



*Delivering a brighter, greener future for all*

12<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## AGENDA

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to:

### Extraordinary Meeting of Warminster Town Council

to be held on

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7pm**

**at the Civic Centre, Sambourne Road, Warminster, BA12 8LB**

#### **Membership:**

<b>Cllr Allensby (West)</b>	<b>Cllr Keeble (West)</b>
<b>Cllr Barnes (East)</b>	<b>Cllr J Kirkwood (Broadway)</b>
<b>Cllr Carter (West)</b>	<b>Cllr S Kirkwood (Broadway)</b>
<b>Cllr Cooper (Broadway) Chairman of the Council and Mayor</b>	<b>Cllr Lee (Broadway)</b>
<b>Cllr Davis (East)</b>	<b>Cllr Parks (North)</b>
<b>Cllr Hawker (West)</b>	<b>Cllr Robbins (East)</b>
<b>Cllr Jones (North) Vice Chairman of the Council and Deputy Mayor</b>	<b>Cllr Tuisinu (East)</b>

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the council and committees, unless excluded due to the confidential nature of the business.

If you wish to contribute during public participation, please contact [admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk) prior to the meeting to enable this to be facilitated.

Yours sincerely

**Cllr Andrew Cooper**  
**Chairman of the Town Council and Mayor of Warminster**

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#### **1. Apologies for absence**

To receive apologies from those unable to attend.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**To receive** any declarations of interest under Warminster Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

**3. Chairman's Announcements**

**3.1 To note** any announcements made by the chairman.

**4. Questions**

**To receive** questions from members of the council submitted in advance to the Town Clerk.

***Standing Orders will be suspended to allow for public participation.***

**5. Public Participation**

**To enable** members of the public to address the committee with an allowance of three minutes per person regarding any item on the agenda and **to receive** any petitions and deputations. The chairman may read out any statements submitted in advance.

***Standing Orders will be reinstated following public participation.***

**6. Reports from Unitary Authority Members**

**To note** any reports received which are relevant to the Full Council.

**7. Draft Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed to review the Neighbourhood Plan in 2021. The first consultation was held in February-March 2022. Work has continued since then led by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group supported by the Town Council and Place Studio – Planning Specialists who have a track record of supporting development of successful Neighbourhood Plans.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have agreed that the Draft Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2 (**attached**) is ready for Formal Public Consultation, (also known as Regulation 14). This consultation will last 8 weeks and 1 day (see Item 8 below).

Following the consultation, all the comments and evidence submitted will be analysed and a response issued with proposed changes to the current draft. This revised draft will be considered by Full Council, most likely in May or June this year, with the intention of submitting it to Wiltshire Council and subsequently an Inspector for examination.

There are a large number of supporting documents (see attached list) which will be made available during the consultation period on the Neighbourhood Plan Website, or sent on request via WeTransfer (or similar) or may be examined as paper copies at the Civic Centre.

**Members are asked to resolve to approve the draft Neighbourhood Plan 2 for Regulation 14 Public Consultation.**

**8. Regulation 14 Consultation Strategy**

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have agreed that the Draft Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2 is ready for Formal Public Consultation, (also known as Regulation 14)

A consultation strategy has been recommended by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, **(see attached)**. The strategy is not meant to be exhaustive, and other consultation and publicity may be undertaken during the Regulation 14 period.

Also **(attached)** for information are a sample leaflet and a quick guide to Neighbourhood Plans.

**Members are asked to resolve to endorse and adopt the Regulation 14 Consultation Strategy.**

**9. Communications**

**Members to decide on items requiring a press release and to confirm a spokesperson if required.**

Minutes from this meeting will be available to all members of the public either from our website [www.warminster-tc.gov.uk](http://www.warminster-tc.gov.uk) or by contacting us at Warminster Civic Centre.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 23rd March 2026.**

# Evidence Base

Start

## Neighbourhood Plan Annexes

[Warminster Design Guidelines and Codes](#)

[Warminster Town Centre Masterplan](#)

## Neighbourhood Plan Appendices

[Appendix 1 - Housing Needs Assessment](#)

[Appendix 2 - Site Assessments Report](#)

[Appendix 3 - Locally Valued Facilities List and Map](#)

[Appendix 4 - Community Projects](#)

[Appendix 5 - Employment Sites](#)

[Appendix 6 - Warminster Town Centre Survey of Businesses Report](#)

[Appendix 7.1 - Natural Environment and Biodiversity Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.2 Climate Change, Sustainable High Priority Design and Renewable Energy Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.3 - Green and Blue Infrastructure Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.4 - Bats Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.5 - Dark Skies Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.6 - Local Green Space Report](#)

[Appendix 7.7 - Landscape and Views Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 7.8 - Heritage Topic Paper and Locally Valued Non-Designated Heritage Assets Shortlist, Map and Photos](#)

[Appendix 7.9 - Managing Flood Risk](#)

[Appendix 7.10 - Trees and Hedgerows Topic Paper](#)

[Appendix 8 - Sustainable and Active Travel Table](#)

## Neighbourhood Plan Supporting Documents

[Glossary](#)

[Modification Statement](#)

[Consultation Statement](#)

[Appendix A - Launch Consultation Summary Feedback Report](#)

[Appendix B - Review Workshop Report](#)

[Appendix C - Locally Valued Heritage Assets Shortlist](#)

[Appendix D - Informal Consultation](#)

[Appendix E - Local Green Space Survey Report](#)

[Appendix F - Damask Way Informal Consultation Results](#)

[Appendix G - Site Allocation Workshop](#)

[Appendix H - Site Allocation Survey Analysis](#)

[Appendix I - Land East of the Dene Engagement Statement](#)

[Appendix J - Media Coverage](#)

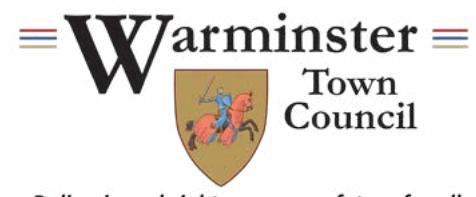
[Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Letter](#)

[Strategic Environmental Assessment Report](#)

[Warminster Carbon Footprint Report](#)

[Evidence and Policy Review Warminster Neighbourhood Plan \(April 2022\)](#)

# Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2 2026-38



*Delivering a brighter, greener future for all*

This document has been prepared by the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Warminster Town Council.

It is a pre-submission draft version of the reviewed (or 'modified') Neighbourhood Plan and together with its associated documentation is to be used for its intended purpose only – Regulation 14 consultation.

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Warminster Town Council PSGA Member  
Licence number: AC0000804884

Related information and the Plan evidence base can be found on the website:

[Warminsterplan.com/warminster-tc.gov.uk](http://Warminsterplan.com/warminster-tc.gov.uk)

Any questions, or requests for further information can be directed by:

Email: [admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk)  
Phone: 01985 214874

## Acknowledgements

From those members of our community who are part of our Steering Group, to those who have responded to our consultations. Assisted by town council officers and professional planners, it's our community that have shaped this updated Neighbourhood Plan. Our thanks to the many of you who have taken the time, in one way or another, to contribute to this Plan that gives us the strongest possible say in local planning decisions.

## Professional Support Team

- Warminster Town Council
- Place Studio Ltd (Community Planning Consultants)
- Arc4
- AR Urbanism
- LUC
- Wiltshire Council

# Summary of the Document

This document is an update of the first Warminster Neighbourhood Plan (referred to as WNP 2016) which was agreed by a community referendum in 2016 when a majority of those who voted said ‘YES’ to the Plan.

## What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) allows communities to have a say in the future of the places where they live and work. It provides legal weight in guiding decisions about conservation, regeneration, and development in the local area. While the primary focus is on land usage and development, it also provides a broader context for the community’s history, assets and aspirations.

## Who is it for?

The WNP is for the people who live, and work in the area covered by the Plan. It is a way for the community to be proactive and positive in the influence we have in the planning system and development industry.

It is also a technical document that is used by Wiltshire Council Planning

Officers when making planning decisions. It will be used by Planning Inspectors when considering appeals. It will also be used by the development industry. That means the planning policy parts of the WNP are necessarily technical but simple explanations are included to ensure it can be understood by the full range of people who might use it. There is a non-technical summary available.

Below we’ve listed some of the key terms used in this document. A full glossary can be found in the supporting documents.

CIL: Community Infrastructure Levy

LGS: Local Green Space

NP: Neighbourhood Plan

NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment

SG: Warminster Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

WNP: The Warminster Neighbourhood Plan (2024-2038)

WNP (2016): The first WNP made in 2016

WLP: Wiltshire Local Plan

WTC: Warminster Town Council

## What stage is it at?

This a draft “pre-submission” version of the updated WNP. It is now shared for formal consultation (defined as Regulation 14 consultation) for public inspection feedback.

The Plan is colour coded to make it easier to navigate:

 **Climate Change and Sustainable Development**

 **Housing and Communities**

 **Economy and Town Centre**

 **Environment, Heritage and Design**

 **Getting Around and Transport**

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# Supporting Documents

The following have been prepared to aid understanding of the Plan, the changes to the Plan as the second edition, and how the wider community was involved in the preparation of the Plan to date.

These are available on (<https://www.warminsterplan.com/draftwnp-r14-consult>) and are:

- Non-technical Summary
- Modification Statement
- Consultation Statement

The Neighbourhood Plan has accompanying 'Annexes' and appendices which provides more detailed guidance and information on particular aspects. These are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website (<https://www.warminsterplan.com/draftwnp-r14-consult>) and are:

## Annexes

1. Warminster Design Guide
2. Warminster Town Centre Masterplan

## Appendices

The Neighbourhood Plan is also accompanied by several evidence base background papers that support a number of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. In the interest of brevity, the Plan only summarises the evidence, and the background papers should be consulted to understand the detailed justification and information where relevant.

- Appendix 1: Housing Needs Assessment
- Appendix 2: Site Assessment Report
- Appendix 3: Locally Valued Facilities List and Map
- Appendix 4: Community Projects
- Appendix 5: Employment Sites
- Appendix 6: Warminster Town Centre Survey of Businesses Report
- Appendix 7.1: Natural Environment and Biodiversity Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.2: Climate Change, Sustainable High Priority Design and Renewable Energy Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.3: Green and Blue Infrastructure Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.4: Bats Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.5: Dark Skies Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.6: Local Green Space Report
- Appendix 7.7: Landscape and Views Topic Paper
- Appendix 7.8: Heritage Topic Paper and Locally Valued Non-Designated Heritage Assets Short List, Map and Photos
- Appendix 7.9: Managing Flood Risk
- Appendix 7.10: Trees and Hedgerows Topic Paper
- Appendix 8: Sustainable and Active Travel Table

# Foreword

**The first Warminster Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) was adopted in 2016; however, much has changed since then within the town, at Wiltshire Council and at a national level.**

Changing habits, internet shopping and COVID19 have adversely impacted the town centre. Whilst the first WNP has merit, we want to update it to benefit from the changes in planning laws and improved environmental standards, so it better reflects the current aspirations of the community.

One significant change within the parish boundary is the development of approx. 1,500 new units being built on the west side of town. The Warminster West Urban Extension (WWUE) supports the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) of sustainable development across the county. Within the WWUE, land is earmarked for additional open green spaces, a primary school, sports facilities and new business and employment opportunities. This expansion of the community will however have an adverse effect on the already over-stretched supporting infrastructure within Warminster; particularly the provision of health care, schooling, transport, and traffic along narrow town roads.

In parallel with the planned growth for Warminster, improvements are being made to the town centre. The town offers a range of supermarkets, independent shops and larger format stores which continue to draw people into the centre.

This WNP is intended to be in general conformity with the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP) through to 2038. It will allow our community to have its say in the type and scale of development, along with the supporting facilities that are required, and where they should be situated. It provides an exciting opportunity for us to help shape our neighbourhood, our town, and our future.

Central to this WNP is a desire to foster a strong sense of community and belonging for present and future generations. The prize is to make Warminster the place of choice to live, work and enjoy.



**In the West Urban Extension, land has already been earmarked for additional open green spaces, a primary school, sports facilities and new business and employment opportunities.**

# 1. Introduction & Background

## Why is the WNP being reviewed?

1.1 Since the adoption of the 2016 WNP, it has formed a part of the statutory development plan for the area, together with the WLP. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the policies of the WNP, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.2 This review and update of the WNP will replace the initial Neighbourhood Plan once it completes a series of processes. The summary of the steps needed to adopt the new WNP is:

### 1. Drafting and Consultation

- Regular and informal community consultation during the preparation phase;
- Evidence collection to understand more about key topics such as the Town Centre or the local environment;
- Develop the draft plan and its policies
- Run formal consultation on the pre-submission draft WNP document. This is a stage required by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations – known as Regulation 14 consultation and held by the Town Council;



### 2. Submission and Independent Examination

- Review feedback from Regulation 14 consultation and make amendments to reflect feedback;
- Submission of the updated WNP to Wiltshire Council;
- Hold a second stage of formal consultation (known as Regulation 16) run by Wiltshire Council;
- Examination by an independent planning inspector. If the independent examiner approves the Plan (often with final amendments) it will proceed towards the final stages of adoption.

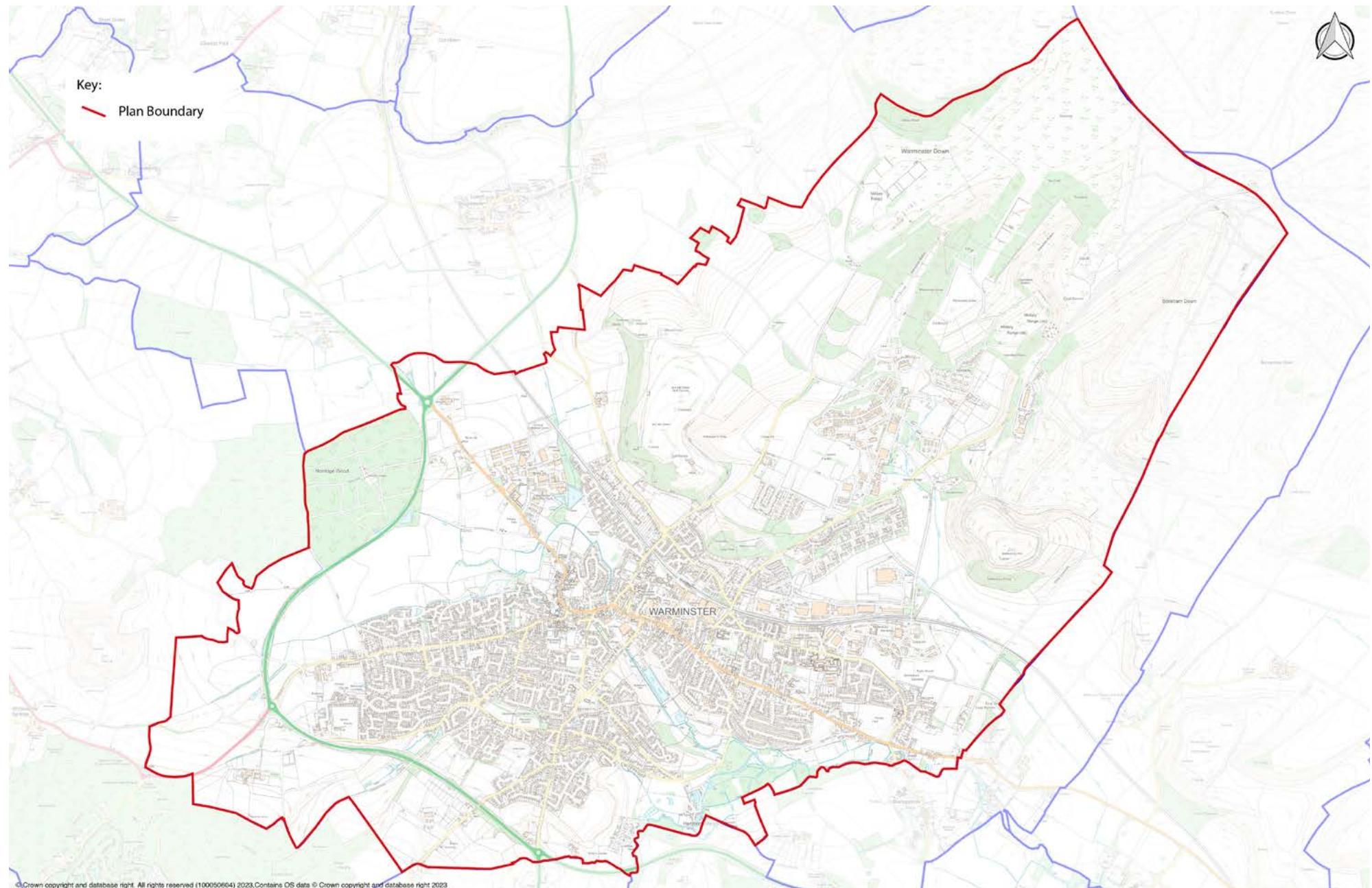
### 3. Adopting (or ‘making’) the Neighbourhood Plan

- Hold a local referendum. If the examiner decides it is needed, there will be a local vote. If the majority of those who vote support the Plan, it will be adopted;
- Integrate with the Local Plan. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will be used alongside the Local Plan to decide planning applications.

## What area does the WNP cover?

1.3 The designated neighbourhood plan area is that of the Parish of Warminster which lies within the unitary authority area of Wiltshire Council. See Figure A overleaf.

Figure A: The designated neighbourhood plan area is that of the Parish of Warminster which lies within the unitary authority area of Wiltshire Council.



## What can and cannot be achieved with a neighbourhood plan?

1.4 A neighbourhood plan (NP) is a planning policy document, and its remit is linked to the use and development of land. Many matters are outside the remit of NPs, such as highway issues or setting housing targets for the area. There are many complex and changing factors that must be considered when deciding on future development. The WNP is not intended to act as a barrier to appropriate development in the future, but instead to facilitate development proposals that are responsive to local concerns, such as environmental protection, and can help to sensitively deliver local needs such as housing.

### The WNP can:

- **deliver local funds:** With an adopted NP, the town council receives 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL<sup>1</sup>), which equated to approx. £547,854 from April 2016 to September 2025. Parishes without an adopted NP receive only 15% of CIL;
- **achieve local goals:** Such as safeguarding valued green space from development;
- **be proactive:** shape what type of houses are proposed and the design of them;
- **bring more influence:** Planning decisions will be taken in accordance with the WNP and the other plans and strategies which make up the WLP, unless material considerations<sup>2</sup> indicate otherwise;
- **cover local issues:** add detail to the planning policies of Wiltshire Council and include local non-planning aspirations.

A Neighbourhood Plan must meet a range of ‘basic conditions’ and observe regulations, and there are limitations to what a Neighbourhood Plan can do.

### The WNP cannot:

- **conflict with national or Wiltshire planning policy:** The WNP sits within a framework of policies and regulations. This includes determining how many new homes an area needs to accommodate. It is a legal requirement that a Neighbourhood Plan is in ‘general conformity’ with the WLP.

