

# Adopted Local Plan - Employment

## Employment

**Objective:** To encourage a diverse and healthy economy by providing opportunities for a range of employment activities through concentrating major development in Salisbury and Amesbury, promoting sites in other larger settlements where new housing is proposed and providing scope for local employment in the more rural parts of the District.

### 5.1

Salisbury District Council believes the promotion of economic development in the District is important to the future well being of the local residents. The main employment area in the District is Salisbury City, which offers a range of employment opportunities. Amesbury, the second largest settlement in the District, has traditionally relied heavily on the Ministry of Defence for local employment. Recent changes in the nation's defence requirements has resulted in the rationalisation of services and changes in working structures within the MOD, with a resultant reduction in local employment opportunities. The town has good road access to major centres to the east via the A303, and is considered to offer potential for major new employment growth to support the existing local population and future planned growth. The District Council will therefore promote economic development in Amesbury through this Local Plan with the identification of significant areas of land for employment development.

### 5.2

The Adopted Wiltshire Structure Plan (2001) requires that 'about' 50 hectares of additional employment land should be provided in Salisbury District between 1991 and 2011. By April, 1999, 21.16 hectares had either been developed or was committed for development (through the granting of planning consent). The Local Plan is therefore required to identify land to meet the remainder of the Structure Plan requirement. In meeting the requirement, the District Council is mindful of both the word "about" in relation to the Structure Plan requirement (which is intended to provide some flexibility for provision across the district) and also the desire to promote economic development in Amesbury.

### 5.3

Table 4 below shows that this Local Plan allocates an additional 41.50 hectares of employment land for the current plan period which runs to 2011.

Employment Land Developed (1991-1999) and land already committed for employment use	21.16
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(either under development or with valid planning consent)

[Includes allocated land at London Road, Salisbury (E2) - 1.4ha.]

## Local Plan Employment Allocations

(Sites or parts of sites carried forward from the previous Local Plan are marked \*)

E1 Old Sarum, Salisbury (component of mixed use scheme)	6.00
E8A Porton Road, Amesbury *	18.00
E8B Boscombe Down, Amesbury	7.00
E8B Porton Down	5.00
E11 Downton (Remainder) *	2.50
E12 Mere *	3.00
	41.50
Total provision (factoring in land already developed) made by this Local Plan for employment uses for the period (1991-2011)	62.66
Strategic Employment Requirement for Salisbury District (1991-2011) as set out in the Wiltshire County Council Structure Plan	(about) 50.00
Surplus of land provided	12.66

It should be noted that some of this provision (15.5 ha) consists of unused allocations carried forward from the previous plan. The remainder of this provision however, has been directed largely according to the plan's strategy of concentrating development in Salisbury and Amesbury, although specialist and rural employment needs are also addressed. It is recognised that the plan provides for a surplus of employment land, however, based on the historically low take-up rates, it is not expected that all of this land will be developed, and hence, the choice of sites, which the overprovision allows, will avoid the risk of a shortage of sites acting as a deterrent to companies seeking employment development opportunities in the area.

## Salisbury

### 5.4

The absence of significant areas of developable land in or adjoining existing employment areas in Salisbury means that the Local Plan must make new allocations of employment land. In accordance with the principles of sustainability set out in Chapter 1 of this Local Plan, it is

considered that the new employment sites should be part of a mixed use development at Old Sarum.

## 5.5

### **Old Sarum**

Land to the north and south of The Portway is released for mixed development including new employment development. The total area available for future development is about 39 hectares (gross), but only part of the site will be released for development in this Plan period. The Council is taking a longer term view than this plan period alone by planning for a sustainable development which will incorporate a range of uses including residential, employment, and community, recreation, leisure and shopping facilities. Within the lifetime of this Local Plan the first phase of development will be limited to 550 houses, 6 hectares of employment land and associated facilities. A master plan will be prepared for the site which will incorporate issues such as phasing, landscaping, design and the provision of facilities. The site has archaeological interest and an archaeological evaluation will be required by the County Archaeologist. Initial investigations have indicated that there will be a requirement for some features to be preserved in situ, for example, Barrow Cemetery. This area will not be available for development, but may serve as an amenity site for the development. In accordance with Circular 1/97, planning obligations will be sought for improvements to any infrastructure or facilities which are necessary as a direct result of the development, including public transport. The release of further phases will be addressed in future reviews of the Local Plan.

