

FEEDBACK SUMMARY
of
SECOND INFORMAL CONSULTATION
SILCHESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The document is a summary of all the comments received during the course of the second informal consultation (2nd September to 23rd September 2024) by email, in person and via written comments. Each bullet point is the comment received from one individual.

POLICY	COMMENTS
S1 Settlement Boundary	• Preference for the housing allocation to be a single estate. Randon infilling should be resisted and construction of new buildings in large gardens of rural properties should be resisted. Ribbon developments should be resisted.
S2 Design Code & Guidance	• Silchester has a wide range of architecture ranging from the 1700's to the present day. Would like continuation of the evolution of design and construction using the latest techniques and designs. • Can there be comments on infrastructure for home working such as having rooms of an acceptable size to enable home working and also provision of digital infrastructure enabling modern home working practices.
S3 Locally Important Views	• No mention of Romans in the text and no photo of Romans in the list of views. • Silchester has a wide range of attractive views, not all of which may be able to be preserved long term. The proposed development site seems to avoid impinging too much on landscapes and views.
S4 Retrofitting in Conservation Area	• Houses need to evolve to meet modern living standards so such evolution should be permitted even in conservation areas. As an example, solar panels change the appearance of a house but not to a detrimental level.
S5 Addressing the Performance Gap	• Houses need to be built with much better energy saving features. Solar panels should be mandatory possible accompanied by triple glazing and heat pumps with no mains gas connection. I am unsure how much this costs and many builders resist this. It is certainly cheaper to install these features at the build stage rather than retrofitting later.
S6 Housing Mix & Type	• I certainly support a mix of housing sizes but with more emphasis on smaller houses (2-3 bedroom semi or terraces and maybe a few 1 bed apartments). I don't reject the idea of a few larger houses but we shouldn't repeat the early 1970s expansion of Silchester which was dominated by larger detached houses. Independent living may be an issue for older people in Silchester due to the distance to many services. Unless you can drive, the poor public transport service makes many necessary activities difficult. Reserving plots for self build may be difficult in such a development.
S7 Affordable Housing	• I don't reject the idea of a few affordable houses for people with a local connection but 12 out of a total build of 15-25! I don't want Silchester to become incestuous and we need to bring new blood into the community. I definitely want more smaller houses but wouldn't wish many of them to be reserved for "locals".

	The team with B&DBC needs to be very strong about how to place a sort of “covenant” on the development planning permission to ensure that the full mix of ‘affordable houses’ is actually built and for ever maintained. This matter is the main problem to be faced by the landowner and the value their site. If the site is sold and developed by a private house building company they will want to develop the site to make a profit. They can only action this by building houses that have “market value”. The promoters of this site need to consider how the development of this site is to be financed.
S8 Site Allocations	- I am delighted that you have identified Plot 1 as the likely location for this development. I have always favoured this location. It is opposite the developed area of the village and can be located outside the conservation area. It would not detract from views or (currently) accessible public open space. I am aware that some have questioned road safety and as a former speedwatch volunteer I am aware of significant speeding along the straight section of Little London Road between Early Lands and the S bend after Hydes Platt. However there are opportunities to improve road safety by realigning Little London Road as part of the development. Instead of a T-junction into the new development why not curve the road to the East, create a mini roundabout and curve the road back to the original alignment. The new development would come off the mini roundabout. This would offer two advantages: traffic would have to slow down for the new alignment and pedestrians from the new development would find it easier to cross the road to get to the current pavement on the west side. (I don't think there is enough space to create a pavement on the east side. - Access to the proposed development site presents challenges due to the poor visibility and speed of vehicles along Little London Rd. If the development proceeds there will need to be considerable thought as to how to have acceptably safe entry to and from the site. Which may require substantial realignment of Little London Rd. - Could the land between Tinkers Square and Sallow Copse be developed for retirement cottages, could the Parish Council gift the land for this purpose. This could be promoted by the Parish Council and the homes sold at a nominal price with the income being used to pay for the removal of the electric pole structure between the Calveva Arms and Village Hall. - Could the agreement not to develop the land south of Early Lands be changed to enable the development of retirement cottages. - The course of the Roman road should be shown on the diagram of the proposed development site. - Estate layout and dwellings design: the vehicle access to the site needs to be well south of that suggested on the plan to ensure that vehicle lines of sight have minimum ingress into the tree belt enclosed in the north Conservation Area parcel. A pedestrian access to the village to be across this area in the far north corner with pedestrian road crossing. Road layout would be best if in small clusters with short cul-de-sacs. Please no open plan, enclosures of housing to be with hedges and much tree planting. The dwelling external designs and materials used to be of much importance- soft and country.
S9 Local Employment	The employment opportunities which exist should be protected if possible.

S10 Connecting the Village	• Crossing the road between the Calleva Arms and Village Hall can be challenging at night. • If the development on the proposed site proceeds, it would be beneficial to have a path and cycleway through the development to connect the village with Silchester Farm. • There is mention of cycle paths, these should be cycle ways.
S11 Community Facilities	• Current facilities must be sustainable. • The garden facilities adjacent to the Village Hall are Community Vegetable Patches, not allotments.
S12 Education	• It would be a great pity to lose the school.
S13 Green Infrastructure	• Silchester is blessed with plenty of green spaces and to a large extent these are protected. I would need to give more thought to whether more needs to be done. • The electric pole structure between the Calleva Arma and Village Hall should be removed to improve the southern entrance to the village.

General comments:

- Draft policy documents /statements refer to an area known as the Silchester Village and NOT the whole Silchester Parish. Unfortunately, the 'Village area' is not defined. It needs to be clear that your Neighbourhood plan applies to the area of the parish defined in 2003, by B & D B C as the Settlement Policy Boundary (D4) and the Conservation Area (E3) as in their INSET No 43.(I mentioned this in my email 23.2.24). Can you action this with a plan in the Referendum.