A photograph of a tree-lined path in autumn. The trees have vibrant yellow and orange leaves, and the ground is covered in fallen leaves. In the distance, a few people are walking along the path. The image is framed by a dark orange border at the top.

**Introduction - A strategy focused on
delivering managed growth**



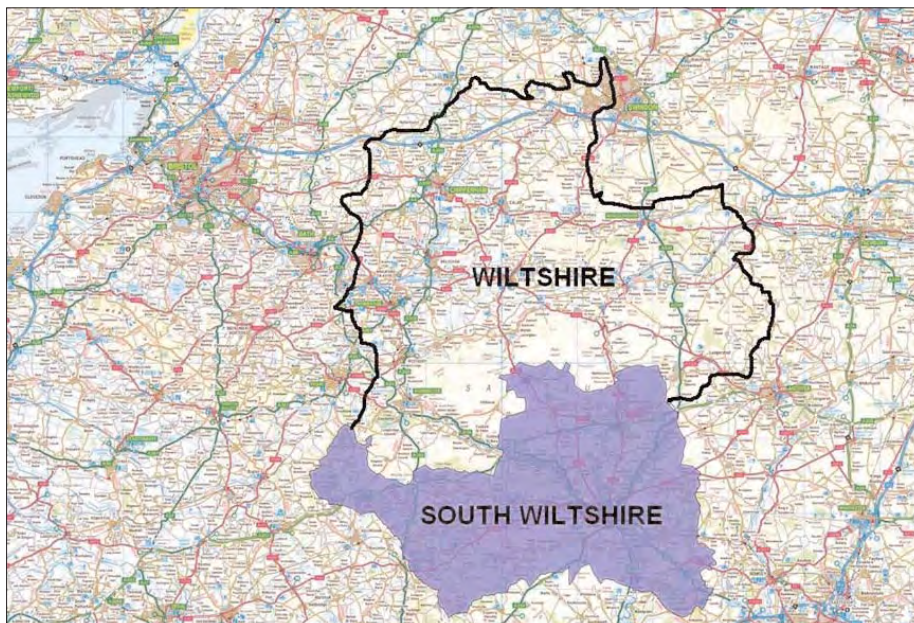
1. Introduction - A strategy focused on delivering managed growth

1.0 The purpose of this Core Strategy

1.1 The Core Strategy (Strategy) is an important document, setting out a spatial strategy and planning policies for the next 20 years. It is a key part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Wiltshire. Together with the South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), national planning policy and saved policies from the Salisbury District Local Plan, it will form the basis of planning decisions in the south of the County to 2026. Together this policy, with the exception of national planning policy, is known as the Development Plan.

1.2 The role of this Core Strategy - A Strategy based on delivering managed growth

1.3 This document sets out a spatial planning framework for the long-term development of south Wiltshire, ensuring that investment decisions are not made in isolation, but are properly co-ordinated, with a focus on promoting the principles of sustainable development. It has been prepared taking into account the views of all sections of the community and stakeholders, as well as maintaining consistency with national and regional guidance. The geographic area covered by south Wiltshire and this Core Strategy is identified in the map below.



Map 1: Placing south Wiltshire into context

1.4 In order to deal with issues that have been identified as being of local importance, this Core Strategy also provides a spatial expression of the Community Strategies¹ covering Wiltshire.

1.5 This document sets out a clear strategy for delivering growth in a managed way, which balances meeting local needs with the protection of the environment. In summary, this document comprises:

¹"Making A Difference Together - Community Strategy for Salisbury and south Wiltshire" and "A Sustainable Community Strategy for Wiltshire- Working together to create stronger and more sustainable communities" 2007-2016"



- an overall vision which sets out how the area and the places within it should develop;
- strategic objectives for the area focussing on the steps necessary to make the Vision a reality;
- a delivery strategy for achieving these objectives, which sets out how much development is intended to happen where, when, and by what means it will be delivered; and
- clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy.

1.6 While this Strategy is based on the delivery of managed growth, the outstanding quality of our environment is fully recognised and new policies are being proposed that will ensure the protection of our natural areas and built heritage.

1.7 Taking a spatial approach and the identification and delivery of strategically important sites

1.8 To convey this Strategy in a coherent manner, this document sets out the implications on an area basis and is designed around the established Community Areas of south Wiltshire.