NPs provide communities with the power to develop a shared vision for their area and support ‘sustainable development’ (see the next page for a definition). Once part of the development plan for the area, their policies carry full weight alongside other planning policies in helping Wiltshire Council to determine planning applications. NPs must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose.

<sup>1</sup> See glossary for definition [https://d0db033a-6ddf-426b-b453-d61ec0ea9e7e.filesusr.com/ugd/f81cd5\\_a821c61c9da34af48e3a2f72752532e6.pdf](https://d0db033a-6ddf-426b-b453-d61ec0ea9e7e.filesusr.com/ugd/f81cd5_a821c61c9da34af48e3a2f72752532e6.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.planningaid.co.uk/hc/en-us/articles/18119343509405-What-are-material-considerations>

## How does the WNP gain legal status?

1.5 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, the WNP must meet a number of 'basic conditions'.<sup>3</sup> In simple terms, the conditions are:

- does the plan have regard to national policy and guidance?
- is the WNP in general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the WLP?
- does the plan promote the principles of sustainable development?
- has the process of making the plan met the requirements of environmental laws?
- It is important to also demonstrate to the independent planning inspector that the authors of the WNP have successfully engaged with the local community and the NP represents a majority view. If the inspector is satisfied, and considers the WNP meets the above conditions, then the WNP will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes in favour of the WNP, then it is adopted and becomes part of future development plans.



<sup>3</sup> As set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

## 2. Planning Policy Context

2.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of 'sustainable development,' which is defined as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>4</sup>

2.2 National legislation and National Planning Practice Guidance set out rules, conditions and limitations for developing local plans. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government (this Plan is being updated under the December 2024 version of the NPPF)<sup>5</sup> is an important guide for that preparation.

### Wiltshire

2.3 Neighbourhood Plans are also required to be in 'general conformity' with the adopted policies of the Local Authority's Development Plan.

2.4 The development plan for Warminster, prepared by Wiltshire Council, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is the Wiltshire Local Plan (WLP). It comprises the following documents: Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015); saved policies from the West Wiltshire

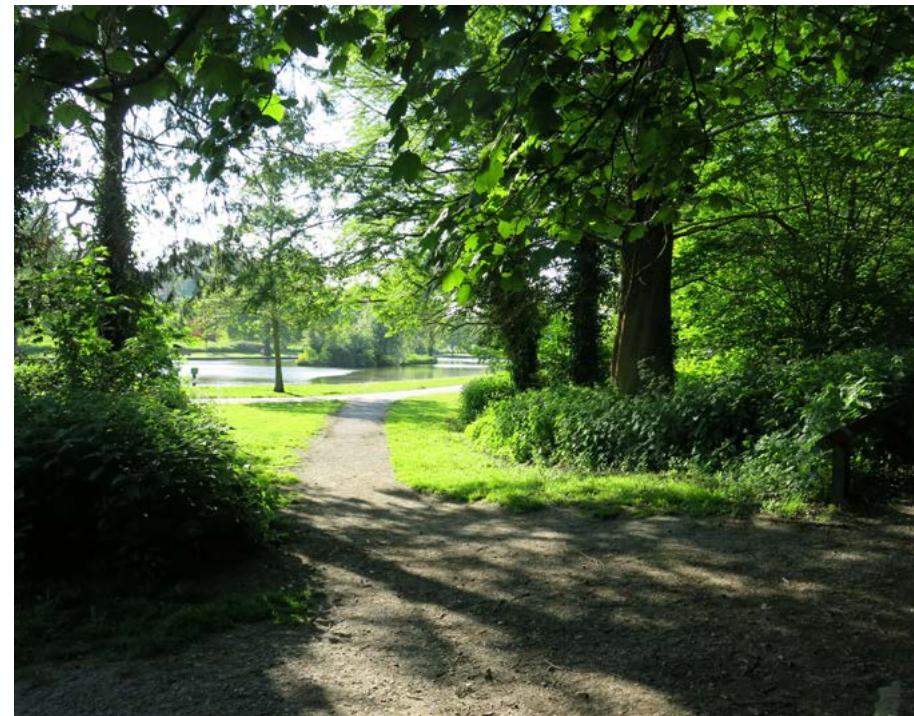
Local Plan and Minerals and Waste Plans. These documents set out strategic policies applicable across Warminster that the WNP must be in general conformity with.

2.5 The WLP, together with the WNP (2016), forms the overall 'development plan' for Warminster.

### Looking ahead to 2038 in Wiltshire

2.6 The Government requires every Local Plan to be reviewed at least once every five years. Wiltshire's Local Plan, the Wiltshire Core Strategy, was adopted in 2015, and is therefore being reviewed. The emerging Local Plan plans ahead to 2038 and will replace the Core Strategy when it is adopted. It is currently undergoing independent examination.<sup>6</sup>

2.7 The draft Local Plan also sets a scale of growth, as part of a wider spatial strategy for Wiltshire, by which the town will expand over the Local Plan period (2020-2038). This is expressed in terms of homes over the Local Plan period and hectares of employment land. In Warminster's case no additional land for homes or employment



**The Lake Pleasure Grounds as seen from Smallbrook Meadows – we want to preserve it for future generations.**

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, 2024 paragraph 7

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.localplanservices.co.uk/wiltshirelpexamination>

is proposed to be allocated, with additional growth already in the pipeline from allocations that were made through the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

## West Warminster Urban Extension (WWUE)

2.8 The West Warminster Urban Extension (WWUE) is the most significant development within Warminster. The WWUE is set to deliver approximately 900 homes prior to 2026, with the ability to provide more if necessary.

2.9 The planned development will incorporate a mix of one and two-bed apartments and two, three, four and five-bedroom homes to meet the needs for social, affordable, and remaining housing needs within the parish. The community wishes to see any new development built to the highest standard of sustainability and integrated with the existing town (not as an isolated community).

2.10 While the majority of Warminster residents accept that the growth of the town within the settlement boundary is inevitable, they are adamant all future development should also include expanded support infrastructure such as extra school resources, health practices, shops etc., to meet the needs of an increasing town population. Residents are passionate that any loss of green fields should be offset by



a quality of development that is sensitive to the local environment.

### 3. Community Voice on Planning Issues

#### 3.1 Warminster Town Council recognises that a NP provides an opportunity for the community to have a say in shaping future development of the town.

3.2 Residents have voluntarily given their time and local knowledge to shape and write the contents of the WNP. They were supported by town council officers and professional, independent consultants who have undertaken specific technical tasks to ensure the plan meets the necessary standards and basic conditions against which it must be examined.

3.3 The updated WNP has been drafted by a volunteer Steering Group, drawing on the outputs from volunteer Topic Groups whose task is to research the following areas for the Plan:

- Housing and Communities
- Economy and Town Centre
- Environment, Heritage, and Design
- Getting Around and Transport

3.4 Active consultation with Warminster residents and businesses will continue throughout the process until the WNP is voted on in a referendum. In this way, the

Steering Group aims to ensure that the views and aspirations of residents and businesses inform the WNP content.

3.5 The Steering Group and Topic Groups were formed in early 2021 following a recruitment drive. This launched a review of the existing NP and formulated a process which follows governmental guidelines. This process will continue throughout the NP preparation period. A variety of approaches using both online<sup>7</sup> and offline methods will ensure that as many people as possible are aware of the NP development and are able to contribute.

3.6 Feedback from the consultation events and online surveys gave a clear direction of what was important to address for further investigation. The key points were:

- visitors are attracted to the town centre from neighbouring towns and villages, particularly for some core facilities (such as the library, banks/Post Office and shops);
- many residents do not like the approach of 'mass-market' housebuilders developing the WWUE but accept that the town has to grow to support and increase economic activity;
- school and medical infrastructure is insufficient for the current population;

• from those who responded to the specific consultation on whether to include housing, there was opposition, but there was also support and potential support for including a housing allocation – if community concerns were addressed.

- people do not like seeing empty shops and a decline in the town centre;
- traffic and congestion on local roads and poor connectivity other than via car;
- many residents do not believe this WNP will make any difference, and that Wiltshire Council and developers will ignore it as they are perceived to have done so in the past;
- the Lake Pleasure Grounds are a valuable asset and enjoyed by all;
- access to beautiful local countryside is a key factor in making Warminster a desirable place to live.

3.7 A Consultation Statement has been prepared to capture the full range of consultation approaches to date. A draft version of this is available on the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan website. Following the consultation (Regulation 14) on this pre-submission draft, it will be finalised to show any changes and updates in response to people's feedback.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.warminsterplan.com/>

## 4. Warminster's Future: A Vision to 2038

4.1 This update of the WNP looks ahead to 2038 (aligned to the emerging WLP). It seeks to ensure that all future developments, whether housing, employment or leisure related, make a positive contribution to Warminster residents and businesses, and fit within a structured, sustainable growth plan.

4.2 New developments not only require close integration with the town's existing infrastructure but also need to ensure a balanced community. They should align in particular with the vision for Warminster.

### A Vision for Warminster

Warminster will capitalise on its close relationship with its heritage and beautiful surrounding countryside to maintain and enhance itself as an attractive and vibrant market town in which to live, to work, for leisure and as a visitor destination.

Its future growth will be through sympathetic development, appropriate in scale, of high-quality design and be environmentally sustainable whilst at the same time developing a growing economy and a robust infrastructure to meet the needs of the community.

### Objectives to Support the Vision

#### Overarching Objectives

- A. Support and promote Warminster's role as a destination of choice for retail, business, socialising, and leisure activities.
- B. Promote inclusive development and opportunities that support everyone's health and wellbeing.
- C. Mitigate against and improve resilience to the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss, contributing to Carbon Neutrality in Wiltshire by 2030.
- D. Enable the highest standards of sustainable design to protect the distinctive character of Warminster as an historic town set within an outstanding natural landscape.

4.3 Moving into more detail, the Steering Group identified four distinct topic areas. Visions and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan were then prepared for each topic area:

## Housing and Communities

Warminster will be a town where the housing needs of the population are met with high-quality and sustainable housing built to the very latest standards of building regulations/guidance and with a view to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The aim is to have a perfectly balanced community with the right infrastructure in place to support it including, schools, health, and social care facilities. The vision is that the people of Warminster steer the necessary growth to avoid the perceived 'wrong type of development' being forced upon the town at the whim of large developers.

**Objective O1:** Ensure housing development meets the needs of our local community; providing sustainable and high-quality housing for all.

**Objective O2:** Improve social, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, by protecting and expanding community facilities.

**Objective O3:** Improve existing, and support new, community infrastructure (such as education, health, and social care facilities).

## Economy and Town Centre

Warminster will support its existing businesses and encourage new businesses to relocate, or start up, within the town so that it becomes much more self-sufficient and less of a commuter town. The commercial areas will be attractive to a range of businesses, so that employment opportunities will enable people to live and work locally. Future development will be employment-led, with high-quality jobs on offer from businesses that are oriented to the future economy.

Warminster will revive its town centre, serving as a centre for community activity, sub-regional public services, and retaining a mix of national traders and attracting independent traders whose presence will embed its market town character. The town centre will be a vibrant meeting place for the community to shop, interact and enjoy their leisure time, and a visitor destination in its own right. The special historic character of the town centre will be preserved and enhanced.

**Objective O4:** Support and encourage existing business growth, new business start-ups, inward investment, and homeworking across Warminster. Support diversified and high-quality employment opportunities for the local population, keeping local talent and skills within Warminster.

**Objective O5:** Promote a 'low-carbon and financial circular economy'; where businesses use local produce, materials, and services, and maximise re-use and recycling. Encourage residents to shop and spend with local suppliers, as well as attracting a sustainable visitor economy.

**Objective O6:** Provide an attractive and efficient environment in which businesses can thrive with up-to-date and well-maintained physical and digital infrastructure and promoting the development of a managed business and resource centre within the WWUE to support local home workers, businesses and provide space for start-up businesses.

**Objective O7:** Protect town centre heritage and facilitate flexible uses and regeneration of town centre buildings and units to improve the vitality of both the daytime and evening economy, increase footfall and provide an attractive and vibrant destination for retail, leisure, and tourism. Support the town centre to adapt to changing shopping habits and expectations.

**Objective O8:** Encourage well-designed residential development within the town centre upper floors to meet local needs, and secure regeneration of units where this does not affect long-term business vitality or viability.

## Environment, Heritage, and Design

New development in Warminster will be of the highest standards of sustainable design and construction. The effects of climate change will be reduced by cutting carbon emissions, improving air and water quality, and building a nature recovery network to improve biodiversity. Historic buildings, green spaces, cultural and sports facilities will be protected and enhanced.

**Objective O9:** Reduce carbon emissions contributing to carbon neutrality in Wiltshire by 2030 and net zero by 2050. Use the highest governmental standards of sustainable construction, prioritising renewable energy generation, storage, and carbon capture.

**Objective O10:** Conserve and enhance our natural and historic environment and cultural heritage. Deliver new developments of high-quality sustainable design.

**Objective O11:** Increase biodiversity, protect irreplaceable habitats and build a Nature Recovery Network of wildlife corridors and Green and Blue Infrastructure across the landscape to connect the internationally important habitats of Salisbury Plain, the Hampshire Avon River System and Cranborne Chase National Landscape and International Dark Skies Reserve.

**Objective O12:** Avoid additional (and reduce existing), light, water, air, and noise pollution and improve air and water quality.

**Objective O13:** Protect and enhance existing green spaces, and sports facilities to ensure that everyone has easy access to nature for exercise, relaxation, mental well-being, and the opportunity to grow food.



**We want to increase biodiversity, protect irreplaceable habitats and build a nature recovery network of wildlife corridors and green (plants) and blue (water) infrastructure across the landscape.**

## Getting Around and Transport

Warminster will be a town where the local population and visitors can move around easily on foot, bicycle, public transport, or car, with a parking strategy that will make a positive contribution to good traffic management. The town will encourage a reduction in carbon emissions from commercial and internal combustion engine vehicles by discouraging short, unnecessary journeys and avoiding congestion in the town centre and local roads.

**Objective O14:** Reduce transport-based carbon emissions (in support of Wiltshire Council's target to be carbon neutral by 2030), and promote opportunities for all to lead healthier lifestyles, by encouraging all to walk, cycle or use public transport, and reducing the need to travel by car.

**Objective O15:** Promote sustainable transport infrastructure that is accessible, reduces road congestion and works for residents, visitors, and our growing population.

**Objective O16:** Promote opportunities for all to lead healthier lifestyles by making journeys through physically active means.

**Objective O17:** Ensure that adequate parking is provided where it is required, and to integrate recharging locations for electric vehicles.



**Warminster will be a town where the local population and visitors can move around easily on foot, bicycle, public transport, or car, with a parking strategy that will make a positive contribution to good traffic management.**

# Section 5

## Land Use Planning Policies

-  Climate Change and Sustainable Development
-  Housing and Communities
-  Economy and Town Centre
-  Environment, Heritage and Design
-  Getting Around and Transport

# 5. Land Use Planning Policies

The planning policies and community actions on the following pages will be used to help determine planning applications within the Warminster Neighbourhood Area. Each policy relates back to at least one objective, which in turn links to the overall vision. Planning policies are shown within a box to clearly distinguish them.

Government guidance sets out that a policy in a neighbourhood plan should be: 'clear and unambiguous' it should be concise, precise, and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.<sup>8</sup> Neighbourhood plan policies should not repeat WLP policies and must be 'in general' conformity. The WNP can add detail, a local dimension or can deal with planning matters not covered by the WLP.

## Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Draft Policy W1 – Sustainable Development in Warminster

<sup>8</sup> Neighbourhood planning – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

## Housing and Communities

- Draft Policy HC1 – Housing and the Settlement Boundary
- Draft Policy HC2 – Housing Mix
- Draft Policy HC3 – Delivering Plan-Led, Affordable Homes at Warminster
- Draft Policy HC4 – Protection of Existing Valued Community Facilities
- Draft Policy HC5 – New Community Infrastructure

## Economy and Town Centre

- Draft Policy ETC1 – Town Centre Vitality and Uses
- Draft Policy ETC2 – Town Centre Heritage, Character & Design
- Draft Policy ETC3 – Town Centre Housing
- Draft Policy ETC4 – Town Centre Shopfronts
- Draft Policy ETC5 – Protecting and Supporting the Existing Economy and
- Draft Policy ETC6 – Supporting Business Investment and Start-Ups
- Draft Policy ETC7 – Warminster Visitor Economy
- Draft Policy ETC8 – Homeworking
- Draft Policy ETC9 – Low Carbon and Circular Economy
- Draft Policy ETC10 – Digital Infrastructure

## Environment, Heritage and Design

- Draft Policy EHD1 – The Habitats Regulations (HRS)
- Draft Policy EHD2 – High-Quality Sustainable Design
- Draft Policy EHD3 – Renewable Energy
- Draft Policy EHD4 – Natural Environment and Biodiversity
- Draft Policy EHD5 – Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI)
- Draft Policy EHD6 – Dark Skies
- Draft Policy EHD7 – Local Green Space (LGS) and Green Amenity Area
- Draft Policy EHD8 – Landscape and Views
- Draft Policy EHD9 – Warminster's Heritage
- Draft Policy EHD10 – Managing Flood Risk
- Draft Policy EHD11 – Trees and Hedgerows

## Getting Around and Transport

- Draft Policy GA1 – Sustainable and Active Travel
- Draft Policy GA2 – Parking
- Draft Policy GA3 – Electric Vehicle Charging
- Draft Policy GA4 – Highway Impact and Safety

# a. Climate Change and Sustainable Development

## Introduction

a.1 The purpose of the planning system is to develop places in a sustainable way, balancing environmental, social and economic objectives. Sustainable development meets the needs of people in the creation of healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for everyone while allowing for future generations to meet theirs.

a.2 It is not possible to achieve this aim without addressing both climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. Rising temperatures, drier summers, extreme winter storms, flooding and loss of wildlife threaten the health, safety and quality of life of Warminster's residents.

a.3 The WNP is part of Warminster's proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

a.4 The environmental objective of the NPPF is to "protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, making effective use of land, improving

biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy." It makes clear, that plan-making must promote, sustainable development, which includes mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change.<sup>9</sup>

a.5 Along with many other town councils across the country, Warminster Town Council has acknowledged the climate and biodiversity crisis in a Climate Change Strategy (2020) and a Climate Action Plan (2023).<sup>10</sup>

a.6 Wiltshire Council's Draft Local Plan has introduced a Climate Change policy and other policies that set high expectations for making efficient use of resources, promoting sustainable design and encouraging production of renewable and low carbon energy. All development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be subject to the new Local Plan policies.

a.7 Responding successfully to climate change will not only protect people and wildlife, but will also define future economic progress. Sustainable development lies at the heart of all the

updated WNP objectives and policies as expressed by our overarching objectives. The WNP also includes a number of policies that specifically address the challenges of climate change in Warminster including:

Draft Policy ETC 9 Low Carbon and Circular Economy

Draft Policy EHD2 High-Quality Sustainable Design

Draft Policy EDH3 Renewable Energy

Draft Policy EHD4 Natural Environment and Biodiversity

Draft Policy EHD5 Green and Blue Infrastructure

Draft Policy EHD10 Managing Flood Risk

Draft Policy GA1 Sustainable and Active Travel

Draft Policy GA3 Electric Vehicle Charging

a.8 The Warminster Design Guide also includes measures relating to Climate Change.

a.9 Warminster Town Council is committed to the annual review of the Town Council Climate Strategy Action Plan which includes:

**"If working apart we are a force powerful to destabilise our planet, surely working together we are powerful enough to save it...in my lifetime I've witnessed a terrible decline. In yours, you could and should witness a wonderful recovery."**

**David Attenborough  
COP26 UN Climate Conference**

<sup>9</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, 2024 paragraph 11

<sup>10</sup> <https://warminster-tc.gov.uk/community/climate-change/>

- Delivering local renewable energy through the solar panels installed on the Civic Centre, Central Car Park public toilets, the hub building and the boat house;
- Instigating the enhancement and development of the cycle path network;
- Progressing proposals for a covered secure cycle parking;
- Encouraging a shift towards electric vehicles by increasing the number of public electric vehicle charging points (EVCP);
- Facilitating not-for-profit community groups with environmental initiatives.

a.10 Through practical actions and the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, the aim is to encourage:

- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy
- Walking and cycling
- Public transport
- Electric vehicles
- Local food production
- Increased green elements such as green roofs / hedges / trees
- Increased biodiversity in our green spaces
- Water efficiency and recycling measures
- Green businesses practices

- Community-led climate / nature initiatives

a.11 People, and particularly developers, are urged to go beyond the minimum standard, to strive for the best. Addressing the climate challenge through the planning system can feel complicated and frustrating but as a baseline Warminster Town Council will always:

- seek development options that will result in the biggest carbon reductions.
- seek to achieve multiple benefits, being aware that action on climate change often delivers wider social and economic benefits, and these should be actively sought and promoted.

a.12 The WNP therefore opens with a policy that sets out the key principles that development proposals should address to ensure that new development contributes to mitigating and adapting to climate change and the challenges most relevant to Warminster. It is recognised that the exact response from development proposals will depend on their scale, but all proposals must respond more effectively to potential climate change impacts by incorporating appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures.