#### *Policy E1*

## 5.6

### **London Road**

An area of land of 2 hectares at London Road offers the potential for new employment and/or leisure uses in association with the proposed park and ride site adjacent. In 2000, approval was given for a mixture of business purposes within classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order on the southernmost 1.24ha of the site. Proposals for leisure uses would be subject to there being no adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the city centre, particularly the evening economy.

#### *Policy E2*

## 5.7

The further expansion of employment activity at Southampton Road is strongly constrained by environmental factors with the majority of undeveloped land lying to the south of the A36, within the flood plain of the River Avon and in an area of High Ecological Value. In addition, the land has an important landscape quality, both in views out from Southampton Road, and as a green foreground element in views looking in towards the city, and the Cathedral in particular. In view of these factors, and having regard also to the trunk sewer that crosses undeveloped land south of Southampton Road, en-route to the Petersfinger Sewage Works, the Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that the open land outside of the current and proposed limits of building at Southampton Road, should remain undeveloped.

*Policy E7*

## **Office development in Salisbury**

### **5.8**

There are a number of large, recently constructed office developments within the city centre. Some of these buildings are out of scale with neighbouring properties and have a design character inappropriate to the Conservation Area. They also tend to generate significant columns of traffic at peak periods and impose additional burdens on the limited stock of public, off-street parking spaces, leading to parking and congestion in residential streets. In contrast, small-scale, well-designed office schemes can, on balance, have a beneficial effect upon the Conservation Area by bringing about the re-development of gap sites or buildings of poor quality. Subject to relevant Conservation and Transport policies, the Local Plan therefore looks favourably on the development of modest office schemes within the city centre.

*Policy E3*

### **5.9**

Policy E4 lays down maximum plot ratios for office development within the Eastern Chequers with the intention of ensuring that not more than half the development site is used for building, with at least half the remainder being landscaped to a high standard. The sensitivity of the city centre in conservation terms demands that careful attention is paid to the details of building design and materials, and ensuring that the proposal is in accordance with height restrictions set out in policy D6. Vehicular accesses are permissible, but they should be in the form of an arched entrance rather than a gap in the building frontage. It is important that the size of the arch is not excessive and that it is sympathetic to the scale and

proportions of the building. Whilst the Building Regulations may require that in certain circumstances sufficient width and headroom is available to permit access by fire appliances, this is likely to result in an archway out of scale with the rest of the building. In some circumstances the problem can be overcome by the installation of dry and wet risers, and early contact with the Building Control section on this and other aspects is recommended.

*Policy E4*

**5.10**

**Brown Street Car Park.** Until the Park and Ride sites come on stream, there may be a shortage of car parking capacity in Salisbury. As a result, the redevelopment of Brown Street car park (proposed by Policies H5, H6, TR9 and S5 of this Local Plan) will be delayed. The District Council will pursue the eventual redevelopment of this car park as this is appropriate in Conservation terms. However, redevelopment of the site will not take place until alternative-parking provision has been made available through the development of Park and Ride sites. In view of the close relationship of this site to existing office and retail development it is considered that any redevelopment should be a mix of development which could incorporate a residential element at first floor level or above. The site has archaeological interest and an archaeological excavation will be required by the County Archaeologist. A development brief will be prepared for the site.

*Policy E5*

**5.11**

**The Old Manor Hospital.** Currently in two locations to the north and south of Wilton Road, the Health Authority has indicated that part of the site will be released for redevelopment during this Local Plan period, although the exact extent has yet to be finalised. The smaller area to the north is considered suitable for residential development, but the area to the south also offers potential for office development as part of a mixed scheme. A development brief will be prepared for the site.