1.9 A systematic appraisal of south Wiltshire has been undertaken to identify how the growth needed to provide people with a decent affordable home and good economic prospects can be accommodated without eroding the very character that makes the area so attractive to begin with. In accordance with PPS12 (Para, 4.38), this process has included the consideration of all reasonable alternatives (including urban extensions and new settlements).

1.10 This Strategy has been developed to be deliverable. To underpin its delivery much work has been carried out to try and prove the Strategy's achievability. Where it has not been possible to prove such, then the options have not been pursued.

1.11 Relationship with other plans and strategies

1.12 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS) forms part of the development plan for Wiltshire and sets out the numbers of houses and jobs that should be provided for. These figures are identified using a review of evidence on the expected economic and population change, regional housing requirements, resources and infrastructure available, the role and function of places and sub-regional relationships between places. The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the Draft RSS for the South West suggests a housing requirement of 12,400 homes for south Wiltshire for the period 2006-2026. This would require an average housing delivery of 620 dwellings per year. This broadly corresponds with the level of need that has also been identified at a local level. The Core Strategy must be in conformity with the RSS

1.13 This Strategy aligns with and is in conformity with other plans and strategies that operate in the area. The Strategy has been designed to be complementary and add a local spatial dimension to other policies and not simply repeat them. The relationship will be made explicit at relevant points throughout the document. Key documents include:

- National planning policy
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Community produced strategies such as community and parish plans.



- Salisbury Vision
- Heritage strategies such as Conservation Area Appraisals and the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Planning Policy Guidance
- Forward work programmes of essential infrastructure providers, to align delivery, such as the review of the Salisbury Transport Plan
- Plans and strategies of key consultees such as Wessex Water's Water Resource Management Plan.
- Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy

1.14 As described in Paragraph 4.10 of PPS12, every effort has been made to ensure that the outcomes of critically linked studies carried out by other agencies provide information in a timely manner to help underpin delivery of this plan. Examples include the successful dovetailing of the Water Resources Management Plan regulated by Ofwat and English Heritage's Historic Landscape Character Assessment.

1.15 An evidence based approach

1.16 All parts of this Strategy are based on the collation and analysis of evidence. This means using sound research and analysis to identify the challenges faced by the area and not basing the Strategy on supposition or anecdotal evidence. It also means ensuring that the desired outcomes to address the challenges can realistically be delivered and are not based on wishful thinking. This evidence has been gathered from a wide variety of sources, including commissioned surveys². This Strategy is based on analysis of over 1500 separate pieces of evidence, including international, national and local studies and reports.

1.17 Throughout this document, there are explicit references to the particular parts of the evidence base, which justify the choices made and also explain why alternative options were not pursued. A series of Topic Papers and addenda have been produced, which collate the evidence in a comprehensive manner. Topic Papers have been updated, or new Papers introduced where necessary as new evidence became available. Appendix G sets out a schedule of Topic Papers all of which are available on the Council's website.

1.18 All conclusions reached in this document are founded on analysis of the evidence, which is available for scrutiny. Wherever relevant this document includes footnotes, which refer to the pertinent sources of the information. All of the evidence can be found by following the simple link from the Wiltshire Council website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk.

1.19 Developing the Strategy

1.20 This Strategy is the most appropriate to meet the needs of south Wiltshire. Reasonable alternatives have been considered throughout its production. The consideration of alternatives and why they have not been pursued is clearly presented In the Methodology Report and Topic Papers³.

1.21 This Strategy aims to deliver a better quality of life through sustainable development. A Sustainability Appraisal ("SA"), incorporating Sustainable Environmental Assessment ("SEA") requirements has been undertaken iteratively at all stages of preparation and has been a key driver in the evolution of this

²See 'Studies and Surveys' section of the evidence base on the website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

³South Wiltshire Core Strategy Methodology Report; Identification of Strategic Growth Areas Papers 1 and 2.



Strategy. In simple terms, this entails evaluating all potential options against a range of criteria, which will score them in relation to how sustainable they are. A Habitat Regulations Assessment ("HRA") has also been undertaken. Both have helped shape this Strategy significantly⁴.

- 1.22 Local communities and those with an interest in the area have had a meaningful opportunity to help shape the Strategy. However, there is a tension within the community about seeking to achieve the levels of new housing and jobs needed to secure the future prosperity of the area without over developing and eroding the very character that makes the area so attractive in the first place⁵. It is a key role of this Strategy to reconcile the pressures in a manner that as far as possible mediates local concerns. The Strategy has been based on a proportionate and considered response to the diverse range of views expressed. The following table sets out some examples of options considered during the production process and the reasons why they do not form part of this Strategy.