The West Urban Extension near Cley Hill

## Draft Policy W1 – Sustainable Development in Warminster – Now and in the Future

1. Development proposals in Warminster that represent high quality and sustainable development, contributing positively to the health and wellbeing of our communities and the environment, now and in the future, will be supported.
2. In relation to planning and development in Warminster, this means:
  - a. the retrofitting of existing buildings to increase energy efficiency and generate renewable energy where possible is promoted (see policies EHD9 and EHD2);
  - b. the energy demands of buildings and structures will be mitigated by implementing the energy hierarchy, to help achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (see Policy EHD2);
  - c. proposals for renewable and low carbon energy-generation will be supported where they accord with Policy EHD3;

- d. sustainable modes of transport (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport) will be prioritised through the location, design and layout of new development (see Policy GA1);
- e. development will avoid areas at the greatest risk of flooding and be designed to help minimise flood risks and provide resilience against flood events, using natural flood management measures where appropriate (see Policy EHD10);
- f. protecting habitats and species, and delivering biodiversity net gain (see policies EHD1 and EHD4);
- g. buildings and open spaces will be designed to maximise their resilience to extreme weather, whilst offering nature-based solutions to a changing climate (see Policy EHD5); and,
- h. businesses and employment proposals that contribute to a local ‘circular’ and low carbon economy are supported (see policy ETC9).



## b. Housing and Communities

### Introduction

b.1 We all have a responsibility to the present and future residents to ensure that Warminster grows sustainably, protecting our environment and balancing delivery of housing, community facilities and jobs to meet local needs, and increase wellbeing in a community where residents feel 'connected' and happy.

b.2 Residents want an appropriate range of dwellings in terms of size and price, as well as homes that meet the needs of elderly and vulnerable people. The WNP will work alongside the adopted WLP to ensure the right homes are provided to meet the needs of the people of Warminster including military personnel and their families

b.3 Warminster is a community of approx. 18,200<sup>11</sup> residents. Ongoing delivery of around 1,780 more homes at the Western Urban Extension between 2020 and 2038 as set out in the Wiltshire Local Plan will result in an increase in the population.

b.4 The town has a good mix of housing. Semi-detached houses make the largest share. But there is a shortage of smaller and affordable homes and demand is increasing for housing to meet the changing needs of

our growing community of older residents.

b.5 Nearly 65% of Warminster's households own their house. Whilst house prices are comparable to the Wiltshire average and private rents are slightly lower, open market homes are unaffordable to many individuals and families. The emerging WLP that looks ahead to 2038 requires new housing developments to provide at least 40% of dwellings as Affordable Housing. 'Affordable Housing' applies to a range of different types of homes including housing for rent, starter homes and discounted market sales housing, like shared ownership. This is a policy that is supported by the WNP.

b.6 Whilst providing smaller and Affordable Housing and specialist housing for older and vulnerable people was rated important in 2023 community surveys, energy efficiency and high-quality design were also a high priority (see the Environment, Heritage and Design chapter).

b.7 Community facilities including our green spaces, sports facilities, places of worship, public buildings and local shops support the social fabric and sustainability of our community. As a market town, Warminster's facilities serve a much wider rural community.

b.8 Community responses to early and informal public consultation in preparing this plan, identified improvement of community facilities as a priority, with survey responses raising concerns about the strain being placed on facilities by an increasing population. Feedback identified the quality of design and links with infrastructure delivery to be most important. Quotes from informal consultation feedback are included throughout this plan, as here on the right.

b.9 The WNP will continue to support and protect these valued facilities and contain policies to insist that future growth is matched by community infrastructure to meet expanded needs.

b.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Government's framework to achieve sustainable development, requires that plans promote development that meets local needs, improve the environment; and respond to climate change. The WNP's Housing and Communities policies step up to NPPF social objectives, supporting community wellbeing through housing choice and quality facilities.

**The people of Warminster said:**

*“.... Affordable Housing for first time buyers – one bed flats or two bed houses are needed. Not big houses on large housing estates that our children will not be able to afford.”*

*“New housing schemes must be accompanied by infrastructure and developers should build this infrastructure first, not after all the houses.”*

<sup>11</sup> Based on 2021 Census Data

## Housing Within The Settlement Boundary

b.11 The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This firstly applies to development inside settlements, where it will be close to communities, facilities and local transport.

b.12 Wiltshire's Development Plan defines Warminster as a sustainable market town with potential for "significant development that will increase the jobs and homes .... and promote better levels of self-containment and viable sustainable communities."<sup>12</sup>

b.13 Settlement boundaries typically reflect existing development and define the extent of built-up areas. Development within settlement boundaries is generally supported. Development outside settlement boundaries is more controlled in the interests of balancing social, economic and environmental needs. Local and Neighbourhood Plans can allocate land adjacent to the boundary to meet local housing or employment need. The emerging draft WLP Policy 2, sets scales of housing and employment growth including the ongoing development of 1,780 homes at the WWUE.



b.14 The town's settlement boundary, defined by Wiltshire Council, is shown in Figure B overleaf.

b.15 WNP supports the definition of the settlement boundary and strict control of development beyond it. Within the settlement boundary, appropriate and well-designed development which is sensitive to our valued heritage, green spaces, or community facilities, will be supported.

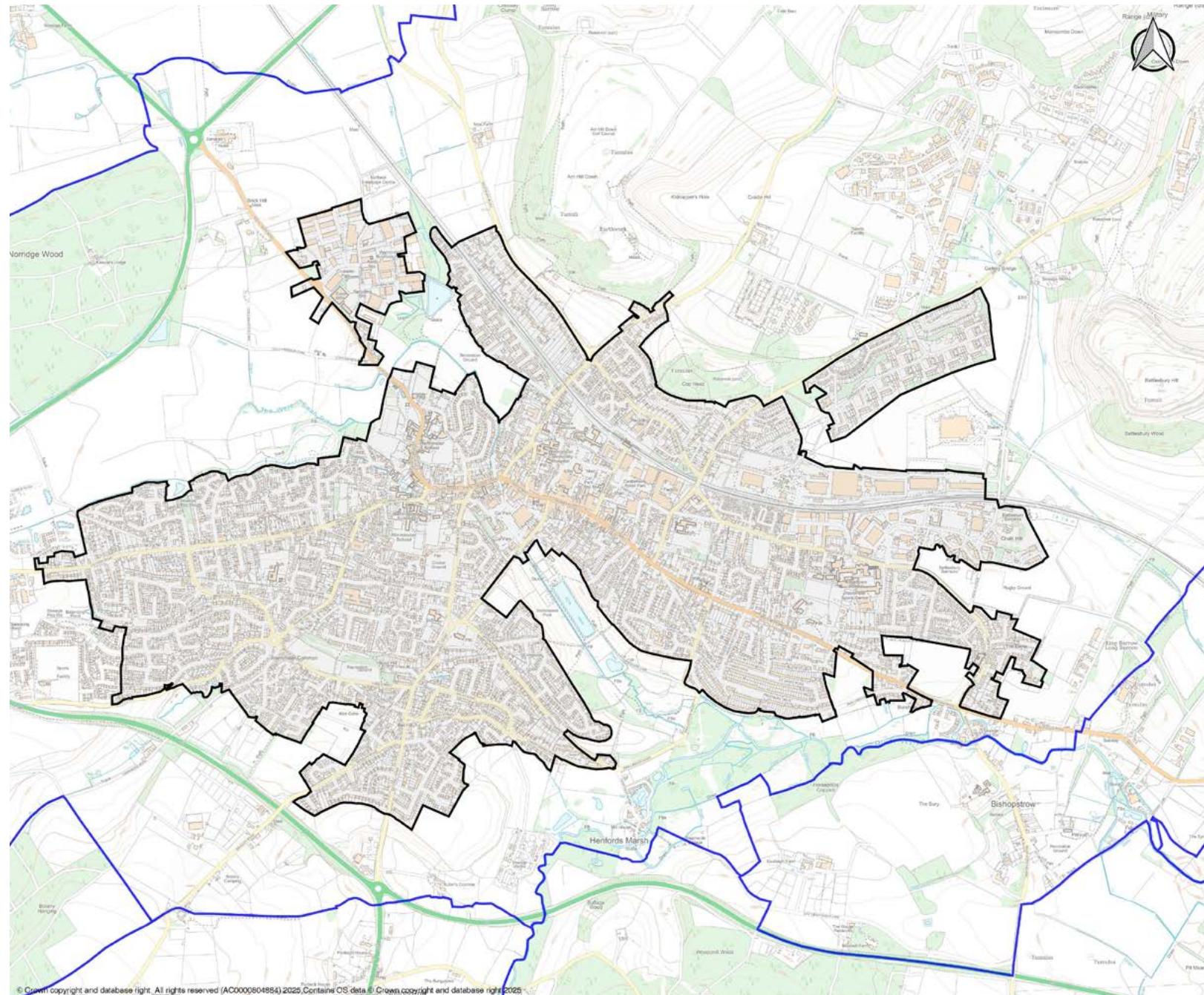
### Draft Policy HC1 – Housing and the Settlement Boundary

#### Supports Objectives O1, O9, and O10

- 1. Proposals for sustainable housing development within the Warminster Settlement Boundary as defined on Figure B will be supported where they:**
  - a. accord with the Settlement Boundary provisions of the adopted Wiltshire Development Plan and;**
  - b. have regard to the character of and integration with the surrounding area, with reference to the Warminster Design Guide (2023);**
- 2. Outside Warminster Settlement Boundary open market housing development will not be supported other than where proposals are in conformity with objectives and policies of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted Wiltshire Local Plan;**
- 3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/11972/Planning-for-Warminster-September2023/pdf/Planning\\_for\\_Warminster\\_September2023.pdf?m=1695727859637](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/11972/Planning-for-Warminster-September2023/pdf/Planning_for_Warminster_September2023.pdf?m=1695727859637)

Figure B: Current Warminster Settlement Boundary



## Housing Mix and Style

b.16 Housing Needs Assessments (HNAs) inform the amount, size, type, and tenure of housing needed for diverse groups in the community.

b.17 The WNP housing chapter is underpinned by a detailed professional local HNA<sup>13</sup> and bolstered by community housing needs feedback.

b.18 Warminster's housing is a good mix of town centre flats, older terraces, 20th century estates with flats and houses and larger detached properties on the outskirts. Semi-detached houses make the largest share. There is a likely surplus supply of larger four bed family homes, but lack of supply of entry level one-bedroom dwellings and flats. Over the next 5 years, it is estimated that there will be a minimum shortfall of 90 Affordable Homes for Warminster taking account of Affordable Housing delivery at the Western Urban Extension.

b.19 Evidence obtained from local property agents suggests there is significant demand for small two and three-bedroom homes with parking, particularly in the affordable and private rental sector.

b.20 The shortage of bungalows and accessible housing for older people looking

to down-size, together with a predicted 52% rise in the proportion of local people aged over 65 in the coming 15 years, places increased need to support changing housing needs. There is a requirement for both new accessible and supported living choices, whilst also adapting existing housing to meet modern standards of accessibility.

b.21 Nearly 65% of Warminster's households own their house. House prices are comparable to the Wiltshire average and private rents are slightly lower. But entry level homes are unaffordable even to experienced single key workers. Local families on comparatively lower incomes struggle to afford appropriate homes with adequate space for growing families. These members of our community need the support of social Affordable and discounted housing. The draft WLP requires new housing developments to provide at least 40% of their homes as Affordable Housing on developments of more than ten units. The WNP aims to ensure all new housing is the type of homes needed in Warminster. The HNA suggests that these products can make owning or renting a decent quality home realistic for people of Warminster.

b.22 Particular challenges for housing can also be experienced by the households of those who serve or have served in the

Armed Forces. Through the Neighbourhood Plan, we wish to acknowledge Warminster's association with the Army and the Warminster Garrison. The Armed Forces Covenant is "a promise that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, including the bereaved, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives".<sup>14</sup>

b.23 Other ways to deliver on local housing need can include community-led Affordable and specialist Housing development. This may be delivered by a Community Land Trust (CLT) which can provide additional Affordable or specialist housing which is made available to qualifying local people. The town council will support community led housing proposals and explore the potential to establish or support a local CLT and secure appropriate land to deliver community led housing.

**The people of Warminster said:**  
**"We want to see new housing for a balanced community and with 'Affordable Housing' that local people can afford."**

<sup>13</sup> Warminster Housing Needs Assessment 2023. Prepared for Warminster Town Council by Arc4 consultancy. Available to read on the Neighbourhood Plan website <https://www.warminsterplan.com/draftwnp-r14-consult>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/about-the-covenant/>

## Draft Policy HC2 – Housing Mix

### Supports Objective O1

1. Development proposals for new homes including conversions of existing buildings will be supported where they:
  - a. provide a balance and mix of market and Affordable Housing types that meet the specific housing needs of the local community, identified in the Warminster Housing Needs Assessment 2023 (see Appendix 1), the Wiltshire Local Housing Needs Assessment, or any updates of these Assessments.
  - b. prioritise delivery of:
    - i. small starter home flats and houses;
    - ii. high-quality two- and three-bedroom houses;
    - iii. housing that supports the local delivery of the national Armed Forces Covenant;<sup>15</sup>
    - iv. housing specifically designed to be accessible and adaptable in accordance with category 2 of Building

Regulations in any locations deemed particularly appropriate for older, or disabled people;

- v. new housing that provides accessible pace Standard (NDSS) and are built to Building Regulations Part M4 (2) and M4 (3);
- c. Community-led Affordable Housing and specialist housing will also be supported where it contributes to meeting local housing needs.
- d. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.



<sup>15</sup> Armed Forces Covenant 2022 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-duty-statutory-guidance>

## Delivering Plan-led, Affordable Homes at Warminster

b.24 Warminster's Neighbourhood Plan is a strong tool for our community to secure plan-led sustainable housing development and avoid un-planned, speculative schemes being forced upon our town. This proactive approach ensures that any future development aligns with our goals, including Neighbourhood Plan Objective O1, which aims to provide high-quality, well-connected housing supported by schools, healthcare and social facilities.

b.25 The Government requires Wiltshire Council to identify a neighbourhood plan housing requirement for Warminster. Looking ahead to 2038, this figure is calculated as 90.<sup>16</sup> Although housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plan areas are not binding, neighbourhood planning bodies are encouraged by the government to plan to meet their housing requirement, and where possible to exceed it as "a sustainable choice of sites to accommodate housing will provide flexibility if circumstances change, and allows plans to remain up to date over a longer time scale".<sup>17</sup>

b.26 Neighbourhood Plans that allocate housing to meet housing requirements and local needs reduce the likelihood of developers gaining planning permission on other, non-allocated land, for five years from when the Plan comes into force.

b.27 To help meet local un-met housing needs and secure plan-led development, WNP Steering Group resolved to progress a sites allocation process as part of the Neighbourhood Plan review to establish if available development sites were potentially deliverable and suitable for allocation in the WNP, or not. The process is outlined below.

b.28 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group undertook a "Call for Sites" in 2024. A Call for Sites is a necessary step to understand when and where owners are promoting land as available for development and to ensure all potential sites are considered. This process received 15 submissions. All sites were thoroughly evaluated based on a range of factors, including flooding, access and sustainability criteria. The assessment was undertaken by independent consultants LUC and presented in a Site Assessment Report (Appendix 2).<sup>18</sup> The Steering Group also considered how potential development

of the sites contribute to meeting or challenging the Neighbourhood Plan objectives (which have drafted by drawing on community feedback).

b.29 Considering both assessments, three sites were identified as potentially most suitable for allocation that had a capacity to help meet our town's housing needs. These sites together with the assessment report into all 15 sites, were put forward for community consideration during March and April 2025. Meetings were also held with stakeholders and local residents. More detail is set out in the draft Consultation Statement that accompanies this Plan.<sup>19</sup>

b.30 The feedback from this informal consultation was invaluable, and it highlighted the complex and often conflicting priorities within the community. There was clear acknowledgement of the need for housing, but also a strong desire to protect the environment, preserve community character, and ensure that infrastructure can support growth.

b.31 While there was no clear support for any of the potential housing allocation sites as initially presented, the community feedback has directly enabled us to identify specific issues and address concerns with

**The people of Warminster said:**  
 "This is an opportunity for the community to help shape the future of Warminster. Considering housing sites as part of our Neighbourhood Plan puts us on the front foot in terms of deciding where best housing need can be accommodated."

