

January 2021



Amesbury

# Wiltshire Council LOCAL PLAN

Looking to the future

● Planning for Amesbury



Wiltshire Council

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# Introduction

1. What will Amesbury be like in the future?
  - How much should the town grow?
  - What priorities should we tackle?
  - Where should development take place?
2. Answers to these fundamental questions could affect how the town develops over the next 15 years.
3. The Council is thinking about these questions in planning Wiltshire's future. It's an important stage in the Council's review of the current Wiltshire Core Strategy and the development of the Local Plan.
4. The Wiltshire Core Strategy is the basis for determining most planning applications. It also identifies land for development that provides for new homes, jobs and infrastructure for our growing communities whilst balancing the need to protect the environment. The Local Plan will continue this role and therefore help shape the places the community of Wiltshire live and work within.
5. The Council has come to some initial answers to these three questions. It is sharing them and wants your views.

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## Scale of growth

### How much should the town grow?

6. The Council assesses what amount of new homes are needed between 2016 and 2036, the period of the Local Plan. It does the same for how much land will be needed for new jobs and business. Detail on these requirements can be found in the 'Emerging Spatial Strategy' paper.

### Additional homes

7. Assessments estimate levels of need for new homes within market areas, as these reflect where the majority of the local population live and work, where the majority of home moves take place and where there is a common range of private sector rents. There are four housing market areas in Wiltshire and each area includes many settlements. Amesbury is in the Salisbury Housing Market Area.
8. The adopted Core Strategy combines the three settlements of Amesbury, Bulford and Durrington because of their associated military garrisons and close links to one another both geographically and functionally. Whilst these links still remain, it was always intended that each settlement be planned to become more self-supporting separate communities, thus improving the local services and facilities they each have

and less functionally reliant on each other. The Local Plan Review aims to encourage the development of each community in its own right by considering each individual settlement's roles rather than taking the collective approach of the adopted Core Strategy. It is proposed that Amesbury is designated a Market Town in the settlement strategy. Bulford and Durrington are designated as Large Villages.

9. The Council has considered how best to accommodate the need for new homes, setting scales of growth by testing different distributions. The result of this work suggests the scale of growth should change from what is currently planned as shown below:



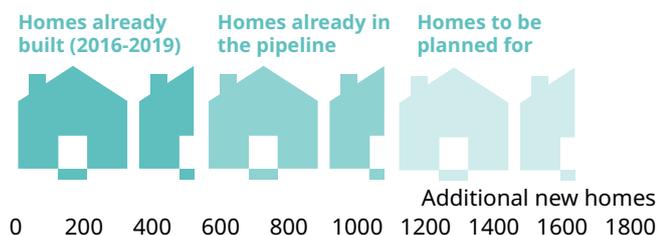
The new strategy 2016-2036



The current strategy 2006-2026



10. The current strategy 2006-2026, the Wiltshire Core Strategy, identified a requirement for 2,440 homes at Amesbury, Bulford and Durrington. The new strategy proposes a requirement of 1,635 homes at Amesbury for the plan period 2016-2036. A main reason this is appearing lower is that the requirement would only be for Amesbury, rather than the total for three settlements combined.
11. From this total estimate of need over the plan period can be deducted homes already built and those already in the pipeline as shown in the diagram below<sup>1</sup>.



12. When the number of homes built and in the pipeline is deducted from the overall forecast requirement it leaves a further 350 homes to be accommodated up to 2036. Both the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans can allocate sites for development. Each community is encouraged to help determine where development takes place through the preparation of a neighbourhood plan. The Local Plan will only allocate land where necessary to ensure supply of deliverable land to meet strategic housing needs and for large or complex sites.
13. Needs for development land should be met as far as possible on brownfield sites in order to help minimise the loss of greenfield land. The Council suggests that a target of 110 homes could be built on brownfield sites over the next 10 years<sup>2</sup> and identifying opportunities to achieve this target could be a focus for a neighbourhood plan. However, at present, the local community is not intending to prepare one.
14. The Local Plan will therefore identify sites on which approximately 350 new homes can

be built. The Council has identified a pool of potential development sites. From these it will go on to select the most appropriate locations to meet the scale of growth that is finally agreed.

