

SEMINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Consultation Statement

Submission Version – July 2024

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in respect of the Semington Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations requires that a Consultation Statement should:
- contain details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan;
 - explain how they were consulted;
 - summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
 - describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Part A Gives an overview of the consultation events and activities that have led to the production of the Draft Semington Parish NDP and ultimately the planning policies contained within it that aim to control and promote sustainable development in Semington Parish.

Part B Gives an overview and description of the pre-submission consultation, known as Regulation 14, that will be undertaken on the Draft Semington Parish NDP. The Regulation 14 Consultation covered a six-week period beginning February 1st and ending on 15th March 2024.

The purpose of Regulation 14 consultation is to ensure Parish residents, stakeholders and other interested parties had an opportunity to comment on a pre-submission draft of the NDP. Those comments and issues raised will be included in this report, together with the Steering Group's responses to those comments. Changes made to the plan following consideration of consultation responses are outlined.

PART A

2. Our Approach to Consultation

- 2.1 Throughout the preparation stages of the Semington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan, Semington Parish Council and the NDP Steering Group have worked hard to engage local people on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan, and also to seek their views on key topics.
- 2.2 The NDP Steering Group was formed in September 2021, after Semington parish council resolved to develop a neighbourhood plan as it was clear from summer consultation events that sufficient interest existed in the community. Two consultation meetings had been held in the village hall over the 2021 summer period to determine local interest and appetite. Appendix 1 is the summary report of the first community consultation (A full report was also prepared and can be found on the village website.¹ The background to the parish council's consideration of whether to have a neighbourhood plan can be found in Appendix 2.
- 2.3 The NDP Steering Group is made up of parish councillors and residents. Its terms of reference are set out in Appendix 3 and its communications map in Appendix 4. A chair, an agenda & minutes secretary, and a community communications lead were elected at the first meeting with all three positions open to being re-determined every fourth steering group meeting so that all roles could be shared amongst members over the neighbourhood planning period. In addition to the steering group, a group of critical friends was formed to act as a sounding board for ideas and a source of additional practical support. They have been consulted at every stage of the development of the plan and their feedback has informed the contents of documents and the planning of consultations.
- 2.4 Wiltshire Council Link Officer, David Way, and Katie Lea from Neighbourhood Planning Consultancy Place Studio, supported the Steering Group throughout the Plan preparation process.
- 2.5 The following section sets out the consultation methods that have been employed (pre- Regulation 14) in the preparation of the NDP.

3 Plan Preparation and Consultation

Summary of Events and Activities

- 3.1. This section sets out details of how the community and other stakeholders as a whole were engaged in the process of plan preparation.

¹ See semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-documents/#np-reports

- 3.2. The summer of 2021 saw two dedicated events in the village hall which sought villagers’ views on [i] whether to develop and neighbourhood plan and [ii] whether they’d like a role in it. These were run by the parish council. There was also an opportunistic event (the village fete) which also provided an opportunity. It was following the positive feedback from these events that the parish council gave the go-ahead for the neighbourhood plan in September 2021.
- 3.3. In the thinking about vision and objectives that went on in preparation for the first community consultation in March 2022, the steering group was able to draw on a significant communications exercise in 2020 when the parish council consulted parishioners about the future development of the parish, and their priorities. The outcomes of this exercise (summarised as development themes) were helpful in the council’s designing of a new village website and in organising its own agenda. Significantly, however, they also proved very helpful to the neighbourhood planning steering group as it could build on this extensive pre-existing consultation.

Sequence of Events and Activities

- 3.4. The sections that follow describe what took place by type of event or activity. The chart below shows the sequence of activities and events.

Event / Activity	Date
Parish Council consultations on possible development themes	2020
Evening Exploratory Drop-in	July 21 st 2021
Village fete	July 31 st 2021
Open Day in the village hall	August 14 th 2021
First Community Drop-in Consultation	March 5 th 2022
Village Fête	July 23 rd 2022
Village Dog Show	September 17 th 2022
Second Community Drop-in Consultation	April 22 nd 2023
Village fete	July 22 nd 2023
Village Dog Show	September 16 th 2023
Regulation 14 Community Drop-in Consultation	February 24 th 2024
Village Hall coffee mornings	Throughout Reg 14

More detail on Key Events and Activities

Evening Exploratory Drop-in | Wednesday 21st July 2021

- 3.5. The event was attended by over 30 parishioners who were asked to participate in writing what they think is important to the village. An introduction to the evening was given by Peter Smith, the Chair of the Parish Council and presentations were given by the Chair of a steering group in a nearby parish, and by Katie Lea of Place Studios who have extensive experience on working on Neighbourhood Plans. The attendees participated in a question and answer session about the pros and cons of having a neighbourhood plan.

Village Fête | Saturday July 31st 2021

3.6. This was an opportunity to further publicise the idea of a neighbourhood plan and get feedback from villagers about the pros and cons of developing a Plan.

Open Day in the village hall | Saturday August 14th 2021

3.7. This built on the two July events, the evening exploratory drop in and the fête. It's purpose was to consult with more villagers and to gather data to help the Parish Council to decide whether to develop a Plan. The meeting was run by the Steering Group.

First Community Drop-in | Saturday March 5th 2022

3.8. Held in the Village Hall on a Saturday, this well attended village consultation meeting was run by the Steering Group and our consultants. People were invited to come along to learn more about the Neighbourhood Plan, and add their comments. As a result of the feedback, the draft vision and objectives were updated based on feedback. A Summary Report can be found in Appendix 1 and a full report is on the Parish Council webpages under Neighbourhood Plan Reports.

Village Fête | Saturday July 23rd 2022

3.9. Held in the Village Hall as part of the village fête, this well attended consultation meeting gave villagers the chance to be updated on the Neighbourhood Plan, and to raise questions and issues. There were three specific activities which we used to engage villagers: [i] people were invited to view a slide show of 24 key views within the parish, and to identify the views by using a map and a descriptor sheet. [ii] a newly-developed climate change questionnaire was available for completion and links to the on-line version were provided; [iii] a consultation of which village green spaces ought to be protected was carried out using maps and a comment sheet.

Village Dog Show | Saturday September 17th 2022

3.10. This was the inaugural dog show and it attracted a lot of participants both from the village and from outside. We had a neighbourhood plan stall for two reasons: [i] to allow anyone to ask about the development of the plan; and [ii] to give parishioners the chance to complete the climate change survey.

Second Community Drop-in Consultation | April 22nd 2023

3.11. Held in the Village Hall on a Saturday, this was another well attended village consultation meeting run by the Steering Group and our consultants. There were specific focus on green space, housing and landscape and we sought specific feedback. A Summary Report can be found in Appendix 5 and a full report is on the Parish Council webpages under Neighbourhood Plan Reports.

Village fete | July 22nd 2023

3.12. Once again, this was held in the Village Hall as part of the village fête and was reasonably well attended given the terrible weather. The meeting gave villagers the chance to be updated on the Neighbourhood Plan, and to raise questions and issues. Feedback continued to be positive.

Village Dog Show | September 16th 2023

3.13. This was the second dog show and once again attracted participants both from the village and from outside. We had a neighbourhood plan stall to allow anyone to ask about the development of the plan and to update them on Regulation 14 timings.

Regulation 14 Community Drop-in Consultation | February 24th 2024

3.14 A village hall open event was organized at the mid-point of the Reg 14 period to enable villagers to talk to steering group members about the draft plan and to raise any queries they had. This was well attended and led to formal responses being made about the plan. During the Reg 14 consultation period at least one member of the steering group attended every village hall coffee morning.

Ongoing Activities

Facebook

3.15 The Village Facebook account has been used to help residents keep up with NDP progress. We have also used this to share information about consultations and to flag up activities and events. At the time of drafting, the Facebook page has 691 members.



Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Community (UK)

Private group · 691 members

Join Group

About Discussion

About this group

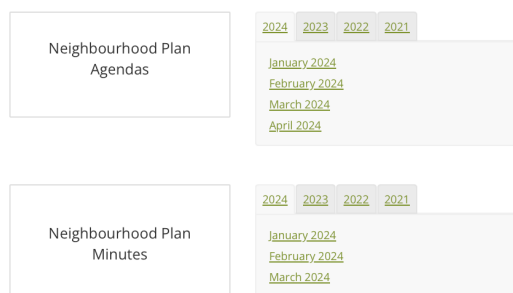
The Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Community page, formerly The Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group was formed at the be... [See more](#)

Private
Only members can see who's in the group and what they post.

Parish Website

3.16 The Semington Parish Council website was used to promote the details of events and activities.

The website also hosts the Neighbourhood Plan webpages which contain agenda, minutes, consultation documents, survey instruments, reports and evidence.



Parish Newsletter


3.17 Neighbourhood Plan updates featured in the monthly Parish Magazine during the planning process.

Semington Neighbourhood Plan What today is all about

One of the most important questions for a Neighbourhood Plan is whether to allocate land for housing development.



***We need to know what you think.
Should we allocate land? Yes or No?***

 **If we do, some new houses will be built. But once the Plan is approved, other sites in the parish will be protected from speculative development for at least two years.**

 **If we don't, the Plan will still give some protection. But it will be much weaker.**

Four fields have been put suggested by owners and have been assessed by consultants as potentially suitable for development.

They all have pros and cons.

If you believe the Plan should include housing, we need to know what you think of these sites.

We will use your feedback to decide what the Plan will propose.

We would also like your comments on the proposed policies and sites for Landscape (Board 6) and for designating Local Green Spaces (Board 7).

Other Communications

3.18 From time to time, fliers and other paper-based communications were sent to every house in the parish. The minutes of the parish council also contained updates. The minutes are available on the website, on the village notice board and are summarized in the parish magazine.

Particular care was taken to communicate with St George's primary school in order to involve and obtain the feedback of younger members of the parish. For example, at the first community consultation in March 2022, a corner of the village hall was dedicated to gathering the ideas of young people about village development.

4 Targeted Engagement

Landowners and Parishioners

- 4.1. The Parish Council undertook a local Call for Sites in collaboration with Wiltshire Council. This involved writing to everyone who had registered a SHELAA site in the parish. Subsequent to this, we commissioned AECOM to evaluate each of the SHELAA sites and their report was accepted in December 2022. Following their report landowners were sent a link to the report. The Call for Sites letter is at Appendix 6 and a Call for Sites letter to parishioners is at Appendix 7. Agents for the site which is allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan have also been engaged as the details of the allocation have been firmed up.
- 4.2. Owners of potential Local Green Spaces and dwellings were also contacted as part of the Local Green Space and Locally Valued Non-Designated Heritage Assets work.

Businesses

- 4.3. The Steering Group surveyed the views of the local business community, and the views of those who worked from home.
- 4.4. An audit of businesses in the village was undertaken and a survey was carried out. Questions included: plans for growth, the services and facilities that businesses needed from the village / parish, what help the neighbourhood plan could provide, and what the business could contribute to the village priorities e.g. green spaces, community facilities etc.

In these, distinctions were made between

- [i] Semington-based businesses with a physical location in the village (eg, the Somerset Arms, the Independent learning centre, farms, etc),
 - [ii] Semington-based businesses run from home, and
 - [iii] people working from home for businesses that are not Semington-based.
- 4.5. The definition of business for the survey purposes included the not-for profit sector. Business surveys were carried out by visiting the enterprises and by telephone. The business and working from home survey and outcomes are set out in Appendix 8.

Climate Change Survey

- 4.6. A climate change survey was developed and publicised through Facebook, the parish magazine and the website. The survey and its results are set out in Appendix 9

Young People

- 4.7. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) looks into the future so the Steering Group were particularly interested to know what young people thought and how they would like to see the Parish develop. As noted above, seeking feedback from young people was a priority for the first community consultation event in March 2022.

PART B Regulation 14 Pre-submission Publicity and Consultation

- 5.1. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 states that before submitting a plan proposal to the local planning authority, a qualifying body (Semington Parish Council) must:
- publicise in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area
 - details of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan
 - details of where and when the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan may be inspected
 - details of how to make representations
 - the date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised
 - consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood plan and
 - send a copy of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority
- 5.2. This section of the Consultation Statement will therefore outline the approach taken by the Planning Group to consult on the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan at the Regulation 14 stage of the process. The Regulation 14 consultation ran from February 1st to March 15th 2024.

Publicising the Plan

- 5.3. In the run-up to the start of the Regulation 14 period, a dedicated email address – reg14@semington.org.uk – was set up on the Semington parish council website. A phone number was also publicised for anyone who wished to speak to a Plan representative rather than email. The email address was used to send out, receive and store all Regulation 14 messages. Although there was already a section of the website devoted to neighbourhood planning, a new and separate page was set up – www.semington.org.uk/np – to host the draft plan and the on-line response form. This page went live on the first day of the Regulation 14 consultation period.
- 5.4. The following groups were communicated with at the start of the Regulation 14 period:
- All the statutory consultees identified by Wiltshire Council (and including Wiltshire Council) – see Appendix 10
 - Semington residents and local groups
 - Semington businesses
 - All landowners / agents who had put their land forward for consideration within the Neighbourhood Plan
 - All landowners whose land had been identified as Local Green Space and included in the draft Plan

- 5.5. Residents and businesses were communicated with in the following ways:
- The parish magazine at the beginning of the Regulation 14 consultation, and then one month into it. In addition, businesses were contacted by email. All these messages identified the various ways in which feedback could be provided
 - The parish magazine at the beginning of the Regulation 14 consultation, and then one month into it. In addition, businesses were contacted by email. All these messages identified the various ways in which feedback could be provided
 - Regular messages on the news page of the parish council website and on the village Facebook page
 - Posters displayed on lampposts throughout the village. See Appendix 11
 - Attendance by steering group members at the Thursday coffee mornings in the village hall during which it was possible to view the plan and provide feedback
 - An open day was held in the middle of the Regulation 14 period (Saturday February 24th) in the village hall from 1100 to 1400. Its specific purposes were to remind villagers of the neighbourhood plan process, to allow them to raise any enquiries about this, and to enable them to respond to the questions posed in the response forms. 32 villagers came to the meeting with response forms being either completed or taken away for completion. There was a positive tone to both verbal and written responses with the Steering Group's strategy being endorsed.
 - Post Regulation 14, a summary report on the consultation was reported to the Parish Council on April 17th. See Appendix 12.

Viewing the Documents

- 5.6. The draft Neighbourhood Plan, background documentation² to the draft plan was available on the website for the Regulation 14 period, along with all the policies³ in separate pdfs⁴.
- 5.7. As well as being available online, paper copies of the Neighbourhood Plan were available to read in the village hall throughout the consultation period. As noted, during this time a member of the steering group attended every coffee morning and talked with villagers about the plan and the consultation.

Making Representation

- 5.8. The main tool used to collect feedback from the Regulation 14 Consultation was an online survey. In order to gauge opinion on each draft policy it asked whether people a) agreed with a draft policy, b) disagreed with a policy, c) not sure about a policy. Comments on each policy were also invited.

² See: www.semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-documents/#np-reports

³ Policy 10 only went live on February 1st as it contained information about the site that had been identified as most suitable for development.

⁴ See: www.semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-documents/#1689667928450-a92cb911-5619

- 5.9. In addition to the online version of the questionnaire, paper copies of the questionnaire could be obtained from members of the steering group whose contact details were publicised in the information provided to villagers.
- 5.10. Representations were also received by email – these were mainly from statutory consultees and landowners.

