will this area be able to cope with the demand. The doctors cannot cope with the patients they have now.

I am pleased to read that there are very limited proposals for development. Ravensden Park is already too much.

EWR could have an effect on any future housing plans.

The village will evolve and there will, presumably, be periodic reviews and reassessment of local needs.

New development required to allow residents to move house without leaving Parish. Also to attract new residents, but put a cap on house price to control building of large expensive units.

There is no mention of EWR. When it happens all of the adjacent land will be up for grabs by developers and we will have no say in it!

The church frontage of Charity Field has potential for infill housing. Whilst still allowing access to the rear of the field for amenity use. The trustees should not be encumbered by local green space restrictions.

Residents on the east side of Vicarage Close have had two letters from a property development company suggesting a possible redevelopment opportunity. The rumour has it that they want to build 140 houses on half of LPR ref 515 which is deemed *not suitable*.

Care needs to be taken that existing property and any new developments maintain adequate off road parking areas.

On road parking is already an issue in our village. Consideration should be given to ensure that adequate off road parking is available when redeveloping current housing and building new housing.

I think it is about right and maintains the characteristics of the village/parish.

Since the residents here are ageing for the most part - a retirement home might be an asset for the future.

Any new development should be small, affordable properties or bungalows where Ravensden residents can downsize into or children of the parish can move into. (Possibly shared ownership.)

I have agreed to both sites with the proviso that affordable smaller houses are included and that access on to Cleat Hill and Butler Street is safe. Ravensden does not need any more large detached houses.

Next to the farmhouse on Green Lane would make a decent plot for two or three older people's bungalows.

12 If you disagree that there should be design codes in the Neighbourhood Plan please set out your reasons

As long as they are in keeping with surrounding properties.

Agree in principle but would not wish to see drab uniformity. Innovation and flair is needed occasionally.

13 What are your thoughts about what design guidance/codes should contain

Every effort should be made to conserve and enhance the rural nature of the Parish.

Buildings within local roads/avenues should maintain a similar outward looking appearance, and any future modifications/extensions should be in keeping with the rest of the road/street/general location.

Design guidance should reflect the nature of this rural area and complement what is already there.

Design code should address key problems of traffic speed and random and inappropriate parking. Measures to address climate change should be stressed: energy, water, etc.

Keep residents up to date on issues and allow us to have a say.

As residents we should have a say with any guidance/codes that happen in the village.

In keeping with a rural setting.

Tree planting and hedging should be a requirement. As eco friendly as possible.

Policies on the scale/size of new replacement builds, and also extensions. Their impact on neighbours and the character of the village.

Roads need to be kept free of on road parking as already there can be access and safety issues when large farming equipment is moved. The industrial site at Crow Hill is serviced by articulated lorries which can also have access and safety issues on Church End. Church End was not designed to service this type of vehicle on a regular basis.

Farm and other land converted into industrial areas in small villages should be given careful planning consideration where the road infrastructure is unsuitable. We have noticed a huge increase in the number of large delivery vehicles including many juggernauts travelling through the village preempting safety concerns.

Ravensden parish has an eclectic mix of housing which contributes to the character of the parish. Design codes would ensure that any future building would be in keeping and sympathetic to the existing buildings and the surrounding landscape.

Character of each part of the parish needs to be emphasised. High sustainability and eco standards in all new development.

Design guidance should include: proximity of listed buildings and appropriate/in keeping building materials.

Security lighting. Wall height/materials. Leylandi. Roof tile colour. Number of storeys of house, e.g. not three storey town houses.

Scale of development in relation to the plot. Street lighting and house security lighting.

The inclusion of resources to reduce rainwater runoff from drives and roads.

15 If you think the draft employment and facilities objective could be improved or have other ideas

I only agree if employment is for local or Bedford people.

To reduce travel to work, time and expense some local employment sites should be identified within the neighbourhood plan.

It would be useful in order to answer the question that a local business survey is conducted to establish how many local businesses operate within the Parish, the type of business, how many local people are working in the Parish. Once we have a view on this, a better understanding can be made on how to maintain/develop local community businesses.

Again EWR could change this draft objective.

Include options for small enterprises to offer local alternatives to working from home with meetings space, digital connections etc. Ravensden is a [place to work as well as retire!

Consideration of new facilities should take into account impact on traffic volumes through the village.

As I set out above the community use of Charity Field. Maintain the orchard at Mowsbury Hill Fort open to passers by.

Examples of facility improvements would be helpful. Some sort of community hub initiative, perhaps utilising the village hall.

Employment facilities of necessity would be small scale, no large factories eg the small units in Butler Street, Graze Lane and the Equine place are good existing ones.