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/11972/Planning-for-Warminster-September2023/pdf/Planning\\_for\\_Warminster\\_September2023.pdf?m=638313246596370000](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/11972/Planning-for-Warminster-September2023/pdf/Planning_for_Warminster_September2023.pdf?m=638313246596370000)

<sup>17</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning. Latest update March 2020 Paras 103 – 104

<sup>18</sup> Warminster Site Assessment Report. LUC, January 2025 <https://www.warminsterplan.com/evidence-base>

<sup>19</sup> Available on the Neighbourhood Plan Website <https://www.warminsterplan.com/evidence-base>

potential site allocations as we move forward. The consultation was a crucial step in an evidence-based process drawing together technical evidence, housing requirement figures and community opinions.

b.32 Draft Housing Site Allocations Proposed for Consultation Feedback

b.33 Two sites are now proposed for allocation in this draft Plan. Site A is a small brownfield site, inside the town settlement boundary and site B is larger greenfield site outside, but directly adjacent to the settlement boundary.

b.34 By proposing these sites for allocation, we are aiming to empower our community to take a lead in helping to deliver on local housing need, shape the future of our town and do what we can to ensure that any development is a high-quality, sustainable addition to Warminster. In this context, neighbourhood planning and proactive site allocation become even more important.

b.35 Feedback from the consultation on this draft plan will inform the final decision on whether or not an allocation is included in this Plan.

## Draft Policy HC3 Delivering Plan-Led, Affordable Homes at Warminster

### Supports Objective O1

**The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the allocation of the following sites to contribute towards meeting the identified housing needs of Warminster's community through a plan-led, rather than speculative developer-led approach to development.**

**Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 and W1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

### A. THE YEW TREE (BOREHAM ROAD)

**The former Yew Tree public house, identified in Figure C is allocated for development of approximately 2 dwellings.**

#### Housing

**1. The development will combine the change of use of the existing public house and addition of new residential floorspace. Subject to viability, this should provide smaller open market accommodation units to address local needs.**

## Community Infrastructure

**2. The developer shall make a proportionate contribution towards improvements to local infrastructure in conformity with WNP Policy HC4**

## Working from Home

**3. In accordance with WNP Policies ETC8 and ETC10, all dwellings should provide flexible space for home working and be provided with high speed digital connection to maximise opportunities for home working and reduce the need to travel for work.**

## Biodiversity, Ecology & Wildlife

**4. In accordance with WNP Policy EHD4 proposals must be accompanied by an ecological assessment and mitigation strategy to ensure existing habitats are protected and there is no net loss of biodiversity and deliver a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain. Proposals should take into account GBI corridor 6 which is important for bats, and should seek to retain the existing Yew tree where feasible.**

### Landscape & Valued Views

5. In conformity with WNP Policy EHD11 proposals should protect and integrate existing mature trees to the rear of the site within development and landscape proposals.

### Flood Risk

6. A detailed flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy (SuDS) shall be provided to manage surface water runoff and mitigate any increased off-site risk.

### Character and High Quality Sustainable Design

7. The development must ensure there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents and businesses and new residents' amenity is not adversely impacted by the neighbouring commercial use.

8. Proposals must demonstrate how they will retain the existing public house building and reinforce the local character using materials and detailing that reflect local distinctiveness in conformity with WNP Policies HC1, EHD2, EHD9 and the Warminster Design Guide. Retention of the name Yew Tree is encouraged.

### Site Access and Public Transport

9. In accordance with WNP Policy GA1 and GA4, development proposals will be expected to make safe pedestrian and vehicular connections to Boreham Road and make proportionate contributions towards the enhancement of public transport facilities and services.

### Parking & ULEV Charging

10. Development will be expected to provide residential parking, including for cycles and charging facilities for residents' ultra-low emission vehicles in conformity with WNP Policies GA2 and GA3

### B. LAND EAST OF THE DENE (HOME FARM)

Land East of The Dene (Home Farm), identified in figure C is allocated for development of approximately 36 Affordable Homes and 54 open market dwellings, approximately 6 hectares of public open space, landscape buffering and biodiversity enhancements.

As plan-led, allocated development, in accordance with Wiltshire Council's strategic mitigation strategy for the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), this site may

apply to the Council led scheme to offset the additional nutrient load from the new development within the catchment of the River Avon SAC. Or, alternatively, a bespoke mitigation strategy will be required. Any mitigation solutions for phosphate will need to meet the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) in order to gain planning permission.

Specific site requirements are set out below.

### Housing

1. The development shall provide a mix of housing types and sizes including affordable, specialist, and a range of open market housing to meet the needs of Warminster in conformity with WNP Policy HC2 and the adopted Wiltshire Local Plan.

### Community Infrastructure

2. The development shall make a proportionate financial contribution towards improvements to local community infrastructure in conformity with WNP Policy HC5.

### Working from Home

3. In accordance with WNP Policies ETC8 and ETC10, all dwellings should provide flexible space for home working and be provided with high speed digital connection to maximise opportunities for home working and reduce the need to travel for work.

### Public Open Space

4. The southern section of the allocation site as shown on Figure C/2 shall be retained and enhanced as to provide public open space with potential for allotments and community orchard and biodiversity enhancements to meet the needs of new residents and the amenity of the neighbouring community in conformity with WNP Policy EHD 7.

### Biodiversity, Ecology & Wildlife

5. In accordance with WNP Policy EHD4 proposals must be accompanied by an ecological assessment and mitigation strategy to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and delivery of a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain. The development must avoid adverse impacts on the adjacent Salisbury Plain Special Area of

### Conservation/Special Protected Area and the River Avon Special Area of Conservation.

6. Proposals should protect and where feasible, enhance 'green corridor' (7) as identified by WNP. Where harm to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Network is unavoidable, the harm must be mitigated with the creation of new or replacement parts of the network of the same or greater value within the site where possible.

### Landscape & Valued Views

7. In conformity with WNP Policies EHD8 and EHD11 proposals will be expected to be supported by a landscape and visual impact assessment and landscape strategy that informs how proposals will;
  - i. Minimise and mitigate harmful visual impact on panoramic views from Battlesbury Hill, Middle Hill and the Salisbury Plain SPA Mitigation Zone.
  - ii. Protect and mitigate visual harm to the setting of the adjacent Bishopstrow Conservation Area and house and designated and non-designated heritage assets.

### iii. Protect or enhance Locally Valued Views No's 3, 19, 20 and 24.

- iv. Retain and protect existing boundary trees and hedgerow and integrate on-site trees and hedgerow within development and landscape proposals. This is especially important for tree identified as notable or veteran trees on the site (see the tree map).

### Flood Risk

8. A detailed flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy (SuDS) shall be provided to manage surface water runoff and mitigate any increased off-site risk.

### Light Pollution

9. As an important area for Horseshoe Bats, light pollution shall be minimised to protect the area's dark sky status in conformity with WNP Policy EHD6.

### Heritage

10. In conformity with WNP Policy EHD9 proposals will be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment and strategy that demonstrates how development will protect the setting of the Bishopstrow

Conservation Area and the settings of adjacent scheduled ancient monuments, designated heritage assets including Bishopstrow House, Grange Farm and listed buildings located on Boreham Road and non-designated Heritage Assets identified by WNP. In particular, proposals must minimise and mitigate any unavoidable impacts on the fabric of Boreham Road boundary walls as a result of the creation of pedestrian and vehicular access.

**11. Proposals must be submitted with an archaeological assessment and strategy to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.**

#### Character and High Quality Sustainable Design

**12. The development must ensure there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents and businesses.**

**13. Proposals must be supported by a design statement that demonstrates how they reinforce the local character using materials and detailing that reflect local distinctiveness and achieve a high standard of sustainability in conformity with WNP Policies HC1,**

EHD2 and the Warminster Design Guide.

#### Walking, Cycling and Public Transport

**14. In accordance with WNP Policy GA1 and GA4, development proposals will be expected to provide a safe and attractive network of pedestrian and cycling routes with connections to the local sustainable travel network, including PROW 40 and 41.**

**15. Proposals should make proportionate contributions towards the enhancement of a safe walking and wheeling route connecting to schools and the improvement of related public transport facilities and services.**

#### Vehicle Access and Traffic

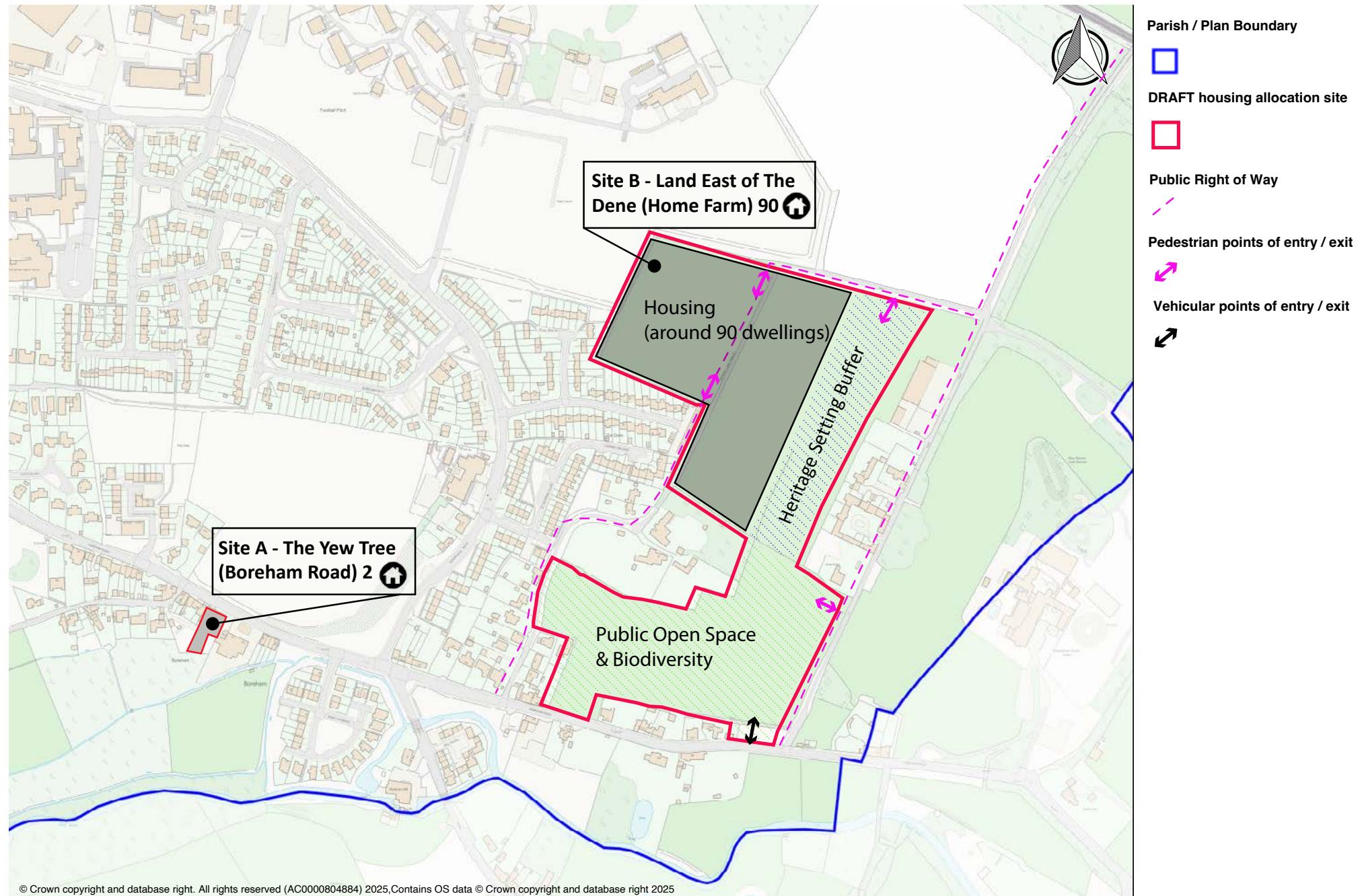
**16. A Transport Assessment and strategy shall be submitted with development proposals to ensure the development will not cause an unacceptable impact on the local highway network. Off-site measures, such as junction improvements, shall be implemented as necessary. In particular, any proposed access from Boreham Road must ensure that highway safety is maintained for all users and that access work**

minimises and mitigates any unavoidable harmful impacts to the existing boundary walls.

#### Parking & ULEV Charging

**17. Development will be expected to provide residential parking and ultra-low emission vehicle charging facilities in conformity with WNP Policies GA2 and GA3.**

Figure C: Site Allocation Diagram



## Protection of existing valued community facilities

b.36 Warminster is home to several primary schools and Kingdown School to the east of the town providing secondary school places to more than 1,500 pupils. The town is served by one doctors surgery, three pharmacies, two dentists and several high street opticians. There is a sports' centre with a swimming pool, several gyms, a library, and a historic theatre. The town has a central park, The Lake Pleasure Grounds, with recreation facilities and hosts many community events during the year.

b.37 The NPPF<sup>20</sup> and Planning Practice Guidance<sup>21</sup> directs NPs to deliver healthy and safe communities that promote social interaction and healthy lifestyles within safe, accessible and inclusive mixed-use environments. Policies should also protect and support existing facilities and services and harness local capacity to integrate new community facilities within balanced housing and employment growth.

b.38 Amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order has enabled certain changes of use of community

b.39 facilities to alternative uses (residential non-community uses) to take place without requiring planning permission. However, many other community facility uses may still be protected by planning policies.

b.40 Community feedback placed significant value on local facilities. This policy aims to provide specific protection and support to the ongoing vitality and use of the locally valued facilities (see Appendix 3 for a list of local facilities and a detailed map best viewed via this link).<sup>22</sup>

### Draft Policy HC4 – Protection of Existing Valued Community Facilities

#### Supports Objectives O2, and O3

- Where planning permission is required, proposals will be supported which sustain or protect existing community facilities. Development that would result in the loss of any community facilities, including those identified in Appendix 3 and mapped<sup>22</sup> will only be supported where proposals are supported by evidence that;**

- it is no longer needed in its current form;**
- a replacement service or facility, of sufficient size, layout and quality is to be provided in an alternative suitable location; or**
- it would not be economically viable or feasible to retain the facility and there is no reasonable prospect of securing an alternative community use of the land or building.**

- Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of this Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:

“Future housing applications should take into account existing infrastructure – especially doctors' surgeries, dentists and secondary schools which are all over subscribed.”

<sup>20</sup> National Planning Policy Framework. Chapter 8

<sup>21</sup> Healthy and safe communities – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>22</sup> Parish Online map link (click on layers to see the key): <https://shared.xmap.cloud?map=60954355-a3e7-44a8-804b-07c30383c925>

## New Community Infrastructure

b.41 This is linked to Draft Policy HC3.

In addition, national policy also sets out the importance of meeting current and future needs and support for communities' health, social and cultural well-being.<sup>23</sup>

b.42 The emerging WLP Policy 81 (Community Facilities) aims to ensure that, wherever possible, Warminster's community existing facilities are supported and continue to be viable, and that new or replacement facilities meet evidenced community needs that cannot be met through existing provision.

b.43 The informal stage public consultation highlighted concerns about strains on access to some local facilities and infrastructure including doctors and secondary school places. The lack of balance between housing growth and provision of infrastructure is considered to be the root cause of these issues.

b.44 Whilst many felt there to be a particular need for facilities for younger people, others expressed the opinion that the town's growing older community needed to be supported by increased facilities to meet their needs and support healthy and inclusive lifestyles.

b.45 Drawing upon community feedback and statistical evidence of existing

and future needs, Warminster Town Council will prepare and maintain a local community infrastructure delivery plan that will inform how and where investments in local infrastructure should be prioritised.

b.46 This policy aims to ensure future community infrastructure is provided in areas of deficit and local need, in tandem with the ongoing delivery of housing at WWUE. Warminster Town Council has produced and manage a community project list (see Appendix 4). This will contain priority projects that will contribute to meeting the WNP objectives.

### Draft Policy HC5 – New Community Infrastructure Supports Objective O3

**1. Proposals for new community infrastructure projects to meet evidenced local needs including; educational establishments, health facilities, social welfare infrastructure and allotments will be supported, provided that:**

- a. they are supported by the community;**
- b. where community infrastructure necessary to**

**serve new development is not available, or where existing community infrastructure requires improvement due to capacity or other constraints associated with the impact of that development, planning permission will only be granted where suitable enforceable measures are put in place to secure the provision and maintenance of that new or improved community infrastructure in a timely manner, when it is required, in order to serve the development;**

- c. they are of high-quality design, with reference to the Warminster Design Code.**
- 2. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:  
"If the (Neighbourhood) plan is going to be diverse then it needs to include options and preferences for everyone."

<sup>23</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, 2024 paragraph 78 (b)

# c. Economy and Town Centre

## Introduction

### Economy

c.1 A healthy local economy is essential to allow sustainable growth and to retain existing, and attract new, businesses into the town that offer a broad spectrum of attractive and quality employment opportunities for all ages and skills to satisfy the needs of a growing community.

c.2 Warminster is a significant employment centre for residents and surrounding villages. Analysis identified some 220 employment sites (see Appendix 5) operating within the town centre and an additional 300 or so located around the rest of the neighbourhood area. The latter tend to be focused on the main commercial areas of Crusader Park, Warminster Business Park and Woodcock Industrial Estate with numerous small home and micro businesses around the town. Warminster Garrison, comprising two main sites on Imber Road and Woodcock Road is also a large employer of both military and civilian staff.

c.3 The WWUE includes a further six hectares of new employment land on the opposite side of the B3414 from Crusader Business Park. This must be protected for employment and not allowed to be lost to housing development. Accessing this

employment site through residential areas of the new development would not sit comfortably with the anticipated volume of residential traffic. It requires clear separation of residential and employment traffic from the B3414 access point.

c.4 Economic growth can be expected to come not only from traditional town centre retail and commercial estate industrial activities but also from micro-businesses, start-ups, and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Flexible use of employment land and existing employment sites to meet such a demand will be encouraged.

c.5 The Covid 19 pandemic has led to an increase in people working from home or working more flexibly, either as an employee or managing their own business, and either full or part-time. This needs to be supported by encouraging investors to provide serviced business centres for ad-hoc use by homeworkers and space for start-up businesses, as well as with flexibility in supporting planning applications for homes and extensions that specifically enable homeworking.

### Tourism

c.6 Warminster is an attractive market town with many fine buildings and a variety of independent shops.



c.7 It is also conveniently located close to Longleat, Center Parcs, Stourhead (National Trust) and the Dark Sky Reserve for Astro-tourism. In 2025 Warminster held StarFest to celebrate dark skies.

c.8 The town has a number of attractions including:

- The Lake Pleasure Grounds – featuring a skate park, splash pad, tennis courts, play areas, wildlife area, putting green, café and boating lake;
- The Athenaeum Centre featuring a diverse programme of events throughout the year;
- An annual schedule of events including seasonal markets, Spring In the Park,

**The Town Park**

Inspire Music Festival, Warminster Carnival and Warminster Christmas Lights Switch On;

- A Blue Plaque Trail – a walking tour taking in 20 of the finest historic buildings in Warminster.