Statutory Consultees

- 5.11. Statutory consultees were all contacted by email on February 1st and directed to the Semington parish council website. See Appendix 13 for Regulation 14 letter to Statutory consultees and the list of those it was sent to (Appendix 5). All the email addresses provided by Wiltshire Council were correct. In addition, the draft plan, the on-line response form, and the background documentation were sent to the Wiltshire Council Link Officer and his immediate colleagues by *We Transfer*.

Feedback to Regulation 14 Consultation

- 5.12. We had 67 responses to the online survey – many of them including compliments like that one. Overall, villagers backed the Plan to preserve Semington’s “actively rural character,” while encouraging limited development which creates jobs or provides additional facilities.
- 5.13. Ten of the 13 policies attracted more than 90 per cent support. Only one received less than 80 per cent. That was the proposal to allow up to 40 houses west of The Turnpike, which was still backed by 79 per cent of respondents. Villagers welcomed the inclusion of a shop, though some doubted that it would be viable. A few wanted no new housing at all, while others stressed the need for homes to be genuinely affordable for local people. The only other policy which seemed to arouse substantial concern was the potential encouragement of renewable energy generation. More than 80 per cent supported the principle, but some were opposed to wind turbines while others would object to solar farms.
- 5.14. 8 responses were received from statutory consultees and 8 responses from landowners (or their representatives). Responses were generally positive and constructive in nature.

Making Amendments

- 5.15. Appendix 14 is a spreadsheet in which all representations received to the Regulation 14 consultation were tabulated against the draft Plan policy that each comment best related to, or logged as a general comment. The comments were carefully considered and responded to by the Steering Group. Where appropriate, amendments were made to the draft Plan and evidence base for Regulation 15 submission to Wiltshire Council for subsequent stages of the Neighbourhood Plan making processes. A summary of changes is set out below:

Policy	Summary of Revisions made as a Result of the Pre-Submission Consultation
POLICY 1: Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording based on feedback from Wiltshire Council (and where relevant in other policies where reference to the Habitats Regulations are included).

POLICY 2: Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 3: Communications Infrastructure	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 4: Local Green Space Designation	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 5: Public Rights of Way and Cycle Network	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 6: Green Blue Infrastructure and Nature Recovery	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 7: Protecting Semington’s Actively Rural Landscape	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 8: Design and Local Distinctiveness	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording and updates to the evidence base relating to local non-designated heritage assets.
POLICY 9: Pre-application Community Engagement	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 10: Land to the west of Turnpike Close (the Auction Field)	Support from the community (nearly 80% of community respondents supported. Lowest level of support but still high). Adjustments to the policy made as a result of feedback from Regulation 14 consultation and more detailed evidence base.
POLICY 11: Community Facilities	Support from the community. Minor adjustments to the wording.
POLICY 12: Sustainable Construction	Support from the community. Major adjustments to the wording (but the intent remains the same) including the title which has changed to Sustainable Construction from Climate Responsive Buildings based on feedback from Wiltshire Council.
POLICY 13: Standalone Renewable Energy Generation	Support from the community. Major adjustments to the wording (but the intent remains the same) based on feedback from Wiltshire Council.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Summary Report of the first Community Consultation Event

Appendix 2 Background to the Development of a Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3 Steering Group Terms of Reference

Appendix 4 Steering Group Communications Map

Appendix 5 Summary Report of the second informal Community Consultation Event

Appendix 6 Landowner Call for Sites

Appendix 7 Parishioner Call for Sites

Appendix 8 Business and Working from Home Survey and Report

Appendix 9 Climate Change Survey & Responses

Appendix 10 Statutory Consultees Identified by Wiltshire Council and those Responding

Appendix 11 Posters Displayed on Lampposts throughout the Village

Appendix 12 Post Regulation 14 Summary Feedback

Appendix 13 Regulation 14 Letter to Statutory Consultees

Appendix 14 Overall Summary of Representations Received

Appendix 1 Summary Report of the first Community Consultation Event

Semington Neighbourhood Planning

5th March 2022 'drop-in' Event
SUMMARY REPORT



This is the Summary note of the 'drop-in', plus a few general reflections. The Full Report, with every single comment noted, together with further information, is available on our website.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Between 11am - 3pm on Saturday 5th March, people were invited to 'drop-in' to the Village Hall to find out more about how the Plan is shaping up.
- The aim of the event was to share a draft vision and objectives for the plan, and to build more information on what people felt should be the scope, or content of the Plan.
- It was a cold, but dry early spring day, so we were really pleased that 62 people called in!
- Not only that but people spent on average around 30 minutes at the event, clearly enjoying all the really interesting, challenging and creative things to do and chat about – this included a kids corner.
- A lot of information was captured that is already helping to shape the content and direction of the Plan. We have made changes to the plan's vision and objectives, and to how we will go about this work, as a result of what villagers said.
- Below are some of the headline comments from those who came along.



KEY POINTS

- People were very keen to give us their views, most of which showed strong support for the twin pillars of the plan - maintaining Semington's actively rural character and restricting new housing developments.
- There was a generally positive response to the draft vision and objectives as well as some really useful comments that will be used to draft a next version of these.
- There was emphasis on [i] helping young families move to the village to maintain a diverse community and on [ii] helping families to remain here. The need for appropriately sized and affordable housing was stressed – but the need for that to be sensitive to the rural setting and small scale of the village must be taken into account.
- The need for more (and better) village facilities, the better use of facilities and meeting the needs of all were mentioned. Facilities mentioned included a shop, and play areas for younger and older children.

- Protecting wildlife, heritage assets (such as the pill boxes) and the rural setting of the village were all mentioned.
- The wide-open landscape setting, the canal and the many walking routes of the village were highlighted as important reasons why people love living in Semington parish.
- It was also clear that safety of roads, especially regarding outside the school area of Pound Lane is an important topic

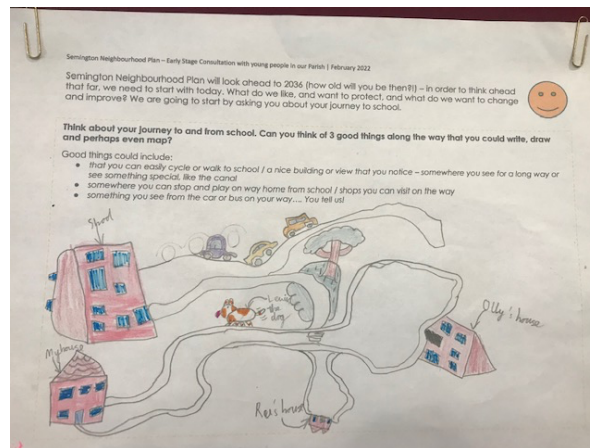
AND WHAT NEXT?

Now the all-important evidence collection begins in earnest!

The Plan needs to be based on evidence to be strong – and collecting evidence can be an opportunity for everyone to get involved ...

.... if you love walking in the landscape around, perhaps you could help to identify key views that a policy in the Plan could protect

.... or if you are interested in how future development could be addressed in a sensitive and locally appropriate way, the complex question of future housing in the village will be an important point of consideration – we can have more control of this through the Neighbourhood Plan.



Interested? If so, get in touch with the Steering Group at np@semington.org.uk or through the village Facebook group

We have re-drafted the next version of the draft vision and objectives based on your feedback. Over the coming months, everyone in Semington, and we want to include our youngest residents, can all contribute in some way to shaping a Neighbourhood Plan* that adds a Semington layer of detail and planning policies to the Wiltshire-wide Plan. We'll keep you updated regularly through the community Facebook page, the village website and the parish magazine as we develop this work.