15. Alongside neighbourhood plans, development briefs for individual brownfield sites and master plans for larger areas, can also be a means for the community, with developers and land owners, to help bring forward opportunities and achieve appropriate designs.
16. Brownfield land that is identified formally, with sufficient certainty, either in the development plan or by granting planning permission, will go on to reduce the need for greenfield sites. But it is likely that a brownfield target will do most to help reduce the need for greenfield sites in future reviews of the Local Plan.
17. At Amesbury, given the scale of growth remaining to be planned for, whilst every effort will be made to secure development of brownfield sites, there will be a need to allocate further greenfield land.

### The Local Economy

18. The Council has assessed what additional land is needed for business in each of the economic zones of the County. These zones encompass many settlements. It has considered how best to accommodate needs for new business by testing different distributions<sup>2</sup>.
19. The town, and surrounding area, benefits from several Principal Employment Areas, including Boscombe Down; London Road; Porton Down; High Post and Solstice Park. Given the existing provision of employment land in and around Amesbury, no further employment land is required.

<sup>1</sup>In Amesbury 660 dwellings have been built between 2016-2019 and, at 1st April 2019, 626 homes are already in the pipeline (i.e. they have planning permission or resolution to grant planning permission).

<sup>2</sup>Further detail can be found in the Emerging Spatial Strategy (2021) paper.

## Questions



AM1. What do you think to this scale of growth? Should there be a brownfield target? Should it be higher or lower?

## Place shaping priorities

### What priorities should we tackle?

20. The Local Plan will contain a set of place shaping priorities for each main settlement. They play a central role in developing planning policies and proposals for development. They will be the basis for an overarching planning policy for Amesbury that will guide development and the direction of growth.
21. Some priorities apply equally everywhere, notably the need to address climate change and achieve carbon reduction. Place shaping priorities are intended to be those distinct to a particular place. They may include:
  - Important local objectives or issues and how they can be addressed
  - Opportunities that have been identified that can help support a local community's vision
  - Infrastructure requirements for which there are local aspirations and capable of delivery or that are necessary to support likely future growth
22. They must relate to the development and use of land and so should revolve around specific outcomes and their benefits
23. They are also a starting point for policies that can be in neighbourhood plans. The Council will continue to work with Town and Parish

Councils to find the priorities best suited to delivering sustainable development and town centre improvements. At this stage in the plan making process these are the draft priorities that have been identified for Amesbury.

- i. Promote Amesbury as a self-sufficient town, thus encouraging residents to work in the town
- ii. Improve recreational facilities and sports pitches in Amesbury
- iii. Develop a town centre strategy that improves the public realm and encourages tourism and spending
- iv. Improve infrastructure and transport, particularly relating to the A303 and A345, both of which currently experience congestion to improve linkages to and from the town. The planned tunnelling of the A303 may relieve some of the issues once constructed.
- v. Create and encourage potential tourism and transport linkages with Stonehenge to encourage tourists to visit the town while visiting the area around Stonehenge.

## Questions



AM2. Are these the right priorities? What priorities may be missing? How might these place shaping priorities be achieved?

# Potential Development Sites

## Where should development take place?

24. Land around much of Amesbury is being promoted for development by land owners or prospective developers. From this larger amount of land, the Council is focusing its own assessment on a smaller pool of potential development sites that are shown on the map below. How these sites have been chosen is explained in a separate 'site selection report', published alongside this document.
25. The Local Plan ensures the proposed scale of growth will be accommodated. The amount to be planned for takes account of development that is already certain and, in the pipeline, including as many brownfield sites as can be relied on, such as those with planning permission.
26. But if Amesbury is to expand, the next difficult question focuses on where and how the built-up area may need to extend to accommodate change. Therefore, what will the role be for the release of greenfield land at Amesbury and where is it most appropriate to consider development options.
27. Each potential development site has its own individual characteristics. Rarely is one site very clearly the best choice. There are a range of different constraints and opportunities associated with each. Some are common to several or even all potential development sites. The information below shows what features, possibly both good and bad, set each one apart from others under consideration using current evidence. This pool of sites can be used to allocate sites in the Local Plan. One or more sites, in whole or part, will be selected and the rest of the pool of the potential development sites will remain as they are – i.e. potentially available for consideration in any subsequent plan review. The results of this consultation might remove some sites, might restore others that were rejected or might even throw up new ones that have not so far been considered.
28. In Amesbury, additional land is required in order to meet strategic housing requirements and this is proposed to be identified by the Local Plan.