## Town Centre

c.9 Warminster's Town Centre is centred around Market Place and High Street plus side streets and three shopping precincts; Three Horseshoes Walk Shopping Mall, The Cornmarket and Chinn's Court.

c.10 A considerable proportion of the town centre falls within Warminster's Town Centre Conservation Area with many of the buildings having listed status. The heritage of the town and its buildings should be protected whilst balancing future needs and providing some flexibility of use, particularly of the upper floors of town centre buildings.

c.11 Like many town centres, Warminster faces the challenge of declining demand for retail shops and outlets which has been exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic, when the move to online e-commerce accelerated.

c.12 However, a survey of businesses in Warminster (see Appendix 6), has been undertaken in Warminster Town Centre every year since 2010, and last carried out in 2024, demonstrated that whilst over the

previous 13 years businesses have come and gone, the overall commercial offer in the town centre has remained stable. There has been a slight reduction in retail shops, financial and professional services such as banks but there has been an increase in hair, health and beauty, funeral directors and charity shops. It is essential that the core town centre be protected as a focus for retail, commercial, leisure, culture and tourism to maintain and increase its vibrancy.

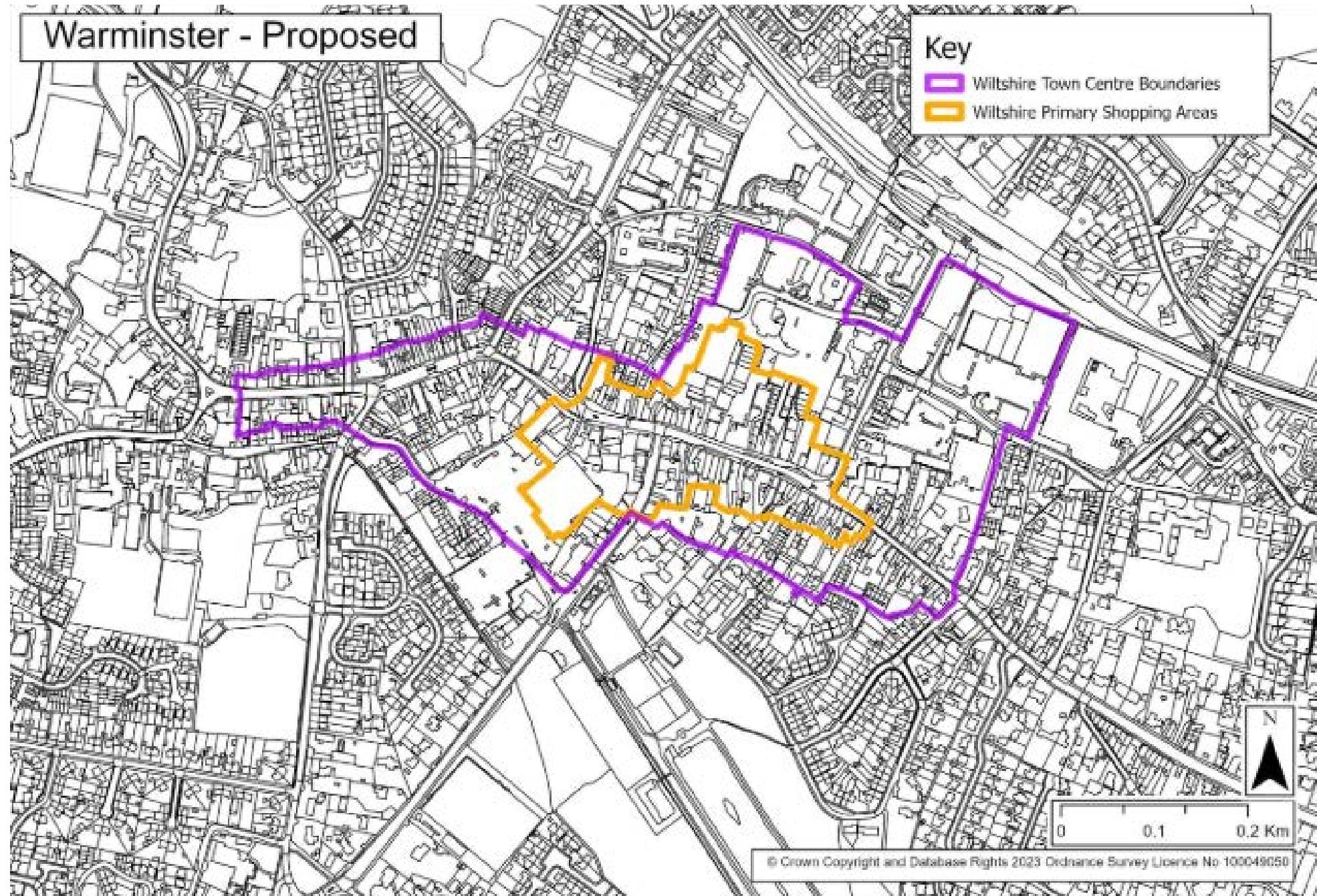
c.13 The town centre has a wide range of shops providing a choice of convenience shopping and a rich mixture of high street and independent shops to serve residents and the wider population. The production and sale of local products and a 'shop local' ethos will be encouraged to grow a sustainable local economy. There are many cafes, restaurants, take-aways and public houses serving a range of world cuisines during daytime and evenings. The nightlife, however, needs to be developed to make it more of a vibrant destination of choice for Warminster residents and for neighbouring towns and villages.

c.14 Maintaining its heritage as a market town, a small market takes place every Friday between the Warminster Library and Three Horseshoes Mall.



The view from the Chapel of St Lawrence during one of the seasonal markets.

Figure D: Town Centre, and Primary Shopping Area, as proposed by the Wiltshire Local Plan Review.



## Town Centre Vitality And Uses

c.15 The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres have at the heart of local communities, taking a positive approach to growth, management and adaptation.

c.16 Changes to town planning (use classes)<sup>24</sup> legislation has introduced Use Class E. This amalgamates nearly all ground floor frontage uses including shops, banks, hairdressers and cafes into a single use class. Changes of use within this class can be made without the need for planning permission. However, changes of the appearance of a building are still likely to require consent.

c.17 The Wiltshire Local Plan defines the town centre boundary – Figure D shows the proposed extent of town centre/primary shopping areas as set out in Policy 68 of the Local Plan Review. The existing town centre boundary can be seen in the appendix of the Local Plan Review.<sup>25</sup>

c.18 Wiltshire Council recognises the role of the WNP and Warminster Town Centre Masterplan 2023 (TCMP) to set locally shaped policy and strategy for the town centre.

c.19 Informal consultation on this plan, undertaken in 2023, revealed high levels of interest and priorities for the town centre. It also revealed the significant proportion of visitors to the town centre and their positive opinion of its qualities.

c.20 Residents felt that Warminster had a good offer but with disjointed shopping areas, complimented by the Lake Pleasure Grounds, which were considered to be safe and welcoming. Respondents wished to see more clothing, book and shoe shops, but felt that there were too many charity shops and hairdressers. Concerns were raised about traffic congestion, parking charges and the poor condition of some buildings including scaffolding of 3 High Street, [since demolished] the old post office and old town hall.



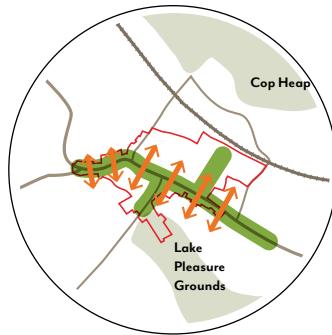
The people of Warminster said:

“The High Street is the town’s best asset, but it is declining. Empty shops need to be utilised. Buildings could be converted back into homes and apartments.”

<sup>24</sup> Use Classes – Change of use – Planning Portal

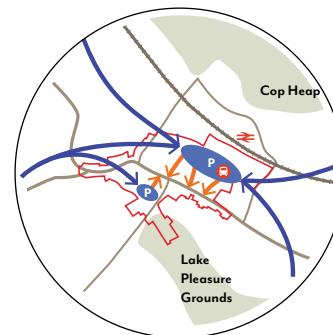
<sup>25</sup> Wiltshire Local Plan Review Appendix E. Figure E.43 Warminster Existing Town Centre Boundary (click across to Appendix E) <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/f8442ee21e894fb2a31912499ebfa37f?item=7>

c.21 The updated Warminster TCMP 2023 (Annexe 2) identifies priorities for enhancing the town centre offer and attractiveness in four key themes:



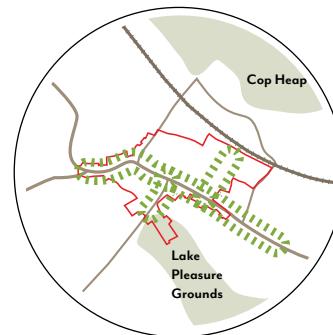
### Improve Town Centre Environment & Public Realm

- improve the environment of the George Street/High Street/Market Place main road currently negatively impacted by traffic;
- support and prioritise pedestrian movement throughout the town centre;
- provide high quality dwell spaces;
- reconnect the north and south parts of the town centre;
- provide community and cultural spaces in the town centre.



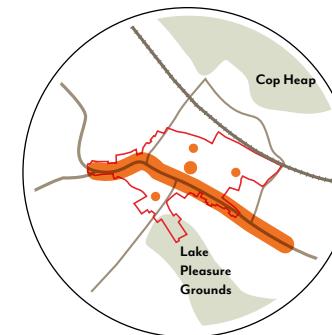
### Rationalise Traffic from East and West to Car Parks

- direct vehicles from the west and east directly to parking sites to reduce car movement through George Street/ High Street/Market Place main road;
- provide alternative access routes to parking areas while prioritising the safety around schools;
- provide safe and clear pedestrian access to the core retail area along the main road from the main car parking sites;
- encourage greater use of backland parking areas and pedestrian links to the main road;
- rationalise service access and timing;
- support cultural and leisure uses through parking management;
- improve wayfinding and access to the railway station



### Strengthen Identity & Character of the Town Centre

- improve town centre shopfronts;
- protect and enhance the local heritage;
- support the sustainable and careful reuse of heritage buildings;
- support cultural and leisure uses to provide attractive options to locals and residents of the Warminster Community Area.



### Identify Key Opportunities in the Town Centre

- identify development opportunities across the town centre for community hubs, cultural spaces and facilities for young people;
- assess redevelopment potential of upper floors of retail units along the main street.

## Draft Policy ETC1 – Town Centre Vitality and Uses

### Supports Objectives O4, O6, and O7

1. The town centre, as defined by Wiltshire Local Plan, will continue to be protected as the focus for retail, commercial, leisure, cultural and tourism uses within Warminster.
2. Proposals will also be expected to demonstrate how they have adequately addressed and contributed positively towards achieving the priorities set out in the Warminster Town Centre Masterplan (2023)
3. Where planning consent is required, proposals for new or changed uses of town centre ground floor frontages and upper floors will only be supported where they are in conformity with the adopted Wiltshire Local Plan and where they maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, provided they do not conflict with other policies of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.



Station Road

4. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

## Town Centre Heritage, Character & Design

c.23 High-quality and sustainable design and placemaking have become a high priority within National Planning Policy and Guidance. The Environment, Heritage and Design section expands upon the current national policies, design guide and code that underpins all local approaches and sets local design quality expectations.

c.24 Together, draft WLP Policy 89 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Placemaking) and Policy 99 (Ensuring the Conservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) set the strategic policy criteria that aims to ensure the protection, enhancement, and quality of the town centre. This has now been supplemented by the Draft Wiltshire Design Guide.<sup>26</sup> The Warminster Design Guide and Code 2023 (see Annexe 1) provides specific local guidance and should be referenced in shaping any development proposal.

c.25 The Warminster TCMP (see Annexe 2) provides a specific and up-to-date framework to guide and inform delivery of the town centre conservation and enhancements, including through development proposals for key sites including Central Car Park or conservation

schemes such as 3 High Street and the old town hall. It also identifies opportunities for smaller schemes to bring underused floorspace in historic buildings into viable mixed uses including within High Street, Market Place, George Street, Silver Street and East Street.

### Draft Policy ETC2 – Town Centre Heritage, Character, & Design

#### Supports Objective 07

- 1. Development proposals within the town centre will be supported provided the proposal:**
  - a. is of a scale and design and uses materials that conserves or enhances the character of Warminster town centre and Conservation Area in conformity with Wiltshire Local Plan Policy 98;**
  - b. protects or enhances the fabric and setting of town centre listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets listed in Warminster Neighbourhood Plan Policy EHD9 and other relevant policies in the adopted Wiltshire Development Plan;**

**c. provides an accessible connection to the public realm;**

**d. provides parking and servicing spaces in conformity with adopted parking and servicing standards.**

**e. demonstrate how they have adequately addressed and contributed positively towards achieving the priorities set out in the Warminster Town Centre Masterplan (2023).**

**2. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:

“There needs to be a revival of the high street. Warminster has such a lovely feel about it, largely due to the heritage buildings and that it is a small town.”

<sup>26</sup> Wiltshire Design Guide. Shaping the future. Wiltshire Council

## Town Centre Housing

c.26 Town centres are changing from retail to mixed uses, restoring diversity and community life. Housing is recognised as an important part of this mix.

c.27 Converting under-used or empty upper floors into small town centre flats can provide entry level housing, helping meet a need identified in the Warminster HNA (see Appendix 1).

c.28 The Warminster TCMP has analysed the potential for residential development in spaces above shops to recommend where it should be supported as identified in Figure E.

c.29 The centre is a highly sustainable location at the heart of local services and transport. Whilst residential car parking must be considered, there are greater opportunities to reduce the needs for car use.

c.30 Integration of housing into the business environment of the town centre must be done carefully to ensure new residents enjoy a good quality of accommodation and amenity and to safeguard the ability of businesses to operate without conflicts.

c.31 Within the defined town centre area, in principle, support will be given to proposals for the reversion or conversion of under-used upper floors to residential use.

### Draft Policy ETC3 – Town Centre Housing

#### Supports Objective 08

1. **Within Warminster town centre planning proposals for change of use of existing floorspace to residential use will be supported subject to meeting relevant criteria as set out below, proposals should:**
  - a. **retain active ground floor town centre business or service use frontages within the defined primary shopping area;**
  - b. **relate to vacant floorspace and would not result in the loss of an existing viable business or community use;**
  - c. **preserve or enhance the character of the Warminster Conservation Area;**
  - d. **preserve or enhance the significance of a listed building. Developments that affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets shall require a balanced judgement, considering the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage;**
  - e. **enhance the vitality and environment of the host street and town centre;**
  - f. **contribute positively to**
2. **Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

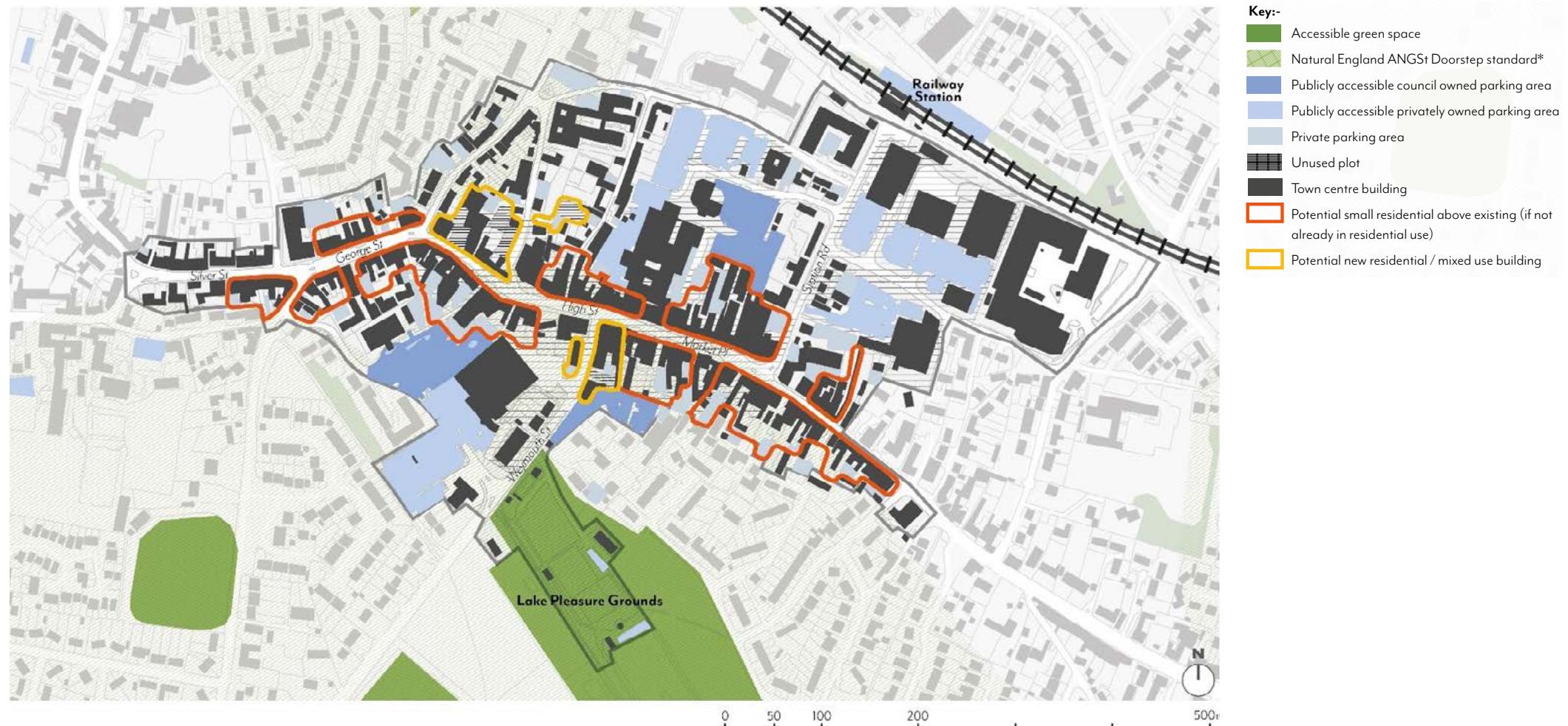
**meeting local needs for smaller and affordable homes as evidenced by the Warminster Housing Needs Assessment 2023 (see Appendix 1);**

- g. **provide self-contained access;**
- h. **not conflict with existing town centre uses and provide a good quality residential amenity, light, and ventilation;**
- i. **provide internal spaces that meet current government space standard guidelines;**
- j. **provide adequate accessible space for the storage of refuse and recycling; and,**
- k. **conform with Wiltshire Council Car Parking and Active Travel Parking Standards.**
- l. **demonstrate how they have adequately addressed and contributed positively towards achieving the priorities set out in the updated Warminster Town Centre Masterplan (2023) as illustrated in Figure E.**

The people of Warminster said:

“Develop on brownfield sites, infill in town centre to make use of empty buildings.”

Figure E: Town Centre Masterplan potential interventions



## Town Centre Shopfronts

c.32 Well-kept historic and well-designed contemporary shopfronts and fascia signs make a huge contribution to the presentation and quality of a town centre. Warminster is fortunate to have many historic buildings and original shopfronts within the Conservation Area as highlighted in the Warminster TCMP. However, like all historic and living town centres there are examples of disrepair and unsympathetic design.

c.33 Changes to signs and shopfronts are managed through planning, listed building and advertisement regulations. There is significant potential to incrementally enhance the image of the town centre through guidance and careful management of such proposals. The Warminster TCMP provides applicants with key principles that should be adhered to when considering changes.