And finally, thanks to those who were able to come along and to any taking the time to read this summary. We really appreciate your time and input in the Plan which we are hoping can play a strong and positive role in the future of our parish. If you'd like to read the full report on the March 5th event, you'll find this on our website semington.org.uk

Semington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

np@semington.org.uk

Appendix 2 Background to the Development of a Neighbourhood Plan

Prior to making a decision to go ahead, Semington Parish Council had considered whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan on a number of occasions.⁵ Five arguments were consistently presented to the council by some of its members:

- [i] doing so would be very expensive in both financial and human resource terms;
- [ii] it would be lengthy process which would struggle to keep villagers engaged;
- [iii] a Neighbourhood Plan would quickly date and have to be done again;
- [iv] a developed Neighbourhood Plan would be ignored if it ran counter to the Wiltshire Council local planning strategy; and
- [v] a Neighbourhood Plan would be ineffective in combatting the main problems Semington faced: aggressive approaches by developers seeking to take advantage of the lack of a 5-year housing land supply.

A number of factors led to a change in outlook:

- [i] the parish council had set up its own website in 2020, which involved the development of a vision for its work and the village, and the creating of working groups with specific areas of interest;
- [ii] experience of coping with the pandemic had led to a dramatic improvement in village communications and support; this came from new village groups rather than directly from the parish council;
- [iii] the composition of the council changed with three co-options replacing councillors who had resigned; one new member was very knowledgeable about the Neighbourhood Plan process;
- [iv] WC began to communicate about the role that Neighbourhood Plans play in the formal development of the local planning process, and hence the importance for communities to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place.

At the January 2021 PC meeting, new council members questioned the arguments against the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish.

At the February PC meeting there was an agenda item: “To decide whether to develop a Semington Neighbourhood Plan” and a discussion about the pros and cons of developing a N-P took place. It was decided to defer a decision in order to consult both WC and with other parishes about this who have direct experience of such plans.

At the March council, a village open meeting was suggested in order to “judge the support for such a plan and to identify those members of the community who may possess the key skills necessary to contribute to, or to lead, the development of the plan.” It was agreed to talk initially to WC officers responsible for N-P, and report back. That took place in April and was followed by an informal meeting of the 3 councillors involved to reflect on developments.

The Chair reported back to the May PC meeting. There was now a general view that a Neighbourhood Plan would be a good thing for the village and that the process of developing it would also be beneficial.

⁵ In the summer of 1999 a village appraisal was carried out with the support of Community First and Rural Action for the Environment. In 2014, a rural housing needs survey was carried out in conjunction with Wiltshire Council.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should consult villagers and village organisations on the desirability of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Semington.

At the June PC meeting the Council agreed to go ahead with developing a Neighbourhood Plan *provided* that there was sufficient support from the village to enable a steering group to be formed. The PC resolved that the *Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area* would be 'The Civil Parish of Semington'. The village consultation was set for July 21st. The PC would then receive feedback at its next meeting to help it decide whether to go ahead or not.

At the July meeting, the council resolved to endorse the following draft Neighbourhood Plan documents: [i] Steering Group Roles; [ii] Communications Matrix; [iii] Prospective Timeline.

A flyer was produced for the community meeting on July 21st which set out the arguments for developing a Neighbourhood Plan and invited villagers to come to hear more and to see whether (and how) they'd like to be involved. This was delivered to every house in the parish. The village Facebook account and website carried similar information.

On July 21st over 30 villagers turned out on one of the hottest evenings of the year to hear from consultants and a local parish council about the Neighbourhood Plan process. Following feedback, it was decided to hold an open day on Saturday August 14th in order to enable more villagers to attend, and also to promote the rural housing need survey. The parish council also had a stand at the village fete on July 31st to enable villagers to talk about both issues.

The August 14th meeting was attended by about 20 parishioners. All indicated that they were in favour of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, and most said that they'd be able to support the process in some way. A small number said they were interested in becoming part of the steering group. At this meeting less emphasis was placed than previously on definitive roles within the group. Rather, it was being part of a cohesive group of villagers that was stressed, with specific roles emerging from deliberations.

Those who said they were interested in being part of the steering group were then approached with a view to confirming their commitment ahead of the next parish council meeting on September 15th. At this meeting, there would be a proposal to establish a steering group, with draft terms of reference being agreed.

Appendix 3 Steering Group Terms of Reference

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group is to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Wiltshire civic parish of Semington within the terms of the Localism Act 2011. This will reflect the aspirations of those who live and work in the community and accord with Wiltshire Council's core strategy and policies.

2 Objectives

The plan will identify the important aspects of life in the parish that need to be taken into account in future planning decisions. It will bring forward proposals to enhance the quality of life in the parish in the years to come and provide a framework for future land use within the parish. It will bring its work to a successful conclusion by the end of 2023.

The Steering Group will work in an open, consultative fashion by

1. engaging individuals and groups in the local community in discussions about key local economic, social and environmental issues and their wishes for the future of the parish.
2. ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan is based on sound and objective evidence that is drawn from a wide range of appropriate sources.
3. communicating effectively with all households, organisations and community groups throughout the planning period.
4. keeping records of how the plan was developed.
5. liaising throughout with the Parish Council, the designated Wiltshire Council officer and the community's elected councillor.
6. working within the budget set by the parish council for the development of the plan.

3 Accountability

- a. The Steering Group has full delegated authority from the Parish Council to manage the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. It will report regularly to the council which is the qualifying body. The Neighbourhood Plan will be a standing item on the council agenda.
- b. The Steering Group will organise inclusive, open and transparent consultation events with residents, businesses and civic organisations in the parish during the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- c. The Parish Council will have the opportunity to consider and comment on all the policies proposed within the plan, and the draft of the plan before local public consultations.

The final draft Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to the Parish Council for approval before onward submission to Wiltshire Council prior to independent examination.

4 Constitution

- a. The Steering Group will initially comprise 8 members, made up of 4 parish councillors and 4 non-councillors who bring specific skills and knowledge.
- b. The quorum for decision-making shall be four members.
- c. Members are free to resign at any time by notifying the Chair in writing.
- d. If appropriate, additional members can be co-opted by the Steering Group which will review its membership from time to time, reporting any changes to the Parish Council.
- e. Any proposal to change these Terms of Reference must be approved by the Parish Council.

5 Method of Working

- a. The Steering Group will normally meet at monthly intervals. Meetings will be open to the public.
- b. A Chair will be elected from and by members of the Steering Group. All other roles will be allocated in similar fashion. All roles may be re-allocated from time to time.
- c. The Steering Group will endeavour to take decisions by consensus. Should voting be necessary, a simple majority carries the day with the Chair having an additional casting vote. Any issue may be referred to the Parish Council for a decision.
- d. The Steering Group can set up sub-groups with a specific remit to examine particular topics. Sub-groups will comprise members of the Steering Group (who will lead the process) and individuals from the community who have offered to help the planning process. Sub-groups will report back to the Steering Group to enable wider consideration of issues and decision-making.
- e. Consultants will be engaged by the Steering Group to guide the planning process. Tenders will be sought and criteria developed for adjudicating between these.
- f. The Chair will produce an agenda and make papers available for each meeting of the Steering Group by consulting members of the group.
- g. Each meeting will begin with an opportunity for members to declare any pecuniary interests in relation to the meeting agenda. These will be noted.
- h. Notes recording decisions reached and those responsible to take actions will be available to Steering Group members no later than 7 days after the meeting; a written report will be circulated to members of the parish council 7 days ahead of the next scheduled meeting; any decisions required of the Parish Council will be clearly identified.
- i. These notes, together with notices and relevant papers, will be communicated via the Parish Council website and by other means as appropriate.
- j. It is expected that all Steering Group members abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council code of conduct.
- k. Members will be covered by the insurance policy held by the Parish Council.