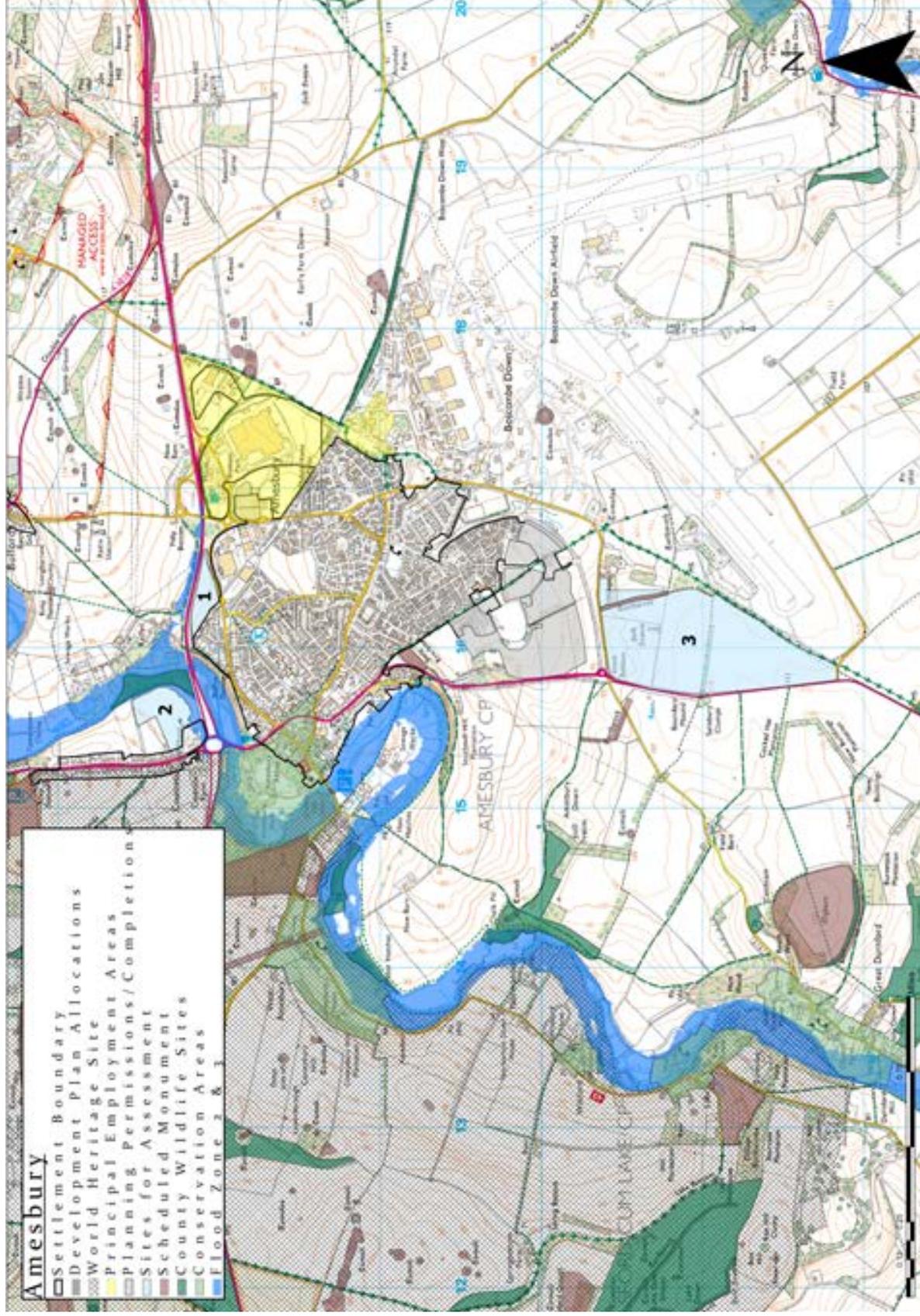
### Questions

AM3. Is this the right pool of potential development sites?  
Are there any other sites we should be considering?

AM4. What land do you think is the most appropriate upon which to build?  
What type and form of development should be brought forward at the town?

AM5. Are there important social, economic and environmental factors you think we've missed that need to be considered, generally or in respect of individual sites?

Figure 1 Map showing potential development sites for assessment



Three potential sites have been identified at Amesbury for further assessment of their development potential for meeting residual housing requirements. One or more of these sites could be allocated for development. Key considerations for the sites are provided below.

There are some considerations that are relevant to all sites:

- All sites are within 6400m buffer of Salisbury Plain Special Protected Area (SPA) which may result in recreational pressures that would need mitigation.
- Sites should be connected to the town centre by methods other than private transport to help minimise congestion.
- Contributions would be required to expand primary education and secondary education.
- Larger sites identified are better able to provide public open space.
- The sites are all located within close proximity to Stonehenge therefore, there is some potential for impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site (WHS) which will require assessment.

#### **Site 1: Land north of London Road (SHELAA reference 3379)**

- Located to the north of Amesbury between the edge of the town's settlement boundary and A303.
- The site abuts the A303 to the north and, as such, noise and air quality (vehicular emissions) would be a major design consideration in terms of achieving acceptable amenity levels for future residents.
- Landscaping of the site will require mitigation including a strong landscape buffer along the north of the site.

#### **Site 2: Land to rear of Countess Services (SHELAA reference 3186)**

- The site is located to the north of the town and north of the A303. The site is set apart from the main settlement and therefore this could be regarded as urban encroachment into the countryside.