## Draft Policy ETC4 – Town Centre Shopfronts

### Supports Objective O7

1. New, replacement or restored shopfronts and signage in the primary shopping area will be supported where the proposed development reflects the architectural style, scale, proportions, materials, and colour of both the host building (especially where this is a listed building or a locally valued non-designated heritage asset) and the Conservation Area. Proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have had regard to principles set out in the Warminster Town Centre Masterplan 2023, or any future adopted shopfront design guidance.
2. Proposals must be supported by information to demonstrate how, where appropriate to the development, that:
  - a. it retains shopfronts and other features which are of architectural or historic interest. Where it is not possible to retain the whole shopfront, development proposals should aim to retain

features which contribute positively to the character of the building and surrounding conservation area. Surviving historic features and archive research should inform the design of new shopfronts;

- b. the design and decoration of the shopfront and/ or signage complements the proportions, scale and characteristics of the host building and has been informed by the characteristics of the surrounding conservation area;
- c. the design of the shopfront considers the rhythm, lines, and key characteristics of the street;
- d. where a shop occupies the ground floor of more than one building, the design and proportions of each shopfront relates to each individual building;
- e. the shopfront or signage does not obscure any existing architectural features or decoration of the upper floors;
- f. the proportions of the fascia, signage area and glazing are appropriately balanced with

the shopfront frame and upper-floor windows;

- g. where security measures are needed, they have been designed as an integral part of the shopfront, avoiding the use of external roller shutters. If there is no alternative to an external roller shutter, ensure that it is open weave, and the shutter box is contained behind the fascia.

3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

## Protecting and Supporting the Existing Economy and Businesses

c.34 Consistent with Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy, the draft WLP protects 'Principal Employment Areas' (WLP Policy 65 and identified in WLP Policy 58 as Crusader Park, Warminster Business Park, Woodcock Road Industrial Estate and Northlands Industrial Estate). The WNP also identifies the protection of local employment with the objective of protecting a sustainable balance of working and living in Warminster; see Appendix 5 and 6 for more detail on local businesses.

c.35 "Use Class" relates to the use of land and buildings. These are currently divided into six sections. In the draft policy below, 'Use Class B – businesses which supply or support others,' 'and Use Class E – 'commercial, business and service,' are referred to. Change between uses within the same class does not constitute development and so does not normally need planning permission, though in some cases it will.

### Draft Policy ETC5 – Protecting and Supporting the Existing Economy and Businesses

#### Supports Objective O4

1. **Within the locally valued employment sites' (as identified in Appendix 4) development proposals that retain, restore or increase the existing employment use within use classes E(g), B2 or B8, will be supported in principle subject to compliance with other relevant policies within the development plan in particular those policies which relate to development that changes the character or appearance of land or buildings.**
2. **Proposals to upgrade, expand or redevelop existing employment buildings and sites within Warminster Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported where it has been demonstrated by the applicant that it would:**
  3. **retain or increase pre-existing employment levels and create increased local employment opportunities;**
    - a. **not result in adverse impacts on the viability, facilities and safety of surrounding uses, the**

environment and surrounding highway network;

- b. **maintain or enhance accessible and attractive connections to Warminster's pedestrian, cycle, and public transport network, as set out in Policy GA1.**
- c. **Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:

"We think the historic nature of the market town is a big appeal and needs to be protected and developed."

## Supporting Business Investment And Start-Ups

c.36 The aim of this draft policy is to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt, in line with national planning policy. It also allows for new and flexible working practices, suggesting the provision of starter units and shared service business hubs but without setting out limits on the type of employment development to be supported.<sup>27</sup>

### Draft Policy ETC6 – Supporting Business Investment And Start-Ups

#### Supports Objectives O4, O6, and O7

1. Proposals for new local employment development will be supported where it will:
  - a. maintain the viability and amenity of surrounding uses;
  - b. protect local character;
  - c. maintain surrounding highway safety, and not adversely impact existing areas of high traffic congestion;
  - d. be well-connected to Warminster's walking and cycling network and close to local bus services.

2. Small scale employment development operated from within built-up areas, including residential areas and homes, will be supported, subject to highways, access, and amenity considerations by:
  - a. allowing small-scale employment development adjoining existing employment areas, provided they are not allocated for other uses;
  - b. permitting business proposals seeking to occupy small sites or buildings within residential or other built-up areas, provided that they are not allocated for other uses or are otherwise protected;
  - c. allowing for the creation of workspace for home-run businesses involving the conversion of part of a dwelling, its outbuildings, or the development of appropriately scaled new buildings within the dwelling curtilage;
  - d. in appropriate locations, either separately or as an element of a larger housing
3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Habitat Regulations as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.



scheme, supporting and permitting buildings designed as 'live-work' units – part living accommodation, part workspace;

e. supporting the provision of starter units and shared, serviced business hubs that will create local employment opportunities

The people of Warminster said:

"There are too many empty shops which could be used for pop-up businesses."

<sup>27</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, 2024 paragraph 86.d.

## Warminster Visitor Economy

c.37 There is a high volume of visitor related employment in Wiltshire.

c.38 Visitor accommodation studies for the county identify a lack in many types of different accommodation. Opportunities for growth include budget accommodation, boutique hotels and pub stays in market towns.

c.39 The town centre already offers hotel accommodation. With its historic charm, vibrant events, and strong transport links, Warminster's location in a scenic rural landscape close to international and national visitor attractions makes it well-positioned to meet some of the county's visitor accommodation needs, especially in the town centre.

c.40 The Warminster TCMP (2023) has identified potential opportunities for regeneration of landmark heritage buildings including the old town hall and the old post office. Re-use of significant areas of under-used upper floors also presents potential for boutique and budget accommodation.

c.41 As part of its support of a diversified and vibrant daytime and evening economy, the WNP supports proposals for visitor accommodation and attractions within the town centre.

### Draft Policy ETC7 – Warminster Visitor Economy

#### Supports Objectives O5, and O7

- 1. Support will be given to proposals for visitor accommodation and food and beverage uses that enhance the offer, vitality and quality of the town centre daytime and evening economy subject to conformity with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.**
- 2. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**



The people of Warminster said:

“The town centre must reflect the change in customer buying habits. There is a swing away from physical shops, potentially towards other outlets, and we have to adapt to that challenge on the basis that we do want the town centre to be a ‘destination’ for residents and visitors.”

## Homeworking

c.42 Homeworking provides a seedbed platform for entrepreneurs and micro businesses and enables traditional office-based businesses to offer hybrid working patterns. In doing so, car commuting can be reduced, and local businesses and services could build a larger local customer base.

c.43 Working from home does not need planning permission if the residential character and amenity of the area is maintained. In some cases, however, planning permission will be needed for extensions and annexes to enable homeworking at existing houses. The WNP will give support to both residential annexes, subject to conformity with adopted strategic and NP design, and transport policies that safeguard area character, traffic and parking considerations and residents' amenity.

### Draft Policy ETC8 – Homeworking

#### Supports Objectives O4, O5, and O6

- New housing, and housing extensions will be supported where they specifically enable and support homeworking, such as being a purpose-designed space connected to state-of-the-art telecommunications.**
- Support will be given to proposals to provide ancillary homeworking space, subject to highways, access, and amenity considerations. Proposals should be of an appropriate scale and design and preserving the fabric and setting of affected historic fabric and locally valued green infrastructure.**
- Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**



The people of Warminster said:

“A vision for the economy also includes having in place the environments and infrastructure for people to work from home or dynamically in purpose built and designed local buildings. This should include getting high-speed fibre to the ‘home’.”

## Low Carbon and Circular Economy

c.44 A circular economy encourages a transition from a 'take, make and throw away' model, to one in which natural and technological resources are retained and reused at equal value. A low carbon and circular economy are about a shift in focus from using resources more efficiently towards reusing resources and there is also a concept proposed relating to 'spending the local pound locally' – this is a financial circular economy – money is earnt/paid in Warminster, we want it to be spent here too.

c.45 In terms of planning and development, extending the life of buildings by recovering and reusing materials at the end of their life can significantly reduce the demand for materials and subsequent waste produced. Adopting a circular economy approach in the development sector will play a significant role in promoting resource efficiency and addressing the challenge of the climate emergency. For example, reclamation of building materials can significantly reduce the amount of embodied carbon in new projects that utilise them.

c.46 As already referenced in this document, the NPPF sets out the purpose of the Planning System to contribute to the

achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives; Economic, Social and Environmental. All three are interwoven. The aim of Draft Policy ETC9 is to enable the delivery of these fundamental objectives through a local circular economy which will also contribute to the wider aim of a more sustainable and climate responsive neighbourhood.

### Draft Policy ETC9 – Low Carbon And Circular Economy

#### Supports Objective 05 & 09

1. **Proposals for employment-related development and investment that contribute positively to Warminster Town Council's Climate Change Strategy and to meeting national and Wiltshire Council carbon neutrality targets will be supported.**
2. **Employment development proposals will be particularly supported that demonstrate:**
  - a. **their location, layout and pattern of development, reduce the need to travel for both people and goods and encourage sustainable modes of transport;**

- b. **they have been designed to reduce energy consumption;**
- c. **the incorporation of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy;**
- d. **designing-out waste and pollution;**
- e. **the repurposing of existing buildings and materials;**
- f. **the creation of circular economic benefits for the local economy.**

3. **Adopting the principles of the circular economy to reduce consumption of finite resources, reduce waste and maximise recycling. This will contribute to minimising carbon emissions in the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan Area and will also be supported.**
4. **Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:

"It would be great to see community hubs with repair space and other ways to support a circular economy."

## Digital Infrastructure

c.47 Superfast broadband with fibre connections to homes and business is critical. This is of particular benefit to SMEs and for landowners and developers to secure end users for employment and business units/sites in the town. Access to good options for broadband are becoming increasingly more important to business expansion and relocation decisions.

c.48 Alternative technologies and innovative solutions such as satellite, wireless and mobile connectivity should also be considered in terms of future proofing to ensure there is access to superfast broadband irrespective of location.

### Draft Policy ETC10 – Digital Infrastructure

#### Supports Objective 06

- 1. Development proposals for telecommunications infrastructure that contribute to providing Warminster's businesses, community facilities and residents with access to state-of-the-art digital connectivity will be supported where development protects the amenity of neighbouring residents and local character, as set out in the Warminster Design Code.**
- 2. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with the Habitats Regulations as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**
- 3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

The people of Warminster said:

“Specifically, the plan should reflect the changing business habits and working styles of the past 10+ years, both from a technology perspective and also ways of working/employment”.

# d. Environment, Heritage and Design

## Introduction

d.1 Warminster is an historic market town surrounded by a beautiful landscape of hills and woodland. Its architecture, Conservation Areas and listed buildings reflect many phases of prosperity. The town sits between the internationally important, protected habitats and landscapes of Salisbury Plain and the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

d.2 The River Wylde which flows through the south of the parish is a rare and protected chalk stream. Its tributaries, the River Were and Cannimore Brook, flow through the built town. Sewage from housing development has increased phosphate pollution so the Wylde's Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) remain in unfavourable condition and require improvement. The Were also suffers from sewage outfall, chemical pollution and silting.

d.3 The WNP supports development that respects local character and heritage and improves the natural environment and biodiversity. This must all be done while futureproofing against climate change using the highest quality, sustainable

methods, materials and design.

d.4 The Environment, Heritage, and Design Topic Papers (see Appendices 7.1 – 7.10) provide detailed information to underpin the policies.

## The Habitats Regulations

d.5 Under the Habitats Regulations,<sup>28</sup> Wiltshire Council must consider whether the WNP is likely to have a significant effect on any environmental site that is protected at European level. There are two internationally important and sensitive environmental sites within the WNP area:

- Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Area (SPA)
- River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

d.6 The whole of the WNP area lies within the 6.4km Zone of Influence (ZOI) for recreational pressure on the Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA.

d.7 Further afield, but still subject to impacts arising from developments in Warminster, is the Bradford on Avon Bats SAC. As the number of people living near these sensitive and irreplaceable habitats



increases, they must be protected, so a full Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is being carried out, along with a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to inform WNP policies and make sure that the most sensitive environmental assets will be protected when these policies are used to make decisions on planning applications.

d.8 New development in Warminster is required to comply with the Habitat Regulations. This policy draws on the findings of the HRA and the recommendations of Wiltshire Council, to ensure this requirement is met.

The people of Warminster said:

**"Agree very strongly with the aim of environmental protection and combating climate change. It could not be more important"**

**"Warminster has an amazing heritage which it has largely been able to preserve.... You should preserve this at all costs."**

**"Many of us here in Warminster care deeply about the local environment and the species that live in and around the town..."**

<sup>28</sup> Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017 – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

## Draft Policy EHD1 – The Habitats Regulations

### Supports Objectives O1, and O9 to O13

- 1. All development proposals must demonstrate compliance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), through adherence to the Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) planning guidance for Wiltshire (2015) and Wiltshire Council's HRA and Mitigation Strategy for Salisbury Plain SPA (2018) (or subsequent updates).**
- 2. Development affecting the Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation/ Special Protected Area, the River Avon Special Area of Conservation or the Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation must avoid or reduce the potential adverse impact of development on these European designated sites, taking into account the Zone of Influence for each site, and the relevant mitigation strategies prepared by Wiltshire Council. Not all development will be covered by Wiltshire Council's mitigation strategies and may therefore be required to provide a bespoke mitigation strategy.**



Above Warminster Common

d.9 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.1- Natural Environment and Biodiversity).

The people of Warminster said:

"We should be planting significant numbers of trees all across the town especially in the most urban areas to reduce the effects of extreme heat."

"We must protect our precious wildlife – we are lucky to live in an area so rich in nature!"

## High-Quality Sustainable Design

d.10 The quality of design is a key issue not just for our community but also at national level. The Government has issued a National Design Guide<sup>29</sup> and National Model Design Code,<sup>30</sup> and the National Planning Policy Framework also underscores the importance of high-quality design.<sup>31</sup> Linked to this, Wiltshire Council has prepared a Design Guide<sup>32</sup> for the county.

d.11 Within this national and local authority context, it is important to add a very local dimension as set out in national policy: “Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.”<sup>33</sup>

d.12 The Warminster Design Guide Annex 1 has been prepared in order to achieve local and national goals for improved standards of design and support locally-distinctive design. The WDG is based on a substantial assessment of Warminster’s architecture, townscape, and landscape character. It is structured

around six distinct themes and provides guidance as to what would constitute best practice development within the parish of Warminster. These themes are:

- Context and Integration
- Built Form & Built Layout
- Movement & Connections
- Public Realm & Landscape
- Uses & Amenity
- Materials & Resources

d.13 The Material & Resources theme addresses the issue of energy efficiency, net zero carbon and renewable energy. This is clearly important to the community; 93.6% of the informal stage public consultation survey respondents agreed that new buildings should incorporate features and material which will reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency. The draft WLP proposes ambitious policies which set the context for the WNP and reflect the urgency of mitigating and adapting to climate change through planning.

d.14 The design policy refers to buildings of zero-carbon standard. These are highly energy-efficient, reducing energy demand and consumption, and using self-generated renewable energy or a renewable energy supply.

The people of Warminster said:

“New development needs to be sympathetic to the environment it is built in.”

“We need to pull out all the stops in terms of renewable infrastructure and energy efficiency of both new and existing housing stock.”

<sup>29</sup> National design guide – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>30</sup> National Model Design Code – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/12-achieving-well-designed-places>

<sup>32</sup> Guidance for Neighbourhood Planning within Wiltshire: Integrating High Quality Design

<sup>33</sup> National Planning Policy Framework ([publishing.service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk))

## Draft Policy EHD2 – High-Quality Sustainable Design

### Supports Objectives O9, and O10

1. Development should conserve local distinctiveness by demonstrating high-quality sustainable design which respects existing character, responds to the distinctive character of Warminster and are resilient to climate change. The Warminster Design Guide (Annexe 1) contains detailed guidance for development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Where a Design and Access Statement is required as part of a planning application, there must be a clear demonstration of how the proposal has responded to the Warminster Design Guide as an integral part of the design development process.
2. New development schemes should demonstrate through a Sustainable Energy Statement (SES) how carbon emissions are minimised, with the target of zero-carbon, and how the impacts of climate change are mitigated and adapted to. The Energy Hierarchy should be embedded within the design of buildings i.e. reducing the need for energy

for example for home heating or cooling, being more efficient with energy, and maximising the use of renewable energy (e.g. installing photovoltaics, and orienting facades, roofs and amenity spaces to receive optimal benefit from sunlight and solar gain) in accordance with the Wiltshire Climate Strategy. Wherever feasible, applications should demonstrate how heat and power demands are minimised by targeting:

- a. space heating demand of less than 30KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/ year;
- b. total energy consumption less than 40kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/ annum;
- c. provision of enough renewable energy output to match the total energy use.

3. Development proposals should demonstrate how they will minimise resource use, for example, whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon, prioritising the use of local sourced, recycled and energy efficient building materials and facilitate the efficient use of water. Retrofitting renewable or low carbon energy systems

in existing buildings will be supported.

4. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

d.15 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix – 7.2 Climate Change, High-Quality Sustainable Design and Renewable Energy).

## Renewable Energy

d.16 The NPPF stresses the importance of increasing decentralised renewable or low carbon energy as part of a more sustainable and locally resilient future.

d.17 As well as renewable energy generation linked to buildings such as rooftop solar, standalone renewable energy infrastructure includes wind turbines, hydropower turbines, and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic arrays. Of the people who responded to the informal stage public consultation survey, 87.23% support development of renewable energy generation in Warminster.

### Draft Policy EHD3 – Renewable Energy

#### Supports Objective O9

**1. Proposals for renewable energy generation, storage and carbon capture will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the environmental, social, and economic effects of the proposal, individually and cumulatively, are acceptable, or can be made acceptable. The following should be demonstrated:**

- a. protection of landscape character and sensitivity**

**of landscape and visual receptors, including the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (and the value of the area as an International Dark Sky Reserve) and Salisbury Plain. Appropriate mitigation may include screening, such as native hedgerows or trees.**

- b. no loss of the best grade and most versatile agricultural land. Where the current use of the land is agricultural, ground mounted solar development should allow for grazing practices to be maintained.**
- c. no unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.**
- d. protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.**
- e. no unacceptable impact on residential amenity or health e.g. from noise, odour, dust, vibration, or visual impact.**
- f. evidence of community support.**
- 2. Significant weight will be given to community-led energy schemes with administrative and financial**

**structures in place to deliver/ manage the project and any income from the scheme. Support will also be given to schemes that provide for a community benefit in terms of profit sharing or proportion of community ownership and delivery of local social and community benefits.**

- 3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

d.18 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.2 – Climate Change, Sustainable High Priority Design and Renewable Energy).