6 Finance

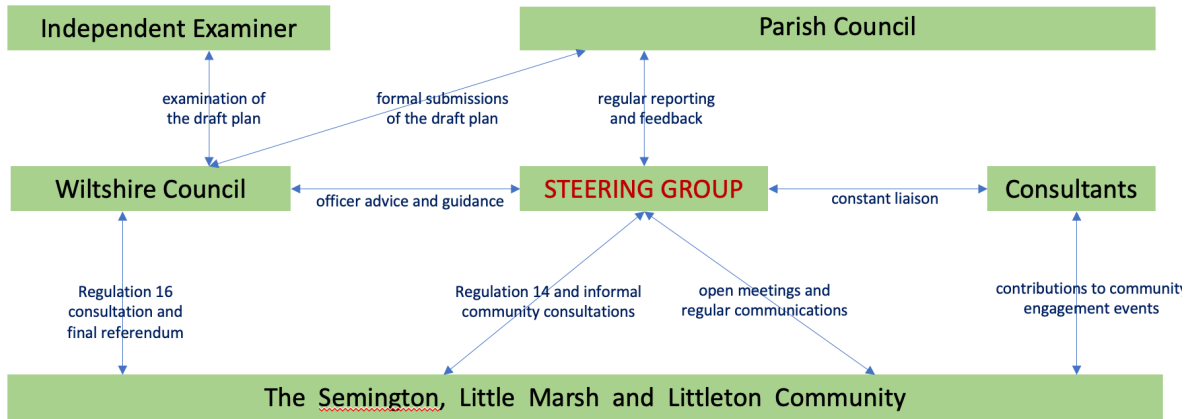
- a. Semington Parish Council will apply for a grant from the Sustainable Community Locality Fund to cover the costs of the production of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with current regulations. In addition, other sources of funding may be sought as appropriate by the Parish Council.
- b. All grants and funds will be applied for and held by the Parish Council which will ringfence the funds for neighbourhood planning purposes.
- c. The Steering Group will produce a budget to monitor and control expenditure. It will maintain a clear record of expenditure and income with supporting documents, reporting to the parish council at regular intervals. All payments will be made through and by the Parish Council.
- d. Members may claim expenses for reasonable and necessary expenditure on the business of the group as allowed by the budget; normally, an estimate will be submitted to the Chair of the Group and approved before incurring any costs.

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Approved by Semington Parish Council at its meeting on September 15th 2021.

Appendix 4 Steering Group Communications Map

Semington Neighbourhood Plan Communications



Endorsed by the Parish Council on July 14th 2021

Appendix 5 Summary Report of the second informal Community Consultation Event

Semington Neighbourhood Planning

22nd April 2023 'drop-in' Event

SUMMARY REPORT



This is the Summary note of the 'drop-in', plus a few general reflections. The Full Report, with every single comment noted, together with further information, is available on our website.

Between 11am - 3pm on Saturday 22nd April 2023, people were invited to 'drop-in' to the Village Hall to find out more about how the Plan is shaping up. The aim of the event was to set out and get feedback on the Steering Group's proposals for housing, landscape and green spaces within the parish and to get more feedback on the scope, or content of the Plan.

55 people came to express their views on housing, landscape and green spaces, and their level of engagement was reflected in much lively discussion and by the 70 post-it notes that they left for us to consider.



Below we set out a summary of the feedback received. A full record can be found in Appendix 1.

The results were pleasingly clear-cut, with unanimous support for the Plan to include policies to protect sensitive landscapes and to designate green spaces. Perhaps more surprising was the strong support for allocating a site for housing to enable the Plan to give greater protection from speculative development. Of the four sites identified, there was a clear preference for site 1 at the Turnpike and strong rejection of site 2, north of Pound Lane. The response to the other two sites was more varied but largely negative.

The results in detail from the tick boxes on the exhibition boards were:

LANDSCAPE

Q) Do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should include a policy to protect sensitive landscape areas?

YES 43

MAYBE 0

NO 0

GREEN SPACES

Q) Do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should include a policy to designate some Green Spaces that meet the national criteria for designation?

YES 42

MAYBE 0

NO 0

HOUSING

Q) Given the reasons set out for allocation, do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should consider allocating a site for housing?

YES 27

MAYBE 8

NO 0

Q) If you said yes or maybe to allocating a site for housing, what do you think of the suitability of these sites? Please add any conditions that would be necessary for you to support that site (or part of it)?

Should we allocate?

SITE 1	YES 26	MAYBE 9	NO 1
SITE 2	YES 0	MAYBE 2	NO 29
SITE 3	YES 3	MAYBE 8	NO 20
SITE 4	YES 10	MAYBE 4	NO 24

The 70 post-it notes cover a range of issues. Several call for any additional housing to focus on smaller, affordable and/or social houses for local young people who wish to stay where they grew up and older villagers who want to downsize. Others are sceptical about current requirements for affordable housing and call for developers to be compelled to provide truly affordable homes and make a greater contribution to local amenities or infrastructure.

Several stress the importance of protecting Semington from encroachment from neighbouring towns. Others want to maintain a green buffer along the canal. There is some disappointment that the Plan is not able to designate more green spaces. The view on landscape and environment is perhaps best summed up by this Semington resident:

“I love living in a village surrounded by beautiful green spaces that support much wildlife and ensure future of biodiversity. I vote to keep it all.”

And finally, thanks to those who were able to come along and to any taking the time to read this summary. We really appreciate your time and input in the Plan which we are hoping can play a strong and positive role in the future of our parish. If you'd like to read the full report on the April 22nd event, you'll find this on our website:
semington.org.uk/Documents/Neighbourhood_Plan/Reports/APRIL_2023_CONSULTATION_REPORT.pdf

Appendix 6 Landowner Call for Sites

<h2>Semington Neighbourhood Plan</h2> <h3>Landowner Call for Sites</h3>	 <p>Semington Parish Council</p>
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Please send completed forms before July 8th 2022 to np@semington.org.uk

PERSONAL DETAILS

Person submitting the form

Name	
Company (if relevant)	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email address	
What is your interest in the land?	
Landowners who have already made a SHELAA application to Wiltshire Council and have a SHELAA ref number for a site – please add that here if you are happy for that information to be shared with the Parish Council.	

Landowner (if not as above. If multiple landowners, please add all)

Name (s)	
Company (ies)	
Address (es)	
Telephone number (s)	
Email address (es)	

SITE DETAILS

Suggested site name	
Site address	
Site postcode / grid reference / what3words	
Is the site in single or multiple ownership?	
Current and any previous use of the site. If agricultural, please list crops, grazing, mowing, fallow or other uses in the last 5 years.	
Estimated site area (ha)	

POTENTIAL CONSTRAINTS TO DEVELOPMENT

Any physical constraints (topography, overhead lines, access to utilities etc.	
Is there access to the site from the public road network?	
If not, how would vehicular access be achieved?	
Are there any 'ransom strips' that might limit access?	
Is there any known contamination on the land?	
Are there any covenants on the land that might limit changes of use?	
Are there factors that might make parts of the site unsuitable for development?	
Are there any other factors that the Steering Group should be aware of?	
Explain any work that has been done that might address any of the above constraints	
Explain any work that has been done to assess the site's viability for change of use.	
Has this site previously been submitted to Wiltshire Council in the SHELAA process?	
When will the site be available for sale or change of use?	
Estimated the number of dwellings the site could accommodate	
Have you engaged professionally with a land agent or development promoter when considering future uses of the site? If so, have you signed a promotion agreement or equivalent?	
Have you submitted the site for outline planning permission or otherwise engaged with Wiltshire Council regarding the suitability of the site for development or other change of use? If Yes, when do you expect/hope to start development / change of use and when might any new dwellings be available for occupation?	

AMBITIONS FOR THE SITE

Please suggest what you regard as the potential uses for the site (you may complete more than one box). Add as much detail as possible, e.g. how many houses, how many employment units, how it will impact on the sustainability of the local community and enhance the actively rural character of Semington, how it could help reduce carbon emissions or otherwise create a positive impact on the wider environment, what community infrastructure might be appropriate.