The gradual increase in employment facilities has reduced the quality of life in the village. Employees do not always have a stake in the village, ignore special units, etc. While I support the activities of local farmers, non farming activities have in my view reduced the quality of life of those who live in the village.

17 f you think the draft transport objective could be improved or have other ideas

We are not well served by public transport in Cleat Hill, and I am hoping this will improve once the development of Graze Hill is complete. Traffic in this area will undoubtedly increase and it needs calming and containment measures to keep the area safe.

If it means more local buses, but not if it becomes rat runs.

The local number 28 bus should retain its public funding.

Limiting rat runs to Rushden and Bedford is a good aim but hard to achieve in practice.

Pollution levels on Cleat Hill need to be checked against national standards.

The proposed footpath from Ravensden Crossroads to the top of Cleat Hill is an excellent idea, but there is a potentially dangerous situation on the existing Cleat Hill footpath with speeding heavy lorries thundering past. Some traffic calming is essential.

The safety aspect is essential - development of footpaths in places and use of traffic calming through various parts too.

Please could a request bus stop be placed on both sides of the Sunderland Hill near Grange Farm to serve a number of residents who live at Ravensden Grange, Grange Farm cottages, and the fishing lake.

More environmentally friendly electric buses. No environmentally devastating rail track.

Travel by foot is dangerous in this Parish.. I'm aware the provision of footpaths for Bedford Road and Oldways Road are much needed and are a priority.

For me [this objective] is a high priority.

(1) Improved facilities for walking/cycling etc within village and into Bedford. (2) Public transport improved to same service levels in rural areas in south of Bedford.

20mph. 7.5 ton limit. progressive speed cameras. electric car charger in each village.

In order to facilitate future home working: 1 Identify suitable site for a mobile network tower. 2 Promote better broadband provision asap.

Safer cycle and walking routes are an essential objective.

I would agree as long as sustainable movement does not include the EWR link.

Better bus service.

Provision of footpaths/cycleways on Church Hill, Oldways Road and Bedford Road to Cleat Hill.

Need more safe footpaths and cycle tracks.

Think the existing bus service is an expensive option. Would it be better used if more frequent smaller buses were used? Probably not.

Our roads are unsuitable for HGVs and many of the roads need protected cycle/pedestrian ways. Buses are sporadic and don't always follow the timetable, so I agree with everything said about travel and transport.

Footpaths along Oldways Road and Church Hill.

Plan could set out mitigation measures if EWR built?

I think more people would use public transport if the bus service went to the train station.

That would be a railway then? Hard to distinguish between local and through traffic. As the region is developed there will be more through traffic. Would an electric car be considered as 'sustainable'?

18 Other comments

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Well done one and all. To develop a NP during a pandemic is a major achievement! Thank you and keep doing great work.

Thank you for your hard work.

You are all doing fantastic work. This is work that is inclusive and informative, and it's so important to have a say. Thank you all

This group should be actively involved in talks with EWR as the project will have serious implications to this and any future plans.

I think care must be taken, whilst not destroying Church End that Ravensden Crossroads is not overdeveloped.

Can we improve any of the bus routes at all? It seems a shame to have to drive everywhere.

Could we submit online in future?

We were very impressed by the well presented and informative display in the village hall on Saturday. Much thought, time and effort went into the event. Such a shame more residents didn't attend.

It has to address EWR: impact and mitigation. The elephant in the room!

You are doing a great job - thanks.

Thank you for all your hard work.

I hope the NPG try to maintain the peace and tranquillity of this rural area.

The work done thus far has been exceptional. Thank you all.

I wholeheartedly appreciate and support the work and efforts of the Steering Group. Many thanks.

I do realise and agree we need more housing developments but none of us want it to be on our own doorsteps spoiling open views and space around us. But that is selfish thinking. It would be wonderful if new houses could be built without stripping away the boundaries which our English countryside is renowned for. But they are slowly being eradicated alongside precious wild life lost forever once built on.

I value the work and time taken by the NPG in protecting our village. However the future changes, their understanding of the environment and the sensitivity shown in view of the parish's development remains paramount.

I think that Ravensden is very fortunate to have such a hard working and dedicated team working on the project.

Pleased there is a plan in preparation.

Thanks for doing a great job.

I would like to congratulate the NPG on their thoughtful and succinct draft of the future of Ravensden.

I agree with the proposed way forward and would like to thank the team for all their hard work and expertise.

A huge thank you to the Steering Group for the all the hard work and ensuring the residents collaborate in what has been a tough period also alongside EWR.

I think you are all doing a great job! Thank you.

An excellent job, Steve. Thank you.

Good to have a plan. Not sure what to add at this stage. I was unable to attend the exhibition.