- It is located apart from the main settlement of Amesbury, segregated by the A303 roundabout making access by walking and cycling into the main settlement difficult.
- The site is bounded by the River Avon green infrastructure corridor.
- Traffic impacts from development of this site are unlikely to be an issue given the existing infrastructure associated with the service station currently on part of the site which has been designed to accommodate a significant volume of vehicular movements.

#### **Site 3: Land adjacent to Stockport Road and Land at Stock Bottom (SHELAA references S1054 and S1010)**

- SHELAA sites (S1010 and S1054) adjoin each other and represent a southern extension of the urban area. It would be logical to consider this area comprehensively, to what extent and for what uses the area may be suitable for development.
- The site is located to the south of Amesbury and is slightly separate from the built form and does not adjoin the settlement boundary.
- Some heritage impact is identified at this stage as the site incorporates scheduled linear boundary and may possibly impact on setting of scheduled Ogbury Camp.
- The site open to views from the south and west and there is little existing vegetation to act as a buffer to the urban development of Amesbury South. This would need to be mitigated by planting. (It would be better to maintain the urban edge of Amesbury to the North of Stockport Avenue where there is already an establishing urban edge of planting as part of site S1013 that can be reinforced. By developing this and site S1010 it would be unacceptable urban development in the countryside.)
- The site is located 1000m away from a congested corridor.

## Settlement profiles

29. When planning for growth it is important to consider the characteristics of the town in terms of important services and infrastructure (green infrastructure, health, education, transport and utilities), as well as housing need and the local economy. The following profiles therefore summarise measures in place or being put in place to address known infrastructure issues and their timing, what additional provision would be needed to support growth and what other opportunities there may be.

### Questions

AM6. Are there any other issues or infrastructure requirements that should be identified?