Residential	
Employment	
Mixed use	
Agriculture (e.g. low intensity, organic, regenerative or farming)	
Other uses and/or benefits to the village (e.g. open space, nature recovery)	

Please send completed forms before July 8th 2022 to np@semington.org.uk

Appendix 1

This resolution was passed at the Semington Parish Council meeting on March 16th 2022.

The Council **resolved** to reconfirm its resolution at the meeting on February 16th 2022 not to support any further housing developments in Semington before further village consultations through the development and realisation of the Neighbourhood Plan after which it would re-examine this resolution. It noted that the recent rural housing needs survey showed little demand for either affordable or market housing in the village. The Council noted that when re-examining the resolution, there would be a strong case for being pro-active in setting standards that the Council should like to see any such development meet before being able to support it. The Council therefore **resolved** to adopt the following standards, to use them in any discussions with prospective developers, and to commend them to the neighbourhood planning steering group.

The development:

- comprises fewer than 10 properties so as to avoid sudden large increases to the size of the village size and hence to its character
- does not further encroach the boundaries of the village into the green buffer zone between here and neighbourhood settlements
- brings properties that primarily meet the needs of existing villagers and those with a local connection looking to move to the village
- is above current building regulations to be fully carbon neutral, including construction materials and ongoing useage
- includes electric car charging facilities for every dwelling, and also for visitors
- provides significant additional tangible benefits to the village that enhances its actively rural character and natural surroundings
- brings higher net biodiversity gain than the minimum 10% required by the 2021 Environment Act in addition to active support for existing wildlife populations
- includes upgrades to the sewerage system and flood amelioration given the downstream challenges of the Bristol Avon
- has full fibre broadband provision for every property

Semington Neighbourhood Plan

A Call for Sites: thinking about land in the parish



Dear Fellow Villagers

We are writing to bring you up to date with the Semington Neighbourhood Plan, which will give the parish a big say in planning up to 2036 and provide some protection from speculative development.

Up to now, the steering group set up by Semington Parish Council has been working on its vision and objectives, and we thank all of you who have contributed your comments. The attendance at our latest consultation event in March was particularly encouraging, and it is clear that our commitment to keeping our actively rural character and limiting future development is widely accepted.

Now we are moving into a new phase where we consider in detail how land in the village is used for sport and recreation, housing, employment, cultural activities, wildlife, etc. We cannot stop all development, so one possibility is to work with a housing developer to ensure that there are benefits for the village. This has already happened in the current build along St. George's Road, which is delivering allotments and affordable housing.

Calling for Sites

After weighing the advantages and disadvantages, the steering group has decided to write to all landowners that we know have an interest in developing land around the village to invite them to tell us what plans they have and whether they'd like to work with the Neighbourhood Plan. We feel it is better to consider development possibilities as a whole, rather than reacting piecemeal to individual bids from developers. When we have their replies, all the sites will be assessed for their suitability for inclusion in the Plan. We'll then consult everyone in the village on what decisions we should take. At all times, your views will be paramount.

Asking Villagers

We are also issuing a "Call for Sites" to you, the people who know the village best. We want to hear your ideas about particular pieces of land where a change of use would benefit the parish or enhance its character. Your suggestions will have a real influence on our consultation, but you will remain anonymous. Your details are only required in case we need further information from you.

Getting in Touch

If you have a suggestion, please complete the back page (it's also on semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan-documents) and either send it to np@semington.org.uk or to Neighbourhood Plan, 24 Pound Lane, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6LP.

Please return a separate form for each piece of land by June 24th 2022.

Thank you,

Semington Neighbourhood Plan Steering group,

The Semington Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites

PERSONAL DETAILS

Your Name	
Address	
Phone number	
Email	

SITE DETAILS

Which piece of land is it?	
What's its current use?	

YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE SITE

Please suggest how you think this land should be used. For example, open space, wildlife area, community orchard, woodland, leisure, nature recovery site, a shop or other business, affordable housing, more infrastructure, green energy, re-wilding, young people's activities, parking, community use,

Please set out your ideas

Please send completed forms by June 24th 2022 to:

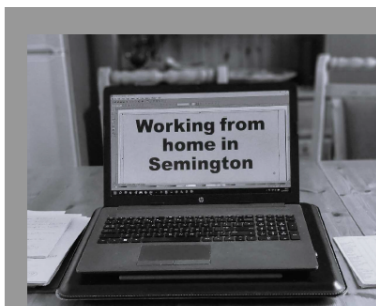
Email: np@semington.org.uk

By post: Neighbourhood Plan, 24 Pound Lane, Semington, Trowbridge, BA14 6LP

By hand: In the box provided in the village hall.

SEMINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

DO YOU RUN A BUSINESS OR WORK FROM HOME?



More people are working from home these days. That's good news for a village like Semington, making it a more vibrant community with greater use of local services and facilities.

Our Neighbourhood Plan for Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton aims to support local employment. So we want to know more about home working here and what we can do to assist and encourage it.

**If you run a business from home, please use the next page.
If you work from home for somebody else, please use this page or go to
tinyurl.com/2cb4evxf to complete the survey online.**

Do you work from home for a company, charity or other organisation?

Where in the parish do you live? (*postcode*)

What are the benefits of being home based?

What facilities do you use in Semington, *e.g. post office, pub?*

Which other businesses in Semington do you use?

How good is your broadband? (*dreadful / poor / ok / good / excellent*)

What about your mobile phone signal? (*dreadful / poor / ok / good / excellent*)

What other facilities or services in Semington would make it easier to work from home?

What is your employer's line of business?

What proportion of your working week is spent at home?

If you would like to work from home, or run a business from home, is anything preventing you from doing so? (*e.g. space, broadband, mobile phone signal*)

Is there anything that could help you achieve your ambition?



Please use this page if you run a business from home
Or complete it online at tinyurl.com/2s3jzu23

What is your business?

How long has it been operating?

Where in the parish do you live? (*postcode*)

What are the benefits of being home-based?

Do you make use of facilities in the village, *e.g. pub, post office?*

What other village businesses do you use?

What other facilities or services in Semington would assist your business?
E.g. local shop, better broadband, local business club, office space/work units.

Do you have a dedicated work/office space?

Do you employ anyone or expect to do so in future?

How good is your broadband? (*dreadful / poor / ok / good / excellent*)

What about your mobile phone signal ? (*dreadful / poor / ok / good / great*)

Any other comments?

***Thank you for completing this survey. Please pop it into the address which is most convenient : 18 St Georges Court / 35 Highfield Close / Lock House, Canal Bridge.
Or scan the form and email it to np@semington.org.uk.***

***We might like to contact you to hear more about the comments that you've made.
If you're happy to be contacted, please give your name and email address.***

Working from Home Outcomes

420 survey forms were sent out with the village magazine, offering the choice of returning them, scanning them to email or doing the survey online. The response was surprisingly poor.

Only 11 people responded to the work from home survey, one of whom simply said they didn't work from home! But the results show the wide variety of jobs that home workers people pursue, and suggest that they could be making more use of village facilities and businesses,

There was only one response from a business run from home. That is a dance consultancy and costume hire business, with clients throughout the UK. So there are no particular advantages or disadvantages to a Semington location. They would like a village shop and longer hours for the post office. They would also be interested in a business club and believe a directory of local businesses would be very useful. They rate their mobile phone signal and broadband as adequate but could be better.

Of the 10 people who said they worked from home, four rated their broadband as good, with two acceptable, two poor, one awful and one excellent.

Four also rated their mobile signal as good, with two awful, two poor and two acceptable. The "awfuls" came from postcodes BA14 6NN and BA14 6JF. The "poors" were from BA14 6JG and BA14 6SZ.

Two work for charities and eight for businesses including insurance, banking, IT, e-commerce, aerospace, railway engineering and project management. Two are at home full-time, four for 4 days a week, two for 3-4 days and two for 2-3 days.