The people of Warminster said:

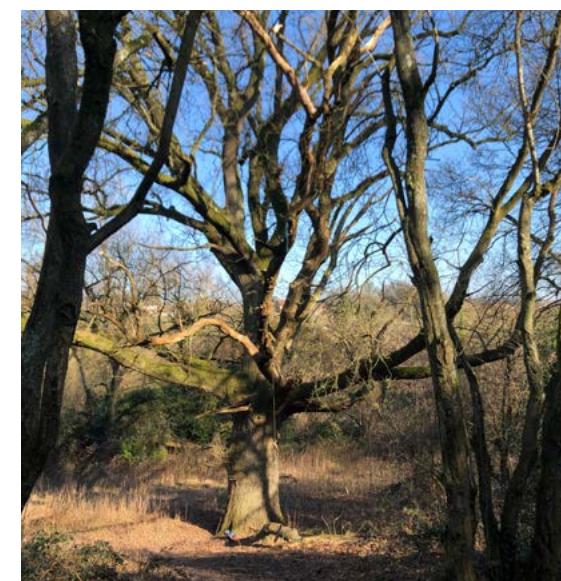
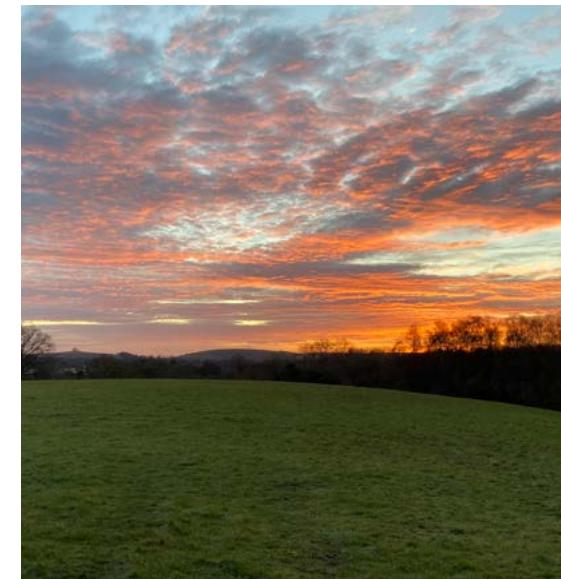
“Every effort must be made to reduce reliance on fossil fuels to future-proof housing etc for existing and future generations. We are way behind.”

“Either we embrace green energy, and drastically reducing our carbon footprint, or it won’t matter to any of us or those coming after us.”

## Natural Environment and Biodiversity

d.19 The natural environment faces urgent and significant challenges; in the UK there has been a 19% decline in the average abundance of wildlife since the 1970s.<sup>34</sup> The Environment Act 2021 introduced several measures with the aim of tackling the decline and supporting nature recovery including a strengthened 'biodiversity duty'<sup>35</sup> on all local authorities.

d.20 Warminster includes part of the internationally important flower-rich chalk grasslands of Salisbury Plain and the River Wylye, which forms the headwaters of the internationally important River Avon system of chalk rivers. Both are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Areas of Conservation supporting many rare and protected species. Salisbury Plain is also a Special Protection Area. The River Avon SSSI is in unfavourable condition because of the impact of nitrates and phosphates from farming and sewage and surface water runoff from housing developments. The Government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023-25,<sup>36</sup> requires all SSSIs to be in favourable condition and have an up to date condition assessment<sup>37</sup> by 31 January 2028-2032.



The people of Warminster said:

"We need to prioritise biodiversity in the town as a matter of urgency. We should not only be protecting the flora and fauna that already exists in the neighbourhood – we should be restoring nature to its former abundance. Key to this is creating connectivity."

<sup>34</sup> State of Nature 2023 – report on the UK's current biodiversity

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty#:~:text=This%20means%20that%2C%20as%20a,policies%20and%20achieve%20your%20objectives>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan-2025/environmental-improvement-plan-eip-2025#annex-2-full-list-of-revised-eip-interim-targets>

<sup>37</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1168372/environmental-improvement-plan-2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1168372/environmental-improvement-plan-2023.pdf)

## Draft Policy EHD4 – Natural Environment And Biodiversity

### Supports Objectives O10, O11 and O12

Development proposals affecting biodiversity must include provision for the protection, enhancement and maintenance of wildlife habitat and biodiversity in Warminster by:

1. securing a net gain for biodiversity as calculated to reflect the latest local and national policy and advice, through planning conditions or planning obligations. Wherever practicable, proposals are encouraged to achieve 20% or higher;
2. giving appropriate weight to the hierarchy of international, national, and local designated and non-designated natural environment priority habitats shown on Figure F. Any developments adjacent to or likely to affect these sites must demonstrate how they will provide an appropriate and sensitive interface or ‘buffer’ with the site through their layout or landscape design to minimise negative impacts on these habitats and retain the overall ecological integrity and connectivity of the network of these important sites and habitats;
3. incorporating habitat features of value to wildlife within the development site

and building design, including those which meet the specific needs of local species found during the ecological survey of the site or recorded at the Swindon and Wiltshire Biological Records Centre. These could include protection of foraging routes for bats or hedgehogs, and native pollinator-friendly planting in landscaping proposals;

4. protecting, and wherever possible enhancing woodland, hedgerows, ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, ditches, and wildlife habitats. Ecology buffers for the main watercourses of the River Wylde (part of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation) and the River Were should be provided;
5. avoiding development which harms, directly or indirectly, species which are legally protected, or species and habitats that have been identified in Warminster and are Species or Habitats of Principal Importance in England (also known as Section 41 or ‘Priority’ species and habitats). Development will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate measures strictly in line with the mitigation hierarchy which prioritises avoidance of harm;
6. demonstrating how the proposal will

maintain and enhance the integrity and connectivity of the network and support the principles of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including the Warminster Plan Bee Project where development proposals are sited within or adjacent to an identified Local Nature Recovery Network;

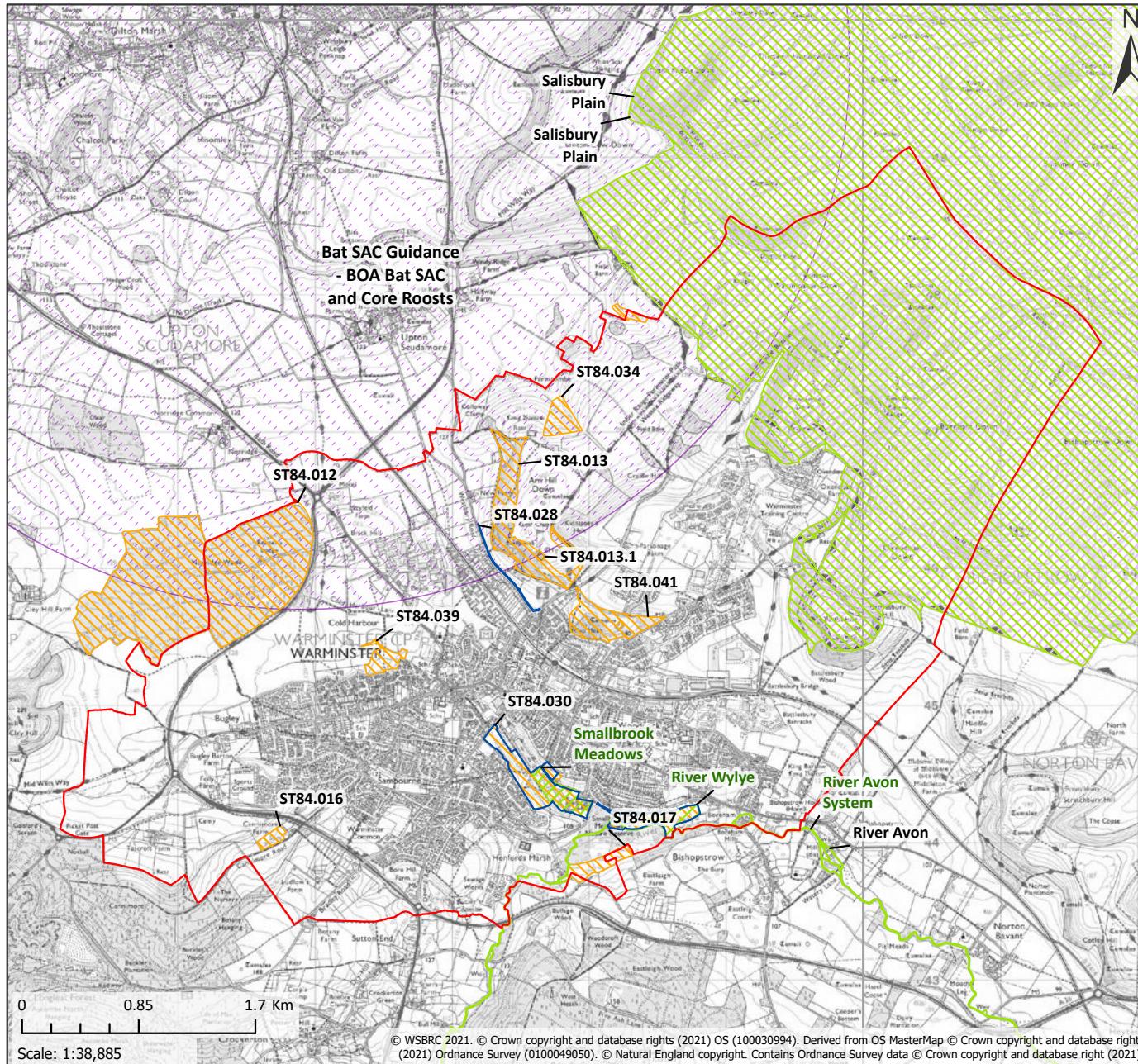
7. incorporating measures to adapt to climate change impacts such as overheating, flood risk and water scarcity. Nature-based solutions are particularly encouraged as these offer co-benefits with improved GBI and biodiversity enhancements.
8. ensuring that development proposals demonstrate compliance with Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the River Avon phosphorous mitigation strategy<sup>38</sup> and River Avon Special Area of Conservation species conservation and water quality targets.<sup>39</sup>

d.21 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers; Appendix 6.1 Natural Environment and Biodiversity, Appendix 6.3 Green and Blue Infrastructure, Appendix 6.4 Bats and Appendix 6.5 Trees and Hedgerows).

<sup>38</sup> Issue details – Democratic Services – Wiltshire Council

<sup>39</sup> UK0013016\_River Avon\_SAC\_Published 14 Sep 2023 (naturalengland.org.uk)

Figure F: Wildlife Sites Map (International, national and local designated wildlife sites)



Wildlife Sites Within  
Warminster Parish:  
**ST874450**

**16/11/2022**

■	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Reserve
■	Site of Special Scientific Interest
■	National Nature Reserve
■	Special Area of Conservation
■	Special Protection Area
■	Local Nature Reserve
■	Local Wildlife Sites
■	Local Geological Site
■	Protected Road Verge
■	Woodland Trust Reserve (boundary information only)
■	Bat Consultation Zone

## Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI)

d.22 As set out in the Wiltshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022), green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and ‘blue infrastructure’ such as streams, ponds, canals, and other water bodies. There are multiple benefits from this network for people and nature.

d.23 The WNP can add local detail to national and regional environmental ambitions for the community and wildlife by promoting habitat creation and, importantly, linkage between habitats. Connected linear features such as hedgerows, stone walls and railway embankments are vital for wildlife such as bats and pollinators.<sup>40</sup> Warminster is included in Buglife’s network of B-Line pollinator corridors which encourages developers to plant flowers to help insects to move across the landscape, contributing to biodiversity net gain targets and supporting pollination of crops. The natural environment faces urgent challenges; 16%

of species in Great Britain are threatened with extinction and since 1970 more than half of flowering plants and mosses have been lost from areas where they used to thrive.<sup>41</sup> The Environment Act 2021 introduced several measures with the aim of addressing nature recovery; Warminster’s local GBI is a key part of this wider picture.

d.24 A GBI corridor table which sets out detail on each corridor is included in Appendix 7.3 Green and Blue Infrastructure Topic Paper.

### Draft Policy EHD5 – Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI)

#### Supports Objectives O10, O11, and O13

- The Green and Blue Infrastructure Network, as shown on Figure G is recognised for its existing value and further potential for providing open space and ecological connectivity. Development proposals which restore, maintain and enhance the connectivity and biodiversity value, and where relevant, recreational value of the areas within the overall network will be supported.**
- Green and Blue Infrastructure assets in the Neighbourhood Area**

**with potential for improvement and enhancement consist of the following:**

- Local Green Spaces identified in Policy EHD7;**
- Strategic and Local Green and Blue Infrastructure corridors as identified in Figure G, and detailed in Appendix 6.3 GBI Topic Paper;**
- B-line pollinator corridors and associated projects of Warminster Plan B.<sup>42</sup>**

- Where harm to the Green and Blue Infrastructure Network is unavoidable as it is clearly outweighed by the need for the development, the harm must be mitigated with the creation of new or replacement parts of the network of the same or greater value. Any new or replacement elements of green or blue infrastructure should be provided in locations that are well related to the part of the network that is harmed and is provided in such a way so that the local community can make use of the new provision.**

The people of Warminster said:

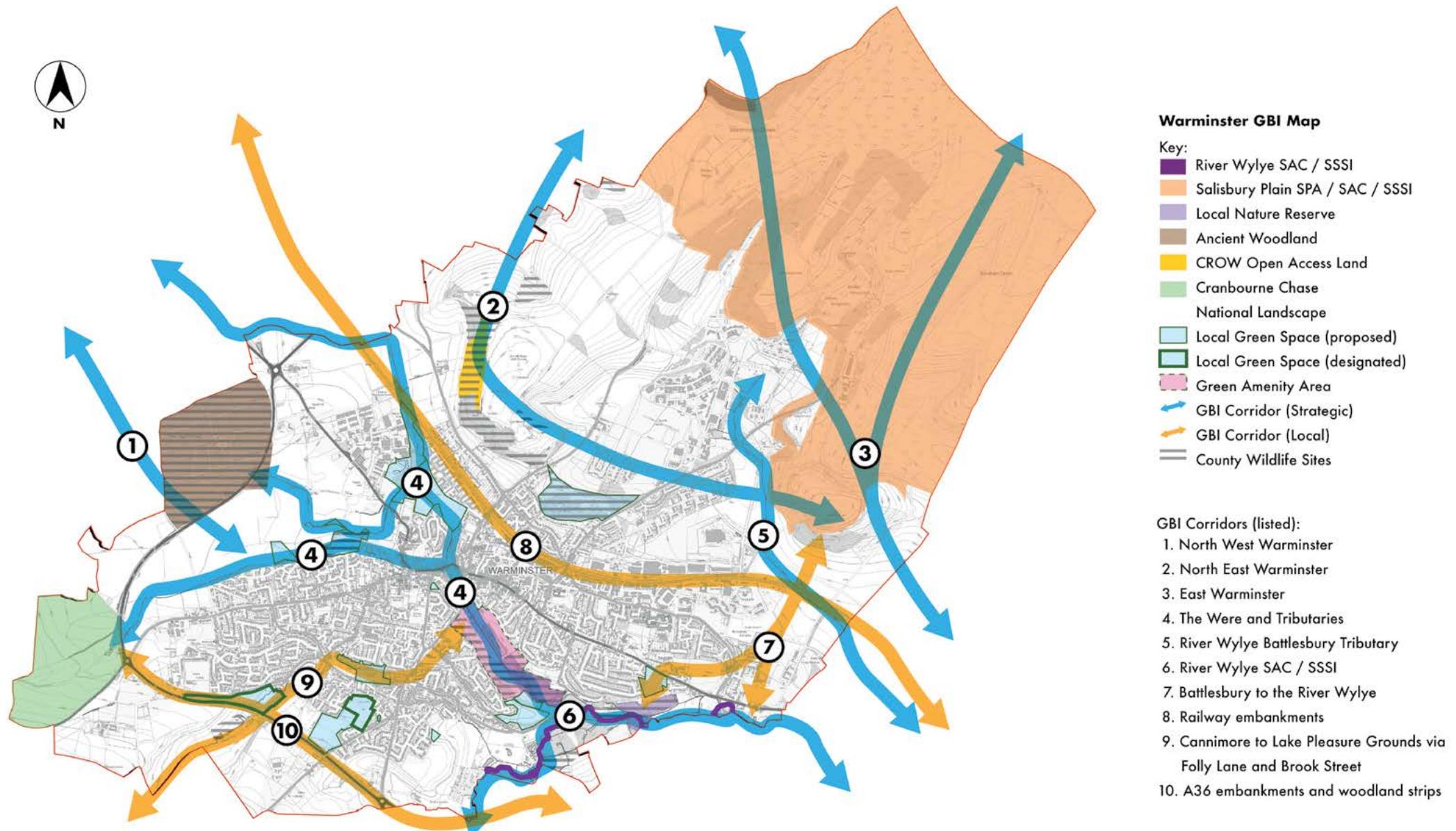
“Wildlife areas need to be Bigger, Better, and more joined up. ... Providing more connectivity for biodiversity to travel through Warminster...”

<sup>40</sup> B-Lines – Buglife

<sup>41</sup> State of Nature 2023 – report on the UK’s current biodiversity

<sup>42</sup> <https://sustainablewarminster.co.uk/warminster-plan-bee/>

Figure G: Green and Blue Infrastructure Map



## Dark Skies

d.25 Warminster is adjacent to the Cranborne Chase National Landscape International Dark Skies Reserve and Salisbury Plain. These areas have very little light pollution at night and are extremely valuable for astronomy and stargazing. It is estimated that at least 55% of the population of the UK cannot see the Milky Way from where they live.<sup>43</sup>

d.26 Many bat species, particularly Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats and Bechstein's Bats, are light-averse and sensitive to artificial lighting as are some of their insect prey. The Neighbourhood Area is home to 15 species of bat and is partially located within the 4km core foraging and commuting zone around the Westbury Leigh Greater Horseshoe core roost. See Appendix 7.4 Bats Topic for further details.

d.27 National Policy states that planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.<sup>44</sup>

d.28 The Dark Skies Policy is Warminster's contribution to reducing light pollution

which impacts on nocturnal wildlife as well as cutting wasted energy, carbon emissions and electricity bills, without compromising security or safety.

### Draft Policy EHD6 – Dark Skies

#### Supports Objectives O11, and O12

- 1. Development should be designed to conserve and enhance the quality of the dark night skies and prevent glare affecting the surrounding landscape, particularly in or in the setting of Cranborne Chase National Landscape International Dark Sky Reserve.<sup>45</sup> Applicants are encouraged to discuss possible impacts on the International Dark Sky Reserve with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership in advance of submitting a planning application which includes external lighting and lies within or is visible from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**
- 2. All developments should avoid external lighting where possible. Where external lighting is necessary applicants should demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, that it is required. Where**

**lighting is considered necessary, its design and location should ensure:**

- a. impacts, both on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties, and in terms of light spillage and glare, are minimised;**
- b. light sources should be time-controlled, fully shielded, and pointed downwards in line with guidance from the Institution of Lighting Professionals;<sup>46</sup>**
- c. in areas sensitive to bats, and other nocturnal species, lighting should follow Bat Conservation Trust guidance.<sup>47</sup> No external lighting facing adjacent woodland, wetland or watercourses or protected habitats will be permitted;**
- d. cumulative impacts of lighting are considered.**

d.29 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.5 – Dark Skies, Appendix 7.10 – Trees and Hedgerows and Appendix 7.4 – Bats).