*Policy E6*

**Amesbury**

**5.12**

Amesbury is the second largest settlement in the District and considered to have potential for significant economic growth during this Local Plan period. One of the main constraints to large scale employment

development in the town is the lack of an all-movements junction at Folly Bottom. The release of additional employment land in Amesbury will provide the opportunity for the junction to be funded through development. Two sites are proposed for employment development in Amesbury. Both sites will be subject to the construction of an all-movements junction at Folly Bottom.

### 5.13

#### **Land to east of Porton Road**

Part of this site (10 hectares gross, 6 hectares net) was allocated in the previous Local Plan for employment development subject to the construction of an all movements junction at Folly Bottom. This Local Plan continues the release of this area for employment development, but also takes a longer term view in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to the future development of the area. The total extent of the area available for long term future development is about 62 hectares (gross). The site will however require extensive structural landscaping. Within the lifetime of this Local Plan the first phase of development will be limited to 18 hectares (net) of employment land. In addition, leisure uses will be acceptable on the site subject to there being no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Amesbury town centre. A master plan will be prepared for the site which will incorporate issues such as landscaping, phasing and design. The site has archaeological interest and an archaeological evaluation will be required by the County Archaeologist. A new all-movements junction with the A303 will be required in association with the development. Provision will be made within the site for a link road to site E8B at Boscombe Down.

*Policy E8A*

### 5.14

#### **Land at Boscombe and Porton Down**

The potential for the development of a South Wiltshire Science Park has been identified and is being promoted as the Salisbury Research Triangle (SRT) centred on the three R&D establishments at DERA Boscombe Down, DERA Porton Down, and CAMR Porton Down. The SRT initiative has received support in principle from Wiltshire County Council.

### 5.15

The site at Boscombe Down comprises about 7 hectares, although there is potential for this to be extended to the east for future development if required. The site currently contains a number of Z-block military residential units. It is within an Area of Special Archaeological Significance, and development proposals will thus need to address the

potential for new archaeological sites to be revealed. The traffic implications of any development proposed within this area will need to be assessed together with precise details of access and any off-site highway improvements proposed. The intention of linking the site with the approved Amesbury Business Park to the north and the proposed Folly Bottom junction will require the alignment of the proposed link road to be safeguarded. These and other matters will be the subject of a development brief.

#### 5.16

The site at Porton Down is about 5 hectares as a first phase, although there is a further 5 hectares of adjoining land available if required in the future. In view of the relatively remote location of Porton Down, new uses on the site will be restricted to those companies requiring the co-locational benefits of the specialist facilities and expertise available at Porton Down: biotechnology, healthcare and pharmaceuticals. The location of the Porton Down site within the designated Special Landscape Area and Area of Special Archaeological Significance, together with its close proximity to the Area of High Ecological Value (SSSI) will also give rise to issues that will need to be addressed in the development brief.

#### 5.17

Generic facilities of relevance to both sites and uses not requiring the specific co-locational benefits of Porton Down, such as a conference centre or hotel will be expected to be located at or adjacent to the Boscombe Down complex. A planning obligation will be sought in respect of the funding and phasing of public transport including the development of a Green Commuter Plan. Issues to be addressed in the Green Commuter Plan should include the potential for the reopening of Porton Station and a bus link to the Porton site, bus links between the two sites and to Salisbury, car sharing initiatives, limits to the provision of car parking and facilities for walkers and cyclists. A development brief will be prepared for the land supporting the SRT initiative, which will incorporate issues such as highway improvements, landscaping, phasing and design.

#### *Policy E8B*

#### 5.18

##### **Alderbury**

Alderbury is one of the larger settlements in the District, but has limited employment opportunities. In accordance with the plan's sustainability principles, it is considered that additional employment land should be identified in the village to help reduce the need to travel. Approximately

0.7 hectares of land are identified for employment opposite the existing business park where there is good access to the A36.