Topic	Comment
Education	<p>There is no existing capacity within early years provision.</p> <p>There are surplus places within Amesbury Primary School to meet primary education needs.</p> <p>There may be an opportunity to expand Stonehenge Main School by 150 places.</p>
Energy	<p>According to Scottish and Southern Electricity Network's (SSEN) Network Capacity Map, the substation and supply points in and around Amesbury are currently unconstrained. However, the infrastructure is partially constrained in relation to energy generation, according to SSEN's Generation Availability Map. This means new generators may require investment in the infrastructure to be able to connect to the grid.</p>
Green and blue infrastructure	<p>A multi-functional 'Local Green Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Network' has been identified and is shown on the map in Figure 2 below. The Map indicates areas where improvements will need to be sought – i.e. in the form of functional and sufficiently scaled corridors within which the aim would be to consolidate and incorporate new green and blue spaces into the existing GBI networks.</p> <p>The map in Figure 3 below identifies biodiversity and heritage assets which are also GBI assets. These features are important waypoints within the existing landscape and should be considered as being integral to how new development areas are sensitively planned.</p>
Sport and Leisure Facilities	<p>At Amesbury there is a need for the following, as identified by the Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been the recent addition of new rugby and football pitches, however, to accommodate the planned growth, there would be a requirement for a 3GATP (3rd generation artificial turf pitch).</li> </ul> <p><b>Leisure Facilities</b></p> <p>The council is in the process of undertaking a Leisure Facility Needs Analysis. Any requirements relating to Amesbury Sports Centre, will be informed by this work, which will include planned growth and demand.</p>
Health	<p>There are two GP surgeries in Amesbury, with no capacity issues. There is a health centre in the town. The buildings are considered not fit for purpose.</p>

Topic	Comment
Housing needs	<p>Based on the assumed migration trend, the population of Amesbury is projected to increase over 20 years from 11,268 in 2016 to 13,956 in 2036, a total increase of 2,688 persons.</p> <p>In the years 2016-2036 the older population is expected to increase by 48% in the 60-74 age group and 104% in the 75+ age group. At the same time the 0-14 age group is expected to increase by 18% and the 15-29 age group to increase by 22%. Finally, the 30-44 age group is expected to increase by 16% and the 45-59 age group to decrease by 1%.</p> <p><b>Local household income</b></p> <p>The annual average income is £39,100 and the net income after housing costs is £27,100.</p> <p><b>Affordability Ratio (based on 2 bed property)</b></p> <p>Median price £194,500  Annual gross income £40,900  Affordability ratio 4.76</p>
The local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amesbury has a reasonably healthy town centre with a good mix of retail, services and facilities.</li> <li>• The town centre has unit vacancies well below the national average.</li> <li>• Some capacity for a medium-sized convenience food store and no capacity for comparison goods retail up to 2036.</li> <li>• The town benefits from strong links to military establishments and the growth of technology parks at Boscombe Down and Porton Down.</li> <li>• The Solstice Business Park is predominantly fully occupied, supporting a range of local employers and large national companies. Based on current evidence, there does not appear to be a need to identify further land for traditional B-class uses at the town.</li> </ul>
Transport	<p><b>Key Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amesbury is well served by the A303 which provides a direct link to London and the South West. Amesbury is well served by bus routes with regular services to Salisbury and Andover, and less frequent services to Marlborough and Swindon.</li> </ul> <p><b>Current constraints/local concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AM and PM peak hour delays on the A303 causes rat running.</li> <li>• Delays on London Road and the A345.</li> <li>• Nearest rail stations are Grately (with limited services) and Salisbury.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to A303 would help relieve local congestion hot spots or any rat-running issues.</li> <li>• New rail station at Porton would encourage a modal shift from car journeys to rail and may facilitate cycling to the rail station. The feasibility of this opportunity is unknown.</li> </ul>

Figure 2 Map showing Amesbury Green and Blue Infrastructure Network and improvement corridors (numbered). (These are draft plans from the emerging Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and may change)