Option considered	Reason why not pursued	Further information
New Settlement to the east of the district to match new housing to planned employment growth at Porton Down	Conformity with RSS, impact on nature conservation habitats, SA, community representations.	See Preferred Options document at www.wiltshire.gov.uk
Major urban extension to the west of Salisbury at Firsdown www.wiltshire.gov.uk	SA, impact on nature conservation, community representations.	See Preferred Options document at
Concentration of the majority of Salisbury's new employment needs in a single new employment park at Netherhampton	Business community requested more choice, community representations.	See Our Place in the Future document at www.wiltshire.gov.uk
Relaxation of the 40 ft rule in Salisbury	Independent specialist study confirmed its effectiveness. Stakeholder workshop including English Heritage concluded it had produced excellent outcomes. Lack of evidence that it had harmed economic growth of the City. Overwhelming public support for its retention.	CBA Report into 40 ft rule and minutes of Stakeholder workshop at www.wiltshire.gov.uk
Community chest, a tariff based system to collect planning gain and to devolve some expenditure to local communities to spend	Awaiting details of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Objections from developers over meeting tests of reasonableness. Uncertainty over community liaison through local government reorganisation.	See Our Place in the Future document at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

⁴See Sustainability Appraisal Final Report by Enfusion and HRA Final Report by Nicholas Pearson Associates.

⁵Issues and Options Consultation Methodology and Output Report; Preferred Options Consultation Methodology and Output Report; Evolved Preferred Options Consultation Methodology and Output Report



Option considered	Reason why not pursued	Further information
Setting nationally leading standards for requiring Ecohome standards in all new building	Lack of evidence to support. Evidence to suggest it would have a significant negative impact upon housing and economic delivery.	See preferred options document at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Table 1 - Examples of some of the options considered and not pursued

- 1.23 Although 8,500 representations have been received it is important to emphasise that the identification of Core Strategy policies is not a straightforward 'popularity contest'. While the representations are an important material consideration, there are other issues that equally need to be taken into account. These include conformity with national and regional policy, analysis of evidence, sustainability assessments, capacity of infrastructure, environmental protection, consideration of options and deliverability.
- 1.24 This Strategy has not been produced in isolation, but has been the subject of external quality control measures throughout its production. These measures include: instruction of Landmark Chambers, use of the Planning Advisory Service ("PAS") Self-Assessment Tool Kit, using GOSW as a 'critical friend' throughout the process and undergoing two Planning Inspectorate ("PINS") Frontloading Inspections⁶.
- 1.25 Flexibility, Contingency and Planning for Economic Recovery**
- 1.26 This document has been produced during difficult economic times and given this, the strategy has been designed to be flexible and to have contingency. No one site is essential to meet either the PPS3 requirement for a rolling five year supply of housing, or the overall 20 year requirement of housing and jobs.
- 1.27 Independent research, commissioned by Wiltshire Council, reported on the economic impact of the 2008 economic slowdown on Wiltshire⁷. It is clear that there will be increased unemployment and investment downturn. It is therefore essential that Wiltshire positions itself so that it is both well placed to benefit from recovery and indeed can help stimulate local investment through proactive actions. This Strategy forms a key part of the long term economic planning of the county.
- 1.28 Wiltshire Council and Local Government Reorganisation**
- 1.29 This strategy has been produced against a backdrop of local government reorganisation in Wiltshire, from a county and four district councils to a single Unitary Council covering the whole county, with the exception of Swindon.
- 1.30 The first LDS for Wiltshire Council has been agreed with the Government Office for the South West ("GOSW"). This sets out the components and timetable for delivery of the LDF by the new authority. The content of this south Wiltshire Core Strategy will be incorporated into a single Wiltshire Core Strategy in due course, although the debate over the south Wiltshire strategy will not be re-opened at that point. The diagram below shows how the strategy set out in this document will feed into the Wiltshire-wide Core Strategy, which will then supersede this document.