*Policy E9*

5.19

**Dinton**

Policy H10 of the plan allocates land for new residential development in Dinton on the RAF Baverstock site. The site is large and offers some scope for redevelopment for employment purposes also, although these opportunities are limited due to the site's location and physical constraints. Since, 2000 the majority of the site has been brought back into use for storage purposes, however the aim of this allocation should be to encourage local opportunities. A planning brief will be prepared for the site, which will include such details as the range of acceptable uses, landscaping, design, infrastructure provision, and the possible protection of land within the site for a future railway station. It is envisaged that small scale B1 uses, for example light industry, studios, or high tech, will locate on the site. The Local Planning Authority is aware of previous concerns expressed by County Highways which have been resolved to meet current requirements, however, access and movements to the site will be a key criteria to be considered in the brief and in subsequent proposals for the site. The Authority will also consider the employment generation of such a proposal.

*Policy E10*

5.20

**Downton**

The previous Local Plan identified approximately 4 hectares of land to the north of the existing industrial estate for new employment development. Planning permission has been granted on 1.5 hectares of the site. This Local Plan therefore retains provision for the remaining 2.5 hectares. A planning brief has been prepared for the site, which includes such details as access, infrastructure provision, acceptable Use Classes, landscaping and design. Use Classes B1 and B8 (of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended) will be acceptable. In exceptional circumstances, B2 uses will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

*Policy E11*

5.21



### **Mere**

Three hectares of land are allocated for employment use to the west of the existing Dead Maid Quarry industrial estate at Mere. The release of this land will provide for new employment opportunities in the town. The land is however part of a large field and substantial landscaping will thus be required on the north and west boundaries to both define and screen the site, and also along the eastern boundary to safeguard the living conditions of residents in Norwood House. An approved development brief for the site has been published and covers these and other layout, landscaping and design matters in greater detail.

#### *Policy E12*

## **5.22**

### **South Newton**

The small industrial estate at South Newton is an important local employment resource. Poor access and internal road and car parking conditions prevent its expansion at the present time, and until these difficulties are resolved it is not considered appropriate to contemplate any further development that would add to traffic generation or car parking need. Accordingly, policy E13 seeks to resist the enlargement of existing premises, or the erection of new buildings, until positive improvements have been made. In the longer term the Council will encourage the overall upgrading of the site and, following the resolution of current vehicle related problems, its enlargement to the north. Subject to the agreement of the Highway Authority the latter development may be coupled with the creation of a new access onto the A36.

#### *Policy E13*

## **5.23**

### **Tisbury**

Tisbury has accommodated a substantial growth in housing over recent years which has not been matched by a growth in employment opportunities. The strong landscape constraints and the inability of the local road network to accommodate larger commercial vehicles prevents the allocation of land for major new employment development in the village. The Local Plan therefore seeks to encourage the development of small-scale employment opportunities in the village and to retain existing employment uses. Approximately 1.4 hectares of land is proposed for employment development immediately west of the housing allocation between Hindon Lane and Weaveland Road. This land will also include part of the link road to the housing development. A development brief will

be prepared for this site in conjunction with the adjacent housing allocation, which will incorporate issues such as design and highway improvements. In order to further encourage the viability of Tisbury as a local centre, within the settlement's central area the conversion of parts of residential properties to small-scale employment uses will be allowed provided that a residential element is retained.

*Policies E14A and E14B*

5.24

### **Wilton**

As is noted in the Housing Chapter, there are constraints on further development in Wilton because of problems relating to sewerage and access. The identification of land for new employment use is therefore considered inappropriate at the present time. However, proposals for smaller-scale employment development, redevelopment or changes of use will be treated on their merits, having particular regard to the likely impact on the sewerage system and the highway network. The implications for the landscape setting of Wilton will also be taken into account.

