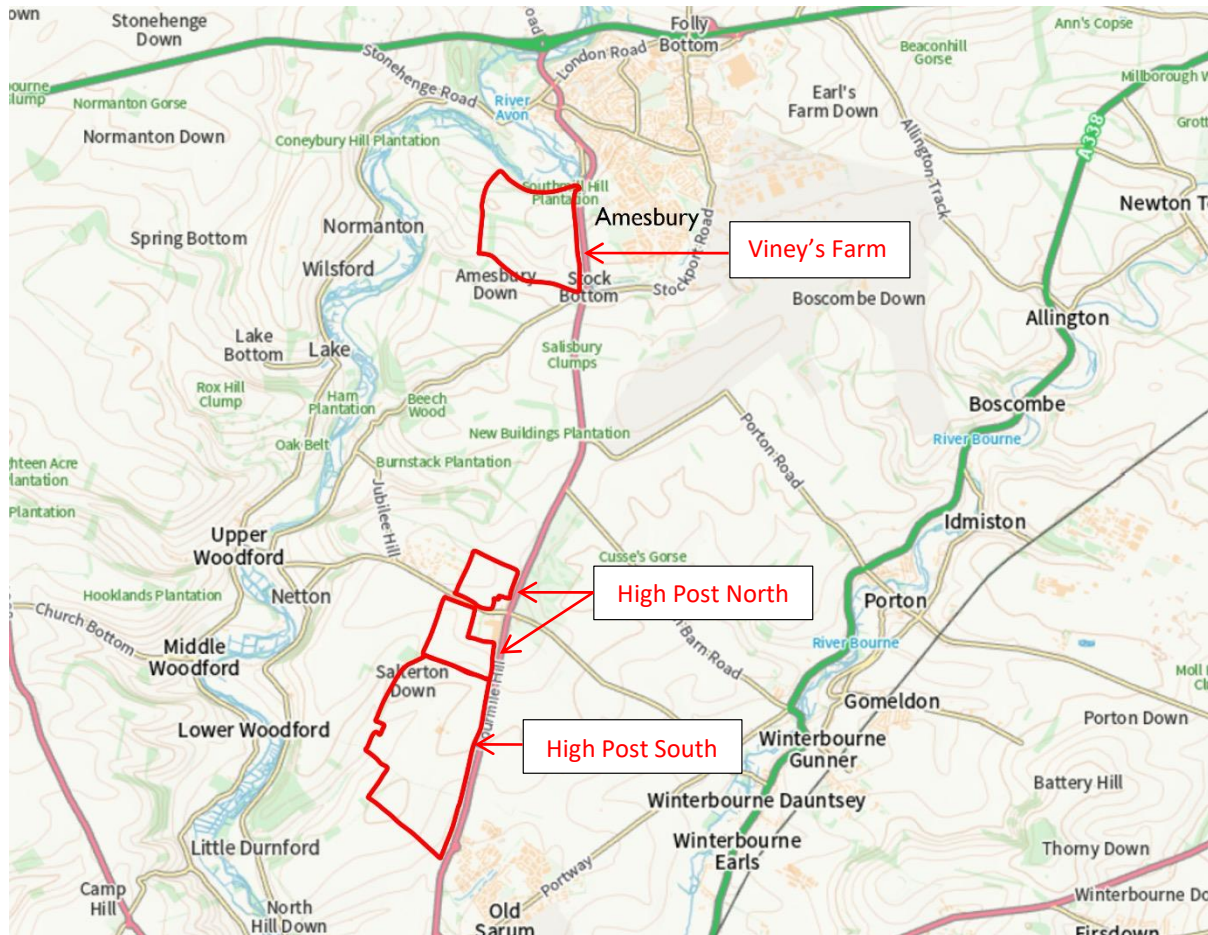


Viney's Farm and High Post Development Proposals



The Save Amesbury Campaign was launched last summer by a group of concerned people living in and near Amesbury and in the Woodford Valley who had become aware of proposals for large scale rezoning for development of agricultural land – 684 acres in total – West of the main Amesbury to Salisbury Road, the A345, in the Avon River Valley (the Woodford Valley).

A huge number of houses have been built in the last decade in Amesbury, Durrington, Salisbury, Wilton, Tidworth and other towns and villages in the area. This has put great pressure on many local resources where supply has not kept up with demand, including road infrastructure, GP surgeries, dentists and, especially in Amesbury and Durrington, secondary school places.

Whatever the aspirations of the planning authorities are for sustainability, the three new proposed developments which we are campaigning against are so far from local amenities that everyone living there would have to drive to get to work, schools, and shops.

Most people who live in our community value greatly that it is a rural area and an ever-increasing volume of development will destroy that. If we want to prevent our beautiful countryside becoming overwhelmed by development, we and our local politicians must actively oppose these proposals.

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Proposals were submitted to Wiltshire Council last March, during a consultation period on the draft Local Plan, for three developments. The areas covered by these proposals are shown within the red lines on the map above. None of the proposals were made public at the time and so far, none have been subject to formal public consultation. All of them are asking to be allowed to develop agricultural land West of the A345, bordering the Avon River Valley:

1. Viney's Farm – a site of 182 acres on the A345 immediately South of Amesbury, opposite Archer's Gate and on the River Avon, with a proposal last March for 1,200 homes, now being changed by the land-owner to about 830 homes plus a care home and other buildings.
2. High Post North – 146 acres wrapping round the existing High Post garage, Stones Hotel and High Post Business Park. Proposal for 514,000 square feet of built footprint for industrial/employment use. "Built footprint" means just the ground floor area.
3. High Post South – 355 acres running South from High Post North all the way to the new Long Hedge development towards Salisbury. Proposal is for 1.26 million square feet of employment space and 500 houses.