⁶South Wiltshire Core Strategy Methodology Report; Soundness Statements

⁷See 'The Economic Impact of the 2008 Slowdown in Wiltshire, December 2008, GWE Business West Research

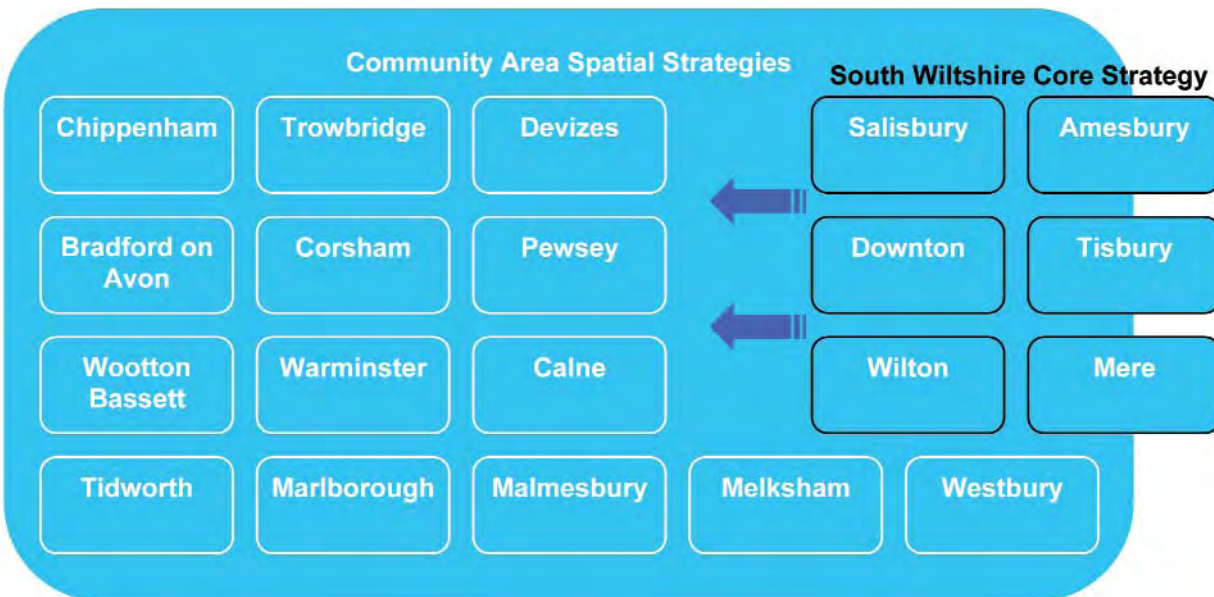
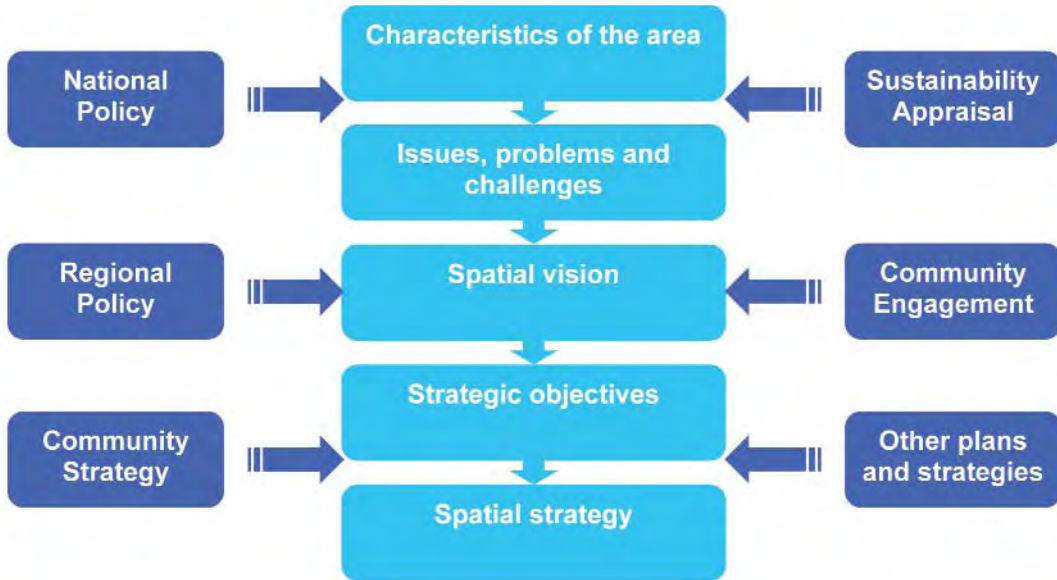


Fig 1: Relationship to a single Core Strategy for Wiltshire