*Policy E15*

## **General**

5.25

One of the main aims of this Local Plan is to provide a range of employment opportunities within the District. Traditional employment patterns in Wiltshire have been changing over recent years and research by Wiltshire County Council has shown that less than half the new jobs created in the past have come from developments on strategic employment land sites. Employment in other jobs such as retailing, transport, health services, education and leisure account for a high proportion of jobs in the area. In recognition of this and the continuing demands to locate other activities within employment areas, proposals for other uses on employment sites will be considered where the alternative use is acceptable in principle and provides a similar number and range of job opportunities. Proposals involving the significant net loss of employment opportunities in a town or main settlement or the loss of an employment use that is important to the rural economy will be resisted. The Council will consider making exceptions to this only where there is clear evidence that the land or premises are no longer viable for an employment generating use and/or where redevelopment of a site for a

non-employment use would bring improvements to the local environment or conservation benefits that would outweigh the loss of local jobs.

#### *Policy E16*

5.26

In addition to and including the settlements already mentioned, policy E17 allows for the consideration of new business development within or on the edge of the majority of settlements in the District. The District-wide applicability of the policy is such that any proposals will be considered in the context of the specific settlement to which the proposal relates. This means that larger proposals which would be likely to be considered appropriate for Salisbury, Amesbury and other larger settlements are likely to be unacceptable in smaller villages where access problems created by local roads and the need to protect the local environment will be a major consideration. Whilst small or medium scale proposals will not count against Structure Plan provision and are unlikely to prejudice the development of the sites specifically identified for employment development, any proposals for large-scale development will be carefully assessed to ensure that they do not prejudice the implementation of other Local Plan policies which promote sustainability through mixed use development in Salisbury and economic development in Amesbury. Whilst B1 uses are, in principle, acceptable, proposals will be carefully scrutinised against a list of criteria laid down in Policy E17 to ensure that they are neighbourly and in keeping with their surroundings. The enlargement of existing premises will be regarded sympathetically where it can be shown that proposals meet the same criteria. The opportunity to create local employment through the change of use of existing buildings is acknowledged, and will be taken into consideration by the Local Planning Authority when dealing with planning applications proposing other uses, such as housing.

#### *Policy E17*

## **Special Restraint Areas**

5.27

The housing chapter notes that there are six villages in the Local Plan area - Ablington, Ansty, Bodenham, Fisherton de la Mere, Stourton and Teffont Evias - which, because of their outstanding and unspoilt quality, are designated Special Restraint Areas. Within Special Restraint Areas new housing development will not be permitted, as it would alter the village scene detrimentally. A similar position is taken in respect on new

employment development which will not be permitted unless it involves the sensitive conversion of buildings that are worthy of retention.

*Policy E18*

## **Countryside**

### **5.28**

In keeping with other policies concerning the countryside, policy E21 prohibits the establishment of new employment sites in rural areas. On existing sites in the countryside the enlargement or redevelopment of premises will be permitted within existing site boundaries. The expansion of existing premises onto adjacent land will be considered if the proposal would result in improved local employment opportunities, or will improve the operational efficiency of the business.

*Policies E19 & E21*

### **5.29**

As an exception to the general thrust of the Local Plan's countryside policies, and in line with Government advice, the conversion of buildings in the countryside to employment uses is considered acceptable, although the need to protect the quality of the rural environment, the vitality of nearby settlements and the character of traditional farm buildings is recognised. The intention is to put to beneficial use buildings that would otherwise fall into disrepair and be lost. Whilst the buildings should, in terms of their appearance, be worthy of retention and the proposed conversion should not perpetuate a rural eyesore, it is not necessary for the buildings to be of particular architectural or historic interest. There is no limitation upon the type of employment activity to be undertaken in such a converted building, save that the requirements of the policy are met and that the scale and type of operation is appropriate to the character of the building and compatible with the surrounding rural area. Where agricultural buildings are involved, it will not necessary to show that the buildings have become redundant except within the New Forest Heritage Area, although the Local Planning Authority will wish to be satisfied that the permitted development rights have not been abused.

*Policy E20*