

High Post development sites

Unsustainable development on a huge scale proposed in the Woodford Valley

Background: The Local Plan

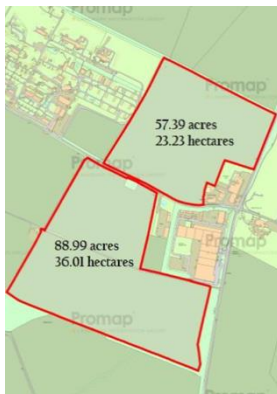
In September 2021, Wiltshire Council published the result of the consultation on its Local Plan. The Council's original consultation documents called for 350 new homes in Amesbury to meet local housing needs.

However, two very large sites in the Woodford Valley between Salisbury and Amesbury were submitted to this consultation by Atlas Planning Group on behalf of landowners. These proposals are way in excess of the housing needs of either town and are in a highly unsustainable location.

We call on Wiltshire Council to reject these submissions.

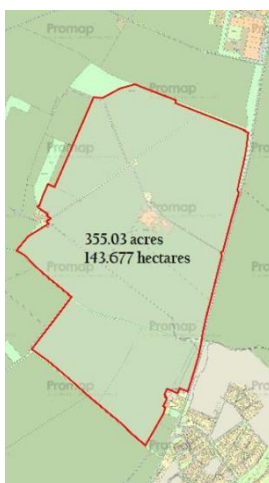
The proposals

Two proposals are for areas of land at High Post on the West/Woodford Valley side of the A345 Amesbury to Salisbury Road.



The North site covers 59 hectares/ 146 acres and is currently agricultural land.

It is proposed that this accommodates 47,500 sqm of employment space as expansion of the existing High Post Business Park.



The South site is 144 hectares / 355 acres, currently agricultural. It runs South from High Post all the way to Long Hedge, the new development on the outskirts of Old Sarum.

The proposal is for 500 houses and 117,000 sqm of employment space.

Unneeded employment land

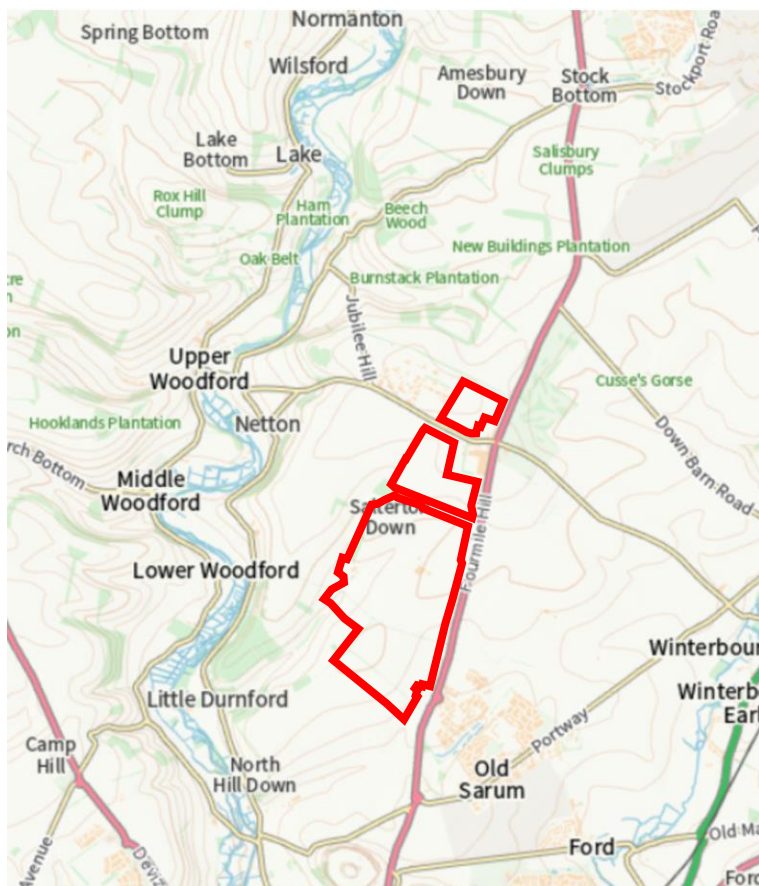
Land at Fugglestone Red in Salisbury is already allocated for employment use and not yet developed. Wiltshire Council estimates that Salisbury needs just 5 hectares of additional employment land, and Amesbury needs no additional space for business. The 203 hectares (502 acres) proposed at High Post is therefore far beyond identified local need, and would not provide a sustainable distribution of employment space for the county.

Unsustainable development

This map shows clearly what an unsustainable place this would be for both housing and industry.

The sites are in an isolated location between Amesbury and Salisbury. New employees would have to drive here, putting more strain on local roads. New residents would have no nearby access to shops, schools, or other services. The A345 here does not even have footpaths. This would make any new residents wholly reliant on cars for daily journeys, increasing congestion, putting pressure on parking in nearby towns, and causing carbon emissions. The Climate Emergency crystallises the need to ensure the emerging Local Plan provides for growth within movement-sustainable locations.

It is also entirely at odds with the aspiration to meet housing and employment needs as far as possible on brownfield sites in order to help minimise the loss of greenfield land.



It is therefore recommended that Wiltshire Council continues to apply the same rigor to these new sites as they have to other unsuitable sites, and discount them at the earliest opportunity.