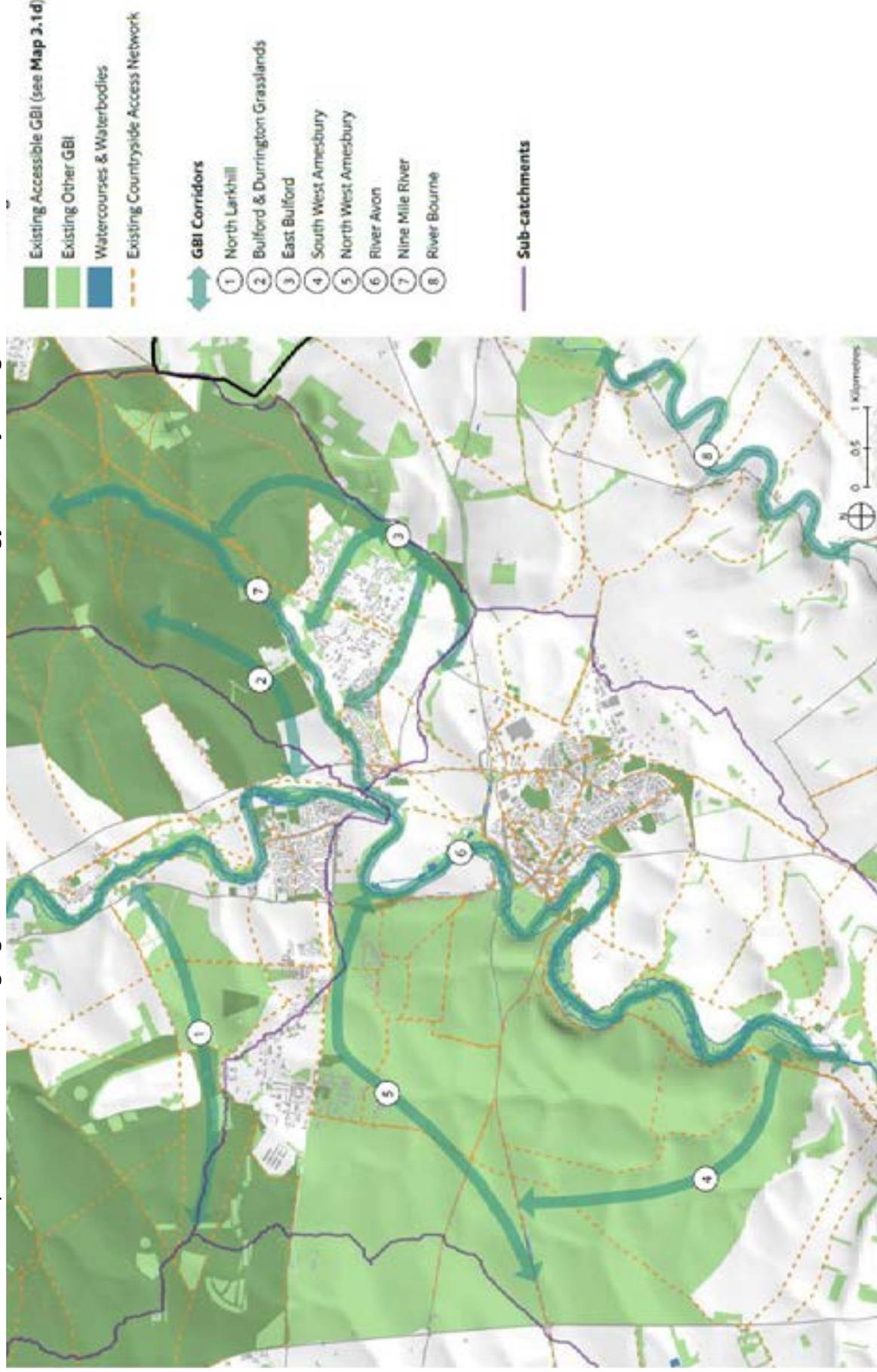
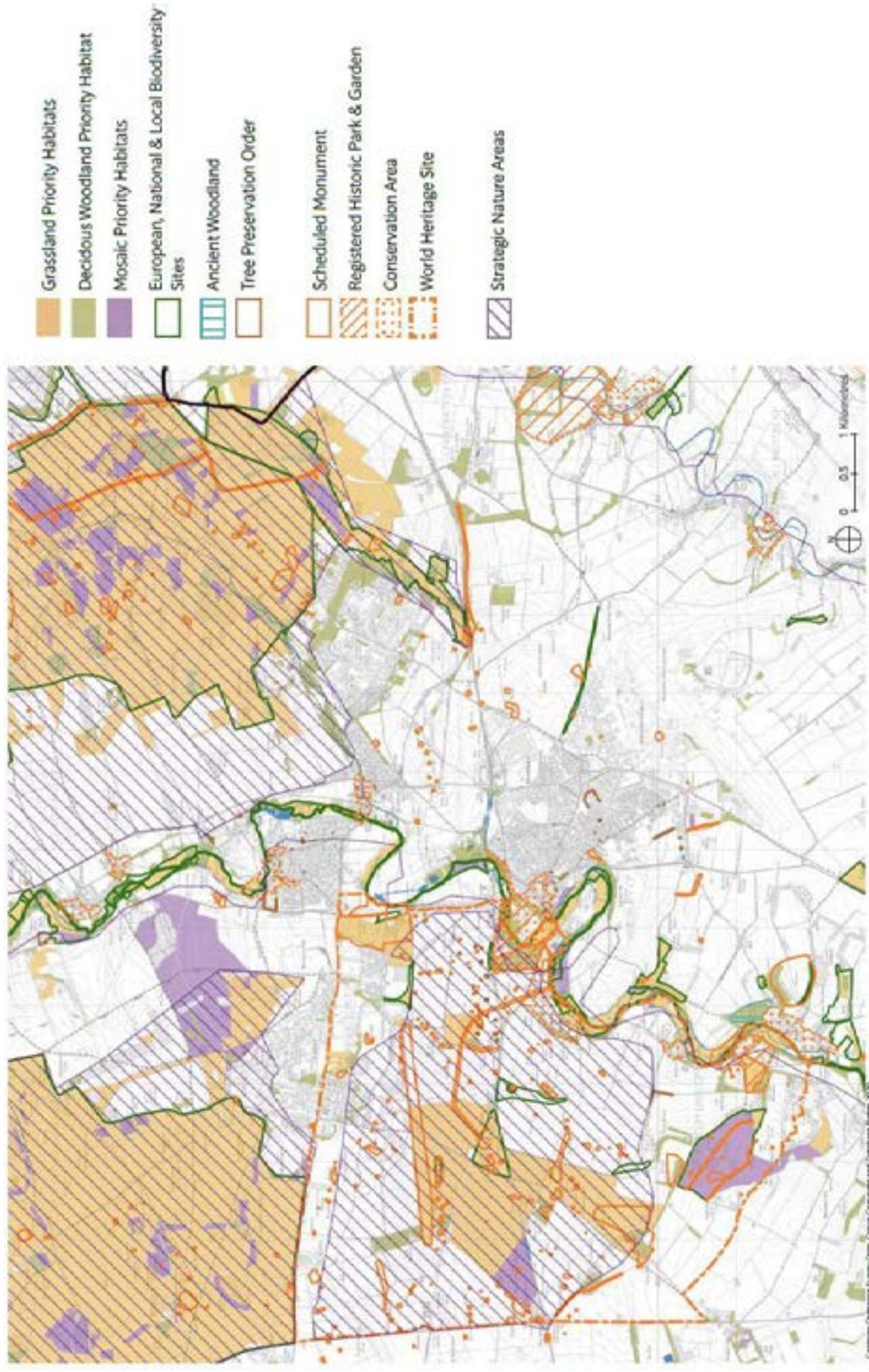


Figure 3 Map showing Amesbury Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets in relation to Biodiversity and Heritage. (These are draft plans from the emerging Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and may change)



# Wiltshire Council Local Plan Planning for Amesbury

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