

**Amesbury Town Council Revised comments on
the South Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS) 20 June 2010**

1. The status of Amesbury in South Wiltshire and how it is affected by transport across South Wiltshire are fundamental issues. On these depend the distribution of housing, retail, education, leisure and employment across the Amesbury Community Area and the preservation of its amenity.
2. Amesbury Town Council (ATC) commented on the CS and attended the Examination in Public. These revisions are in the light of the new Coalition Government's decisions on Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the Stonehenge Visitor Centre (SVC).
3. The Amesbury Community Strategic Plan (ACSP) covered these issues. Salisbury District Council accepted and endorsed the ACSP in 2007. The ACSP was created after, and independently of, the previous Salisbury District Local Plan and partly in parallel with the Salisbury Vision. The ACSP is a Core Document for this examination, as it was for the Retail Examination of the ASDA/Tesco applications in 2009. CS paragraph 8.2 identifies retail choice as a key issue and this remains true. The Amesbury Community Partnership (ACP) continues to monitor the progress of the ACSP in co-operation with Amesbury Town Council (ATC) and other interested parties.
4. CS Section 8 covers the Amesbury Community Area (ACA). Whilst it acknowledges the problems for ACA the evidence base used appears to be incomplete. The evidence produced so far does not cover the impact from the combination of changes envisaged across the whole area. A current example is the problem of movement corridors for large Goods Vehicles leading to impasse between local communities without an overall view at the South Wiltshire level. This draws into question the soundness of the assumptions underpinning the CS. As residents of Salisbury have noted in their representations Solstice Park is a major component of South Wiltshire employment.
5. Transport documents were added to the CS evidence base on Friday 15 January 2010. This was well after the completion of the other parts of the CS. Amesbury Town Council is concerned that these earlier proposals and investments are centred on Salisbury, reflecting the focus of previous documents rather than the broader scope of South Wiltshire.
6. Recent discussions at the February 2010 Amesbury Area Board of the possible de-priming of the A338, reinforce the need for a higher level view of the transport system as an enabling capability for retail, leisure, education, and entertainment. For the region as a whole simulation modelling would indicate likely levels of benefit to South Wiltshire, such as anticipated levels of sales, access to leisure facilities numbers of pupils educated per year

and capacity of types of leisure offerings as well as the detriments based on numbers of vehicle movements. These assessments will act as evidence to inform evaluation of possible options for development which the CS will support.

7. ATC believes that the CS requires a similar level of detail in its evidence base for Amesbury to that applied to Salisbury. The CS acknowledges that there are discrepancies in the coverage of Amesbury. 8.18 recognises that Amesbury has not been acknowledged as regards employment. 8.20 acknowledges changes from the previous local plan as regards Solstice Park.
8. The extensive changes to anticipated developments in employment, retail, the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and the much larger amount of housing now in prospect will cause impacts which have not been considered as a whole. These impacts are the outputs of systems which can be measured in quantitative and qualitative terms. The CS does not seem to have considered impacts from these systems which may be positive, such as visitors to Stonehenge, with associated benefits to local retail sales or negative such as numbers of homes affected by high levels of large goods vehicle passage affecting their amenity.
9. The scope of the Kings Gate development is now substantially greater than that originally envisaged and approved by Salisbury District Council for the area to the West of Boscombe Down airfield. Education Capacity has already been identified as out of step with the likely additional population for Amesbury. Whilst there are plans to extend Archer School and build another school whether these will offer enough school places by time for the anticipated population has not been assessed.
10. The scope of the improvement of the A303 has been scaled back and delayed although it was seen as an essential enabler to South Wiltshire. Paragraph 8.24 recognises inadequacy of the A303 west of Amesbury and the need to work with the Highways Agency (HA) and Department for Transport (DfT). This should be included in Strategic Objective 8 as a singular item.
11. English Heritage has noted in its representations the close relationship between Amesbury and the World Heritage Site. Simulation should explore the possible ways that this synergy could be developed, for example through modelling the changes to the flows of visitors to Stonehenge as they move to and from supporting facilities. There are potential sites which have not been fully considered as part of a co-ordinated tourism offering.
12. Lack of analysis of the likely impacts on the amenity of Amesbury is a gap in the soundness of the evidence base for the CS. "Amenity" covers the quality of life in the existing homes of Amesbury as well as the provision of Amenity Space.
13. There appears to be a lack of evidence on the level of the housing needs. For the CS to be valid as the foundation for the assessment of options for the future of South Wiltshire consideration of the place and role of both Amesbury and Salisbury in South Wiltshire is essential.

14. Amesbury Town Council welcomes the opportunities from the examination to consider Amesbury's role within South Wiltshire and so ensure that the CS reflects this so that the CS will be a sound basis for future development.

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