Status of the proposals

Wiltshire Council will produce a new draft Local plan in 2022 which will be subject to a public consultation period. Currently, Wiltshire Council has to find space for 350 new housing units in Amesbury under Central Government policies. In 2020, the draft Local Plan it published included three smaller sites in Amesbury where the land for these might be found:

Already shortlisted

	Acres	Ha	Units
North of London Road	11.1	4.5	170
North of Countess Services	24.7	10.0	257
Stock Bottom	149.5	60.5	390
Total	185.3	75.0	817.0

Wiltshire Council does not have to include any of the Viney's Farm and High Post sites in the next version of the draft Local Plan in order to meet its obligations to deliver housing units. The Save Amesbury Campaign believes none of the new proposed sites should be included.

The local Councils involved, Amesbury, Great Durnford, Woodford and Wilsford cum Lake, have a voice but are not the decision makers about this. The last three have all written to Wiltshire Council opposing the new sites and Amesbury Town Council is still considering its position.

What we have done so far

The Save Amesbury Campaign has delivered to Wiltshire Council a consultants' report addressing some of the more technical reasons why these sites should not be taken forward to the next stage of the planning process. This can be downloaded at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/f399pk81skhtjyt/Ashurst%20Local%20Plan%20Review%20-%20Amesbury%2021-10-21.pdf?dl=0>.

It is written by:

Planning Consultants:	Sphere25
Transport Consultants:	Velocity
Landscape Consultants:	David Jarvis

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Ashurst, a leading London law firm, has overseen this work and has also written to Wiltshire Council.

The bases of the objections are wide ranging and include:

Viney's Farm

- **Scale** - This proposal is far in excess of the 350 homes required for Amesbury under current policies.
- **Infrastructure** - Amesbury has already experienced a significant increase in housing numbers and there is a clear deficiency of essential services and transport infrastructure to support more development of this scale.
- **Transport** – The site is beyond normal walking distance from most local shops and services and residents would be forced to rely on public transport or private vehicles causing further congestion and pollution.
- **Landscape** - The site comprises 182 acres of farmland in a protected Special Landscape Area. It is highly sensitive in terms of landscape and visual impact, with views to and from the Stonehenge and Avebury UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Avon Valley. The land is within and represents a valuable amenity to the people of Amesbury and adjacent communities.
- **Ecology** - The impact of such a large housing development on the site alongside the River Avon, which is protected as a valuable chalk stream with international rare wildlife habitats, designated both a Site of Special Scientific Interest & and a Special Area of Conservation, risks irreversible damage to this protected ecology. The damage which would be done to the river from runoff and to protected species must be prevented.
- **Archaeology** – this site contains a number of undisturbed archaeological sites.

High Post

- The development of the proposed sites would represent the permanent loss of farmland in a predominantly rural area.
- The proposed development of 1.75 million square feet of business/industrial space would far exceed local requirements.
- The proposed sites are clearly an unsustainable location for both housing and employment. The sites are remote from Amesbury and Salisbury necessitating employees, residents and visitors to drive for every journey creating further congestion with associated carbon emissions.
- Development of these sites would be a significant step towards a ribbon development linking Salisbury and Amesbury, not at all an attractive or practical development for South Wiltshire and the ancient cathedral city of Salisbury.

Political action

We have run an online petition objecting to the Viney's Farm proposals which has so far been signed by over 1,200 people.

We have spoken at meetings of Wiltshire Council and Amesbury Town Council to explain our objections.

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We have contacted and spoken to a number of local politicians including John Glenn MP, Wiltshire Councillors and members of the Amesbury, Great Durnford, Woodford & Wilsford cum Lake Councils. Many of these politicians support our stance and have written to the decision makers at Wiltshire Council to say so.

We have contacted a number of interest groups to alert them to these proposals and gathered their support – e.g. Council for the Protection of Rural England, RSPB, Amesbury Walkers, Salmon & Trout Conservation, Piscatorial Society, Wiltshire Climate Alliance.

What next?

The Viney's Farm developer is planning a public presentation of his proposals in Amesbury in the New Year – an opportunity for us all to tell the developer exactly what we think of their plans!

Wiltshire Council will publish the next version of the draft Local Plan in 2022; they haven't yet said when. If any of the three sites are included in the next draft Local Plan, we will escalate our opposition to their re-zoning for development.

What can you do to help?

If you support our campaign:

- If you want to continue to be involved in our campaign, we will keep you on the mailing list for future Newsletters. If you don't want to be on our mailing list, please let us know by emailing saveamesburycampaign@gmail.com.
- Write to your local Wiltshire Council member to express your opposition to the development of these sites and their inclusion in the next draft of the Local Plan. You can find your Councillor's contact details by putting in a post code at <https://www.writetothem.com/>
- If you are an Amesbury resident, write to Amesbury Town Council using their contact form at <https://www.amesburytowncouncil.gov.uk/contact-us> or by emailing any town councillor directly using their email addresses found at <https://www.amesburytowncouncil.gov.uk/councillors-and-clerks>

GDPR and privacy

We are committed to protecting personal information. Any information provided will be used in line with applicable laws concerning the protection of personal data, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Under the terms of the GDPR you have certain rights over how your personal data is retained and used by us. Your personal details will be held securely by the Save Amesbury Campaign in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, will be used solely in connection with this campaign and any subsequent planning applications and will not be passed to any third parties. We will only keep your personal details for the duration of the campaign.