

Swavesey Parish Council

Working Party Meeting

Notes from a meeting called by Swavesey Parish Council with representatives of the Environment Agency to discuss concerns with regard to drainage and flood protection within the parish of Swavesey

9.00am Meeting held at The Memorial Hall, High Street, Tuesday 30th September 2008

PRESENT

Parish Councillors :	Mr J Dodson, Mr T Parish, Mr K Wilderspin
Clerk :	Mrs L Miller
District Councillor:	Mrs S Ellington
Environment Agency:	Mr N Pope, Development Control Team Leader Mr T Hamling, Operations Delivery Team Leader
Swavesey Internal Drainage Board:	Mr I Smith, Clerk to the IDB

Item		Action
1	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None received	
2	TO WELCOME AND RECORD THOSE PRESENT As listed above	
3	DRAINAGE CONCERNS The following concerns were raised and discussed:	
3.1	Covell's Drain bank height, in relation to flood protection for Swavesey village The mains points of discussion were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Smith outlined statements from the 2003 Atkins report on Covell's Drain and the height of the banks in relation to flood protection for the surrounding area. In particular that the report stated that the bank height had no impact at all on the flood protection to Fen Drayton village. • Mr Pope confirmed that he had met recently with Mr Matthews from South Cambs District Council (SCDC) to discuss the proposed flood risk assessment to be carried out for the Covell's Drain area. Tenders for the consultancy work were currently being sought by SCDC. • Swavesey Parish Council requested that it be consulted as part of the work, as local knowledge of the area would be an important part of the assessment. Mr Pope replied that the consultants would be requested to meet with both Swavesey and Fen Drayton Parish Councils as part of the work. • Mr Pope also confirmed that the Environment Agency (EA) would provide the same information and figures to the consultants as was provided to Atkins for the 2003 report. 	NP

3.2 Proposed foul water treatment strategy for Northstowe new town, including use of the Swavesey Main Drain to carry treated water out to the river

The mains points of discussion were:

- Mr Pope confirmed that the Memorandum of Understanding with regard to enabling developments to connect to Uttons Drove Sewage Treatment Works (STW) would be signed by SCDC at a meeting scheduled for 8th October. Parish Councillors were still unhappy about this Memorandum and decision. SCDC had replied that the Memorandum was not a legally binding document and would not restrict any party in the discharge of their statutory functions.
- The EA is still objecting to the Northstowe Planning Application and will continue to do so until it is satisfied that its objections have been overcome and it can protect the surrounding area from future flooding.
- Mr Smith stated that the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is still awaiting a response from the EA, with regard to legal issues relating to the Swavesey Main Drain. Mr Pope replied that these are still being investigated.
- Parish Councillors raised concerns over the 'bottle neck' occurring at the culvert under the Overcote Road from water coming down from the Swavesey Main Drain. Also that the channel the other side of the culvert through to Chain Dyke cannot cope with the present levels of water. Mr Hamling replied that the EA is to clear and de-silt the Chain Dyke and agreed that the capacity in the channel is not sufficient. At present the culvert is holding water in moderate flow times, if the Northstowe plans go ahead for Uttons Drove STW, water in the Main Drain will increase significantly and the culvert will have to be made larger. It was thought that the culvert was due to be replaced around two years ago, Mr Hamling was asked to find out why this had not happened.
- Increased water run-off from the planned new A14 will also flow towards Swavesey and out to the river, this must also be taken into account. Mr Pope confirmed that the EA would include A14 surface water drainage figures in the Uttons Drove information.
- It was suggested that Swavesey Parish Council could make recommendations to the EA to consider with regard to water balancing in relation to the A14 proposals.

TH

SPC

9.40am, Cllr Mrs Ellington apologised that she had to leave to attend another meeting

- Uttons Drove STW, Parish Councillors expressed concerns over the design capacity. The increased flow of water out of the STW, if the Northstowe proposal goes ahead, will cause a steady flow of water along the Swavesey Drain, undercutting the banks, which has already started to happen. The drain is badly silted up and in need of de-silting and dredging. Mr Hamling explained that the EA is now starting to carry out weed spraying rather than just weed clearing, which in other areas is now resulting in much improved maintenance of the drains. A rolling program of spraying is now being planned. However no dredging work would take place.
- Parish Councillors ask why Anglian Water is not going to be charged to discharge water into the water courses and why the EA did not originally object when the bylaws were established allowing Anglian Water to discharge to the water courses free of charge? This was not a question that could be answered at the meeting.
- Parish Councillors questioned why a pipeline for foul water from Cambourne to Uttons Drove STW had been sustainable and provided, but a pipeline from Uttons Drove to the river to take the Northstowe foul water had been found unsustainable and is not to be provided? Uttons Drove STW is at capacity, when will the Cambourne pipeline be stopped?
- It was agreed that the Parish Council could provide a radical proposal for the Uttons Drove and A14 (as mentioned above) water to the EA for its consideration. Mr Pope agreed that the EA would consider any recommendations and would meet to discuss them with the Parish Council.

SPC

3.3 River levels in the River Great Ouse and the effect of this on the flood water meadows surrounding Swavesey village

The mains points of discussion were:

- Important that the Swavesey fens are protected and kept available to store the high-ground water from south and west of the village and protect the village from flooding.
- These fens should not be full of water from Covell's Drain unable to enter the river.

3.4 Other Drainage Items raised:Church Bridge

Mr Wilderspin asked when maintenance work could be carried out on the Church Bridge drain, particularly from Cow Fen culvert to the doors at Church Bridge. Mr Hamling agreed to visit the drain with Mr Wilderspin to clarify exactly what work would be required. **TH/
KW**

Mr Smith clarified that if a drain is an Awarded Drain, as the Swavesey Main Drain is, then the EA must carry out necessary maintenance work.

Guided Busway

Mr Pope was asked to investigate concerns raised over the work carried out recently by the Guided Busway contractors, on culverts under the new guideway. Concerns were raised that the work had not all been completed, additional pipes appear to have been put in along the guideway and the new culvert banks were too steep. **NP**

River Bank, Covell's Drain to Webb's Hole

Concerns were raised over the deteriorating state of the riverbank along this stretch of river. Mr Hamling and Mr Wilderspin to walk the bank to review what work the EA should carryout to ensure the bank is urgently repaired. **TH/
KW**

4 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS ARISING**4.1 Environment Agency**

- (i) Mr Pope to ensure that the appointed consultants for the Covell's Drain flood risk assessment be requested to meet with both Swavesey and Fen Drayton Parish Councils to ensure that local knowledge of the area is included within the report.
- (ii) Mr Hamling to find out why work to replace and enlarge the culvert under the Overcote Road had not happened within the last 18 months and to report back to the Parish Council.
- (iii) Mr Hamling to visit Church Bridge drain to review maintenance issues raised and to report back to the Parish Council.
- (iv) Mr Hamling to visit the riverbank at Covell's Drain-Webb's Hole to review maintenance issues raised and to report back to the Parish Council.
- (vi) Mr Pope to arrange for Guided Busway works to be inspected in regard to concerns raised.

4.2 Swavesey Parish Council

- (i) A letter to be sent to the EA, outlining recommendations for water balancing and flow of water from the proposed A14 improvements to the river. Also to include proposals for the use of Uttons Drove STW for Northstowe foul water treatment and how that treated water should then be taken out to the river.

Meeting closed at 10.30am