The advantages cited for working from home were mostly to do with improved work/life balance, flexibility and less commuting. One mentioned "the ability to have a cat."

Awareness of local businesses seems low, though five of the ten use the Somerset Arms and one uses Kings Auto Services.

In terms of facilities, three use the village hall, two use the post office and tennis court, and one each mention the Wessex Close play area and the "phone box library."

Two would like a village shop, with one suggesting it should include a parcel delivery/collection point. One wants a coffee shop, and two want better broadband and mobile. One would like fibre broadband, while another called for "zero power cuts."

Appendix 9 Climate Change Survey & Responses

RESPONSES

60 responses were received. Of those, 38 (63.3 per cent) are very concerned about climate change, 18 (30 per cent) per cent are fairly concerned. Only 4 (6.7 per cent) are not concerned.

Wildfires, droughts, extreme temperatures and flooding are the likely effects most often mentioned by respondents. Heat stress on humans, animals and crops are also widely anticipated.

78 per cent want a community response, with 3 per cent opposed and 19 per cent unsure.

68 per cent would support wind turbines in Semington, while 82 per cent would support solar farms. 8 per cent would not support either. 92 per cent would be more likely to support these if there was a financial benefit to Semington.

EXISTING HOUSING

The survey shows that most homes in Semington are reasonably well insulated. But there is a significant number of older properties, including listed buildings, which are hard to keep warm and where adequate insulation is difficult. The take-up of modern energy-saving technology is low.

Three-quarters of respondents find it reasonably easy to keep their homes comfortably warm in winter. But 20 per cent say it is difficult and 3 per cent find it impossible. Old, poorly insulated properties and increasingly expensive electric or oil heating are most often mentioned as reasons for difficulty.

88 per cent of respondents have double or triple glazing, 85 per cent have loft insulation and 75 per cent have wall insulation. But only 18 per cent have solar panels for electricity, and only 8 per cent for hot water. Battery storage and ground or air source heat pumps are reported by 7 per cent, while only 5 per cent have a biomass boiler.

55 per cent would consider installing solar electric panels, while 48 per cent would consider solar battery storage and solar hot water panels. 30 per cent would be interested in ground/air source heat pumps, but there is markedly less enthusiasm for biomass boilers (12 per cent). 52 per cent would consider an electric vehicle charging point.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

There is widespread support for eco-friendly design and features for all future housing development in Semington.

82 per cent say green spaces and trees are essential. 78 per cent say the same for efficient, low carbon, heating and cooling, and 71 per cent for solar electric panels. 63 per cent rate sustainable materials and construction methods as essential. 57 per cent believe electric charging points for cars are a vital requirement. While only 47 per cent think battery storage is essential, another 35 per cent rate it as important. Only 17 per cent think planted roofs and walls are essential, but another 33 per cent consider them important.

GETTING AROUND

Unsurprisingly, the car is the dominant form of transport for work (55 per cent of respondents) and shopping (88 per cent). But walking is the most popular for leisure (87 per cent). 38 per cent cycle for leisure, but only 8 per cent for work and 12 per cent for shopping. 12 per cent use an electric bike for leisure and 5 per cent for shopping.

There is relatively little use of public transport. Buses are used by 7 per cent of respondents for work, 15 per cent for shopping and 13 per cent for leisure.

Only 8 per cent of respondents have an electric car, but 15 per cent say they have a charging point.

68 per cent believe that Semington should have charging points for community use. The village hall is the location most often suggested, with the pub also a popular choice.

OTHER COMMENTS

A number of respondents suggested other ways of responding to climate change, including:

Grey water collection systems for new homes.

Campus heating – a group of homes served by a communal ground source heat pump.

Pandemic-style arrangements to look after vulnerable people and families.

Easing of restrictions on listed buildings to allow double glazing and solar panels.

Better community facilities, including shop and activities for children, to cut down on car use. Turn street lights off at 11pm.

Incentivise owners to sell land for solar farms rather than housing. Bulk discount scheme for people to install heat pumps, solar panels etc.

Village recycling point for non-standard items.

Methane-powered power generation, using waste organic matter produced locally.

The survey

How green is my village?



Semington Neighbourhood Plan

CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY

Global warming will affect all of us. So how should Semington respond? We need your views as we work on the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish up to 2036. Would you welcome wind turbines? Where will we charge electric cars? Help us shape a greener future for Semington by completing our short survey, which is entirely anonymous.

Select all the options that apply, and add any comments you may have.

1. How concerned are you about climate change?

Mark only one oval.

- Not concerned
- Fairly concerned
- Very concerned

2. How do you think climate change is likely to affect Semington?

3. Should we explore a community response to climate change?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Wiltshire is leading most other counties in solar energy. The county is planning to assess the potential for more renewable energy, using a range of technologies including wind turbines and solar farms. These can present visual and landscape challenges.

4. What options for generating renewable energy would you support in Semington?

Tick all that apply.

- Wind turbines
- Solar farms
- None of these

5. Would you be more likely to support these options if they were community owned or provided a financial benefit to Semington?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

EXISTING HOUSES

There are many ways to make homes more energy efficient. But Semington has a wide variety of properties, and what is possible or affordable will not be the same for everybody.

6. How easy is it to keep your home comfortably warm in winter?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Easy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Impossible

7. If it is difficult or impossible, please explain why.

8. Does your home have any of these?

Tick all that apply.

- Solar hot water panels
- Solar PV electric panels on the roof?
- Battery storage
- Biomass boiler
- Ground/air source heat pump
- Double/triple glazing
- Wall insulation
- Loft insulation
- Electric car charging point

9. Would you consider installing any of these features?

Tick all that apply.

	Yes	No	Not needed	Too expensive	Not possible in my home
Solar hot water panels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solar PV roof panels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Battery storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biomass boiler	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground/air source pump	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Double/triple glazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wall insulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loft insulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric car charging point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NEW BUILDINGS

Better building design and construction will help to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

10. What features should be included in new buildings in Semington?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Essential	Important	Unimportant
Efficient, low carbon heating and cooling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable materials and construction methods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Green (planted) roofs and walls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Green spaces and trees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charging points for electric cars	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solar PV electric panels on the roof	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Battery storage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

GETTING AROUND

Reliable transport is important to a rural village like Semington, and the switch to electric vehicles could be a particular challenge here.

11. What forms of transport do you use?

Tick all that apply.

	Work	Shopping	Leisure
Walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Van	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric bike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility scooter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 10 Statutory Consultees Identified by Wiltshire Council and those Responding

Organisation	Contacted at Reg 14?	Responded at Reg 14?
Statutory Consultees		-
Wiltshire Council – send directly to the link officer, to [REDACTED] and to Neighbourhood Planning	Yes	Yes
The Homes and Communities Agency	Yes	-
Natural England	Yes	Yes
The Environment Agency	<u>Yes</u>	-
Historic England	Yes	Yes
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	Yes	-
Highways England / National Highways	Yes	Yes
NHS Wiltshire	Yes	-
Wessex Water	Yes	-
Wales and West Utilities	Yes	-
Scottish and Southern Energy	Yes	-
O2	Yes	-
Vodafone	Yes	-
BT	Yes	-
National Grid	Yes	Yes
National Gas	Yes	Yes
Electronic Communications		
Civil Aviation Authority (if relevant). Consult relevant aerodrome in the first instance.		-
Community Area Board (Wiltshire Councillors + Community Engagement Manager)	Yes	

Organisation	Contacted at Reg 14?	Responded at Reg 14?
Neighbouring Town/Parish councils		
Melksham Without	Yes	Yes
Seend	Yes	
Keevil	Yes	
Great Hinton	Yes	
Hilperton	Yes	
Other Reg 14 stat bodies/consultees		
Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area	Yes	
Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area		
Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area	Yes	
Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area	Yes	
Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area		
Canal and River Trust	Yes	Yes
Sustrans	Yes	
Wiltshire College	Yes	
Police	Yes	
The Garden History Society (if relevant, refer to Schedule 1)		
Police and Crime Commissioner Office	Yes	
Michelle Donelan MP	Yes	
Defence Estates	Yes	

SEMINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN



A Vision for Semington

The long-awaited Neighbourhood Plan for Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton will be published in draft form on February 1st.

It aims to protect our rural character by preventing unwanted housing development, maintaining a green buffer along the Kennet and Avon Canal and preserving valuable green spaces and landscapes.

There are policies to encourage local businesses and home-working, improve wifi and phone communications, and enhance local facilities.

Now it's over to you

We need you to tell us whether we have met the objectives that you helped to set for us. This formal "Regulation 14 Consultation" is an essential part of the process - and your last chance to mark our homework before we submit the Plan to Wiltshire Council.

Consultation starts February 1st

During the six week consultation you can -

- ◆ **Inspect** the Plan at www.semington.org.uk/np where you will also be able to complete our online survey.
- ◆ **View** the Plan and complete written survey forms at the Village Hall during coffee mornings – 10am to 12noon on Thursdays.
- ◆ **Discuss** the Plan and fill in written survey forms at a Consultation Event at the Village Hall from 11am to 2pm on Saturday, February 24th.
- ◆ **Send** any questions about the consultation to reg14@semington.org.uk.

Consultation closes March 15th

Please complete the survey



Appendix 12 Post Regulation 14 Summary Feedback

This was reported to and discussed at the Parish Council meeting held on April 17th 2024.

INTRODUCTION

The consultation was held from February 1st to March 15th to gather responses to the draft of the Semington Neighbourhood Development Plan. We are very grateful to all those who took part.

There were 67 responses to our survey form, most of them submitted online. 61 came from residents of the parish, four of whom were also landowners.

Detailed responses were also received from landowners, potential developers and statutory consultees.

THE RESULTS

Responses to the survey showed a large majority of residents in support of the draft Plan. Many expressed their appreciation for the hard work and attention to detail that had gone into its preparation. *“A very clear and comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan, which covers all the key areas that I as a resident would want to see”* was typical of the comments received.

The response to individual policies was also extremely encouraging, with 10 of the 13 attracting more than 90 per cent agreement. There was overwhelming support for maintaining Semington’s “actively rural character,” with greater protection for habitats, landscape and the Kennet & Avon Canal.

It is little surprise that the proposal for a village shop, as part of a development of up to 40 houses west of The Turnpike proved the most contentious policy, but it was still supported by nearly 80 per cent of respondents. Most felt it was the most suitable site for new homes, though a few were against any new housing development at all. Others stressed the importance of building homes that are genuinely affordable for local people. The prospect of a village shop was a major factor in favour of this site. Some felt the village would be better served from a more central location, possibly combining a shop and pub in a community hub. But most recognised that a shop close to the A361 and attracting passing trade would be more likely to thrive.

A variety of other issues were raised in response to the policies We have listed some of them here.

Policy 1 – Habitats Regulations

96.9% of respondents agree

Comments showed strong support for policies to protect wildlife. Some respondents felt that other species as well as bats should have been named in the policy, and that light pollution should have been mentioned.

Policy 2 – Support for Rural Businesses and Workspace **96.9% agree**

Residents were strongly in favour of planning policies to encourage small enterprises and working from home. Some expressed concern at a possible worsening of parking problems in the village.

Policy 3 – Communications Infrastructure **100% agree**

Unanimous support for improvement to broadband and mobile signals shows the level of concern at the current provision in the parish.

Policy 4 – Local Green Spaces Designation **96.9% agree**

Many villagers stressed the importance of the five green spaces listed. But several expressed disappointment that there were so few, or called for the policy to include an ambition to designate more.

Policy 5 – Public Rights of Way and Cycle Network **93.8% agree**

Villagers valued the existing network and supported its expansion and improvement. But some said lessons should be learned from the “unintended consequences” of laying tarmac on the cycleway from St George’s Road.

Policy 6 – Green Blue Infrastructure and Nature Recovery **98.5% agree**

This policy received near unanimous support. Suggested additions included a reference to water run-off, pollution and nutrients, specific protection of the Semington Brook flood plain, and a biodiversity gain target for any future development.

Policy 7 – Protecting Semington’s Actively Rural Landscape **90.9% agree**

This is at the heart of the draft Plan and again received overwhelming support, though a few villagers thought it should be even more restrictive of new development.

Policy 8 – Design and Local Distinctiveness **89.2% agree**

Residents agreed that new buildings should be in keeping with the village. Some also called for them to be zero carbon and for all to include charging points for electric vehicles.

Policy 9 – Pre-application Community Engagement **96.9% agree**

Villagers welcomed consultation from developers, and some wanted them to provide more facilities like green space, play areas or allotments.

Policy 10 – Land to the west of Turnpike Close (the Auction Field) **79.1% agree**

As discussed above, the most contentious of the policies. Opposition was mainly from other landowners, developers and nearby residents. Some villagers opposed all new housing development or feared that it would encourage further development along the A361. Others doubted the viability of the proposed shop.

Policy 11 – Community Facilities**89.2% agree**

The closure of the Somerset Arms attracted more comments than any other issue, with many calling for the pub to be reopened. Other comments included a request for improved bus services, and for the Wessex Close play area, tennis court, allotments and football pitch to be included on the list of community facilities.

Policy 12 – Climate Responsive Buildings**96.9 % agree**

Some villagers wanted the policy to go further to cover drainage and water run-off, and require zero carbon and roof mounted solar panels for all new buildings.

Policy 13 – Stand-alone Renewable Energy Generation**82.8% agree**

The only policy apart from 10 to attract significantly less than 90 per cent support. Four out of five villagers would still support the principle, but some would oppose wind turbines while others are against solar farms around the village.

OTHER RESPONSES

As well as the residents, we have heard from landowners and developers who were disappointed that their sites were not recommended for development and continued to press for their inclusion.

Wiltshire Council provided a 41-page response, including many helpful and positive suggestions to make the Plan more likely to satisfy planning inspectors. We also had feedback from Melksham Without Parish Council and from agencies such as Natural England, Historic England, and the Canal and River Trust.

NEXT STEPS

We will now consider all of the comments we have received and make appropriate amendments to the draft Plan. The finished Plan will then be handed over to Wiltshire Council, who will supervise the remaining stages, including assessment by an independent examiner and a further consultation with the parish. Finally, residents will vote in a parish referendum to decide whether the Plan is adopted to guide Semington's development over the next 15 years.

Semington Parish Council

Notice of the Regulation 14 consultation on the draft Semington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

Dear Statutory Consultee,

In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 1 of schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, we are writing to let you know that the Semington Neighbourhood Development Plan will be out for Regulation 14 Consultation for a period of 6 weeks from February 1st 2024 to March 15th 2024.

The draft Plan and associated material are available at: semington.org.uk/np

All representations must be received by Semington Parish Council no later than midnight on March 15th. All representations will be publicly available* and will be considered by Semington Parish Council in producing the final Plan which will then be submitted to Wiltshire Council for Regulation 16 consultation and Independent Examination. We will share information of who was contacted with Wiltshire Council to enable contact again at the Regulation 16 stage.

(*With personal information redacted).

We look forward to hearing from you. Please address all correspondence to reg14@semington.org.uk

Yours sincerely.

**Semington Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group
on behalf of the Qualifying Body: Semington Parish Council**

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GDPR

Semington Parish Council has a duty to protect and process personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2019 and the Data Protection Act 2018 and any future amendments to these Acts. A GDPR statement is available on the parish council website: semington.org.uk/contact

Appendix 14 Full Details of Reg 14 Responses

The full set of responses received are set out in an Excel file on Semington Parish Council's Neighbourhood Planning website here:

<https://www.semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/the-plan-and-evidence-base/#evidence-base>