<sup>43</sup> Bye-bye dark sky: is light pollution costing us more than just the night-time? | Natural History Museum (nhm.ac.uk)

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/15-conserving-and-enhancing-the-natural-environment#:~:text=\(c\)%20limit%20the%20impact%20of%20light%20pollution%20from%20artificial%20light%20on%20local%20amenity%2C%20intrinsically%20dark%20landscapes%20and%20nature%20conservation%20and%20light%20pollution%20-%20GOV.UK%20\(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/15-conserving-and-enhancing-the-natural-environment#:~:text=(c)%20limit%20the%20impact%20of%20light%20pollution%20from%20artificial%20light%20on%20local%20amenity%2C%20intrinsically%20dark%20landscapes%20and%20nature%20conservation%20and%20light%20pollution%20-%20GOV.UK%20(www.gov.uk))

<sup>45</sup> Dark Night Skies – Cranborne Chase National Landscape

<sup>46</sup> Guidance Note 1 for the reduction of obtrusive light 2021 | Institution of Lighting Professionals (theilp.org.uk)

<sup>47</sup> Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' ILP Guidance Note update released – News – Bat Conservation Trust

## Designation of Local Green Spaces (LGS)

d.30 Green space is clearly important to the community of Warminster who expressed a wide range of reasons for valuing green spaces in the informal stage public consultation undertaken as part of updating the WNP. As set out by the charity CPRE, the health and wellbeing benefits of local green spaces alongside their positive contribution to tackling the climate emergency are clear.<sup>48</sup>

d.31 National policy<sup>49</sup> enables the WNP to designate areas of Local Green Space (LGS) for special protection from development. LGS does not need to be publicly accessible but the site must be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves and should not be an 'extensive tract of land'. The land must be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance.

d.32 The sites identified in Policy EHD7, and shown on Figure H, are proposed for designation as LGS because they are considered to meet the criteria above. A Local Green Space Report (Appendix 7.6) has been prepared to outline how the sites meet the criteria for designation as LGS, and to set out the process that led to their inclusion in the WNP. This includes

information on the two LGS already designated in 2016, one of which (Folly Lane Rehobath) has been reviewed to see if it still continues to meet designation criteria due to landowner objection. At this point of the review process (pre-submission draft) it is considered that evidence demonstrates that the designated LGS does continue to meet the criteria as set out in national policy and for these reasons the Steering Group proposes to retain the designated Folly Lane Rehobath LGS.

d.33 The policy manages development proposals in line with the Green Belt, which places a presumption against development unless the 'very special circumstances' test can be met. Any development proposals which enhance the space for the reasons designated may be supported.

d.34 The policy also identifies Green Amenity Areas, which are spaces that are either considered to have sufficient protection, or do not meet the criteria for LGS designation, but which are still valued by the community. The Lake Pleasure Grounds and Smallbrook Nature Reserve are of clear local importance and are very special to the town's community. Together, these spaces are included as a Green Amenity Area in the policy for protection. Although the Lake Pleasure Grounds and

Smallbrook Nature Reserve do clearly meet many of the LGS criteria, the area could be considered as an 'extensive tract of land' when considered together with directly adjacent LGS candidates. These areas are owned by the Town Council who place great importance on the protection and maintenance of the various green spaces included within.

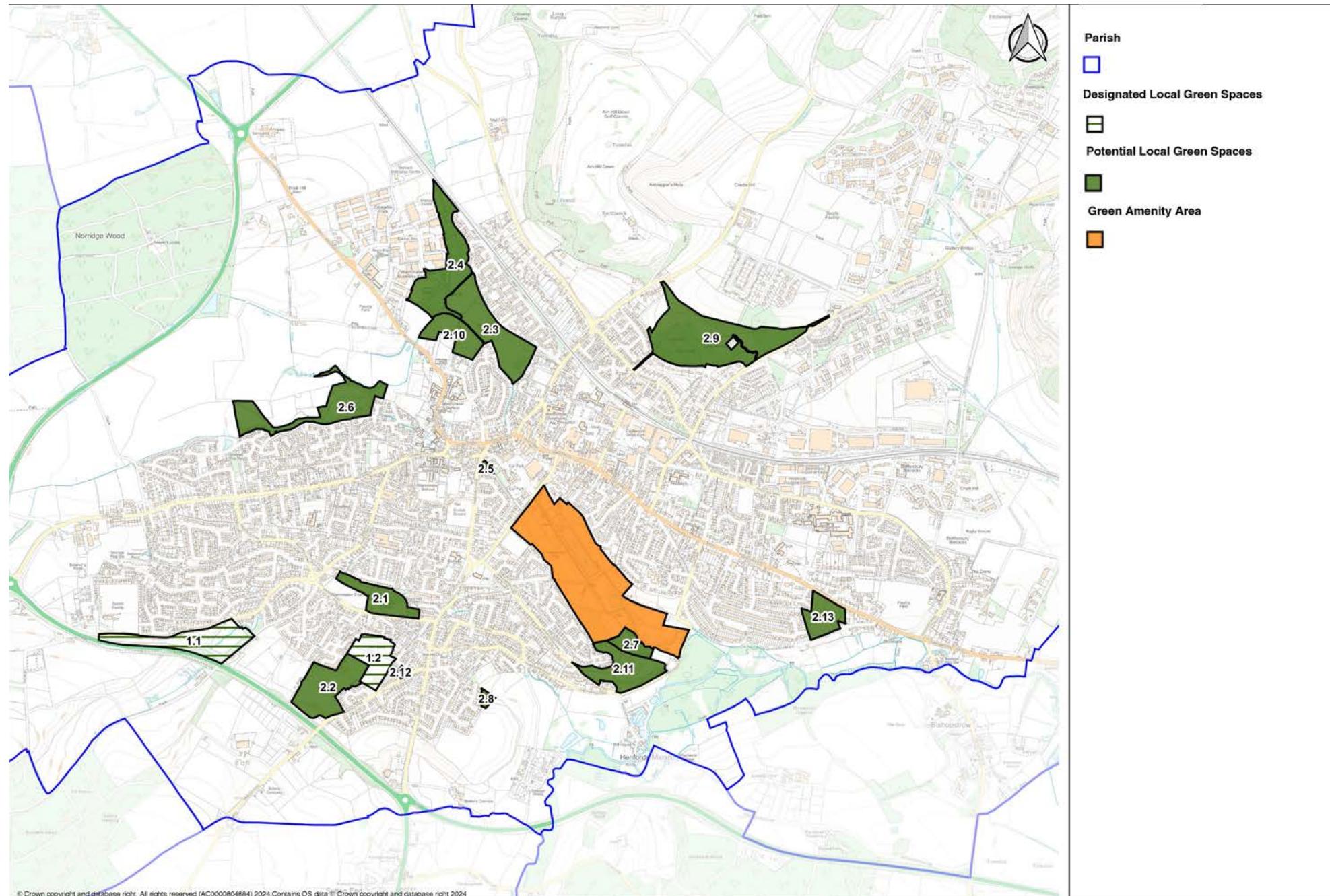
The people of Warminster said:

"We are so lucky to have so many green spaces in Warminster, it is part of what makes this such a lovely town to live in. Please protect as many of them as you can."

<sup>48</sup> Local-Green-Spaces-report.pdf (cpre.org.uk)

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-and-safe-communities#:~:text=105.%20The,for%20Green%20Belts>

Figure H: Local Green Space Designations – Existing and Proposed



## Draft Policy EHD7 – Local Green Space (LGS) and Green Amenity Areas

### Supports Objective O13

1. The green spaces shown on Figure H, and detailed in the Warminster Local Green Space Report, are designated as Local Green Spaces and will be protected from inappropriate development in a manner consistent with the protection of land within the Green Belt.
2. These spaces will be protected from built development except in very special circumstances and where the proposals enhance the existing use of the space, particularly regarding the characteristics that underpin the reasons for designation as Local Green Spaces.

#### Designated Local Green Spaces (2016):

- 1.1 Folly Lane Rehobath
- 1.2 Tynings Allotments

#### Proposed Local Green Spaces Designations (2025/26):

- 2.1 Fore Street Recreation Ground, play area and woodland
- 2.2 Warminster Common

- 2.3 Portway Field
- 2.4 Portway Pond and Wild Area
- 2.5 Sambourne Field
- 2.6 Grovelands
- 2.7 Woods North of Damask Way
- 2.8 Ashley Coombe Green Space
- 2.9 Copheap
- 2.10 Land inside the loop of River Were around St Denys' Church
- 2.11 Damask Way
- 2.12 Bradley Road Community Garden
- 2.13 Warminster Community Orchard/Yeates Field

3. Warminster Town Park: Lake Pleasure Grounds and Smallbrook Nature Reserve are designated as a Green Amenity Areas as it is considered integral to the functioning of the residential areas in which it is located and must be retained. Proposals to improve the amenity and recreational value of these areas of the Town Park and the Nature Reserve are supported in principle.



## Landscape And Views

d.35 The landscape around the town is highly valued by our community and includes areas of national importance, with the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB) and International Dark Skies Reserve to the south of the parish.

d.36 In the north of the parish (roughly north of the railway line) are the elevated chalk grasslands, open skies, dry valleys, rolling chalk hills and wooded escarpments of Salisbury Plain. Higher ground is topped with ancient monuments which are served by a network of public footpaths. The hills allow long views of the town from above as well as distant views of Cranborne Chase National Landscape, Salisbury Plain, the Wylye Valley, Cley Hill and far hills in Somerset. The towers and spires of Warminster's Minster Church, St Lawrence Chapel and Christ Church can be picked out of the views from elevated footpaths and can be glimpsed from parts of the town.

d.37 The landscape to the south of the railway is characterised by the valley of the River Wylye and its tributaries: Cannimore Brook, Norton Brook and the River Were. There is an extensive network of historic water meadows along the floodplains of



these rivers. The southwest boundary of the Neighbourhood Area borders the mixed woodlands of the Longleat Estate which are also part of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape.

d.38 The key characteristics that contribute to the particular sense of place that our landscapes display are described in Landscape Character Assessments.<sup>50</sup>

d.39 As there are many places in the Warminster Parish Area where beautiful views can be enjoyed. 'Key views' have been identified (see this spreadsheet<sup>51</sup> and photographs<sup>52</sup> for detail) and mapped

The people of Warminster said:

"The wider landscapes we sit within are of significant importance on a world platform"

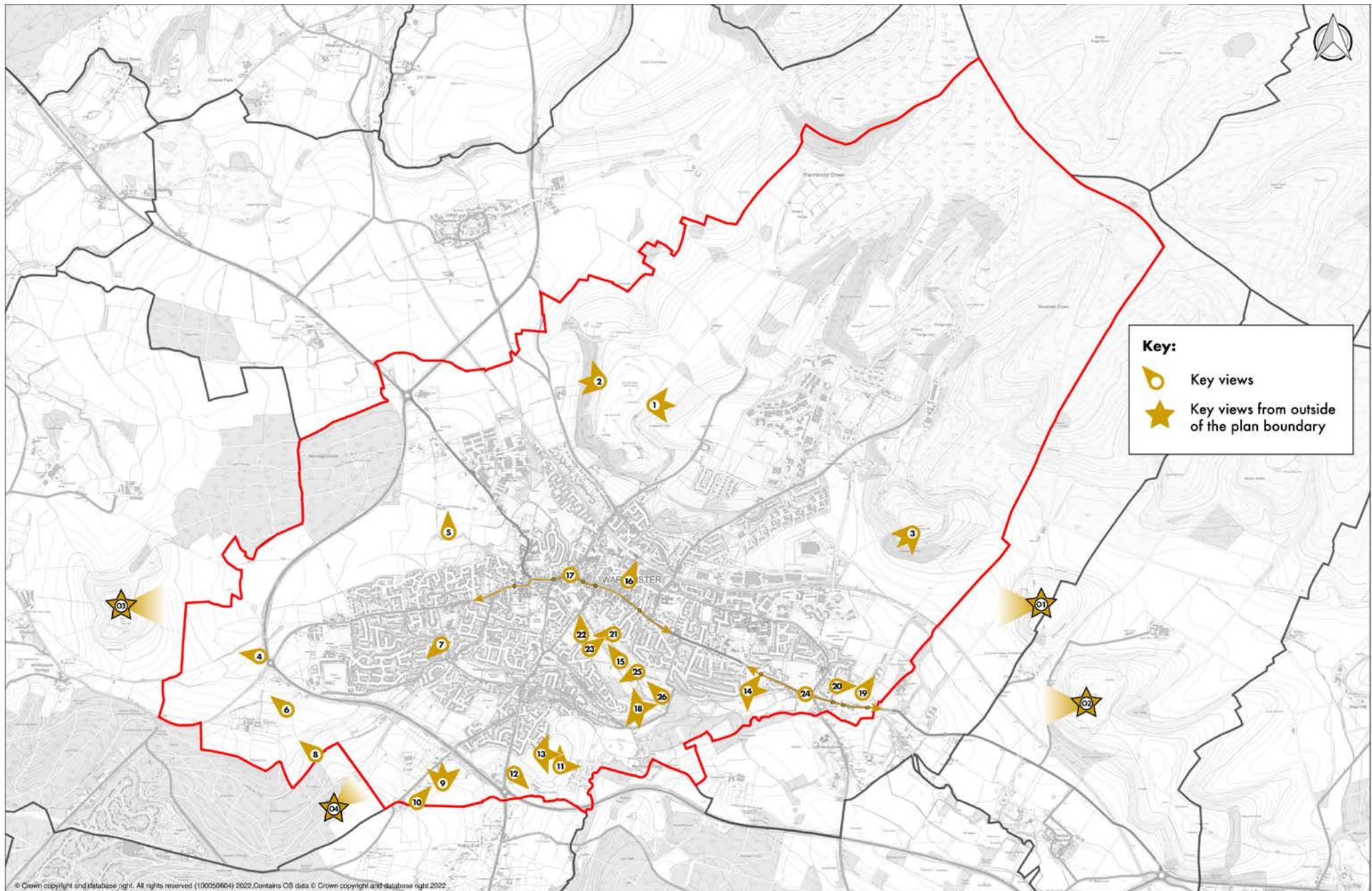
"The view from Copheap over the surrounding area is outstanding. It is a challenging walk/climb, but as it is so close to the town, it is achievable for so many."

<sup>50</sup> Landscape conservation – Wiltshire Council

<sup>51</sup> <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xnX7F5S-jyOSx0g8fG8d1767hTmhA1xvzuFWGrwsPS0/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.warminsterplan.com/valuedviewsphotos>

Figure I: Key Views Map



## Draft Policy EHD8 – Landscape And Views

### Supports Objectives O10, O11, and O13

- 1. The landscapes of Warminster will be conserved and where possible enhanced and restored. Applications must demonstrate how the scale, siting and design of development will protect and enhance the key characteristics, local distinctiveness, tranquillity and settings of Warminster's landscapes, particularly the Wylde valley and the designated landscapes of Salisbury Plain and Cranborne Chase National Landscape and International Dark Skies Reserve. Development will only be supported where it is demonstrated that it does not detract from the visual qualities and key characteristics of the character area as set out in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment.**
- 2. Applications for development which might impact on locally valued views, illustrated in Figure 1, should demonstrate how the development will be seen in relation to that view, what impacts development would have on**

**the view, and include mitigation proposals to remove or reduce any negative impacts. Development will only be supported where it maintains and where appropriate enhances the locally valued views.**

- 3. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

d.40 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.7 – Landscape and Views).



View over town park

## Warminster's Heritage

d.41 Warminster's historic environment is essential to the character of the town and surrounding landscape. Its unique heritage is defined by pre-historic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and medieval archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas.

d.42 NPPF defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.<sup>53</sup> These can be both 'designated heritage assets,' and 'non-designated heritage assets.'

d.43 Designated heritage assets are largely designated nationally, but also include Conservation Areas, which are designated locally.

d.44 Non-designated heritage assets are any physical entity of archaeological and/or historical significance that is not otherwise protected by designation, but which have importance to our heritage at a local level. The WNP can highlight these assets, so they are considered when assessing

planning applications. This is different from listing and does not bring such restrictions.

d.45 Community outreach to identify potential non-designated local heritage asset nominations was undertaken as part of early consultation on the Plan. This was supplemented by Topic Group research. Nominations that were put forward were assessed using Historic England criteria set out in Advice Note 7 Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage.<sup>54</sup> See Appendix 7.8 for a list of locally valued non-designated heritage assets (which includes this map,<sup>55</sup> a link to photographs<sup>56</sup> and detail on each locally significant heritage asset). From time to time additional heritage assets may be identified and the locally Valued Non-designated Heritage Assets list will be updated, in which case the policy will apply to an updated version of the list.

d.46 Retaining, reusing, refurbishing, and retrofitting historic buildings is an important part of meeting the Government's net zero carbon target so this policy therefore also seeks to encourage this. Historic England offers information and advice on many related topics including energy efficiency and



historic buildings, including historic buildings and traditional homes.<sup>57</sup>

d.47 The historic buildings of Warminster are archaeologically complex. Many are superficially 18th or 19th Century but incorporate medieval fabric and have been adapted from earlier uses, such as maltings, wool stores or agricultural barns. Developers should be aware there is a high potential for discovery of the remains of medieval Warminster, particularly in the High Street, Silver Street and Vicarage Street and not only in listed buildings.

The people of Warminster said:

"We have too many old and interesting buildings falling into ruin. I would like to see the town taking steps to enhance Warminster's heritage architecture"

<sup>53</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, 2024 Paragraph 202

<sup>54</sup> Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage | Historic England

<sup>55</sup> <https://shared.xmap.cloud/?map=97d47bd2-c3ea-4b8b-8158-eefef05d999d>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.warminsterplan.com/locally-valued-heritage-assets-list>

<sup>57</sup> Retrofit and Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings | Historic England

## Draft Policy EHD9 – Warminster’s Heritage

### Supports Objective O7, O9, O10

Warminster’s historic environment will be preserved, protected, or enhanced, in accordance with the principles set out below:

1. Planning decisions affecting a heritage asset must be based on a sound understanding of the significance of that asset, and the impact of any proposal upon that significance. Applicants will be required to provide a heritage statement describing the significance of the asset and any contribution made to this significance by its setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance;
2. Proposals and initiatives which conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance and setting of heritage assets, especially those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the town and surrounding area, will be supported. These include:
  - a. the 14 sites of national archaeological importance (which are designated as Scheduled Monuments), areas of higher archaeological potential, and the 219 buildings that are listed as having special architectural or historic interest;
  - b. the two town centre Conservation Areas (CA) and the part of the Bishopstrow

Conservation Area that lies in the Neighbourhood Area;

- c. designated and non-designated heritage assets (including locally valued non-designated heritage as detailed in Appendix 6.9), especially those linked to:
  - prehistoric settlement, burial, landscape delineation and fortification
  - water meadows
  - the woollen industry
  - the malting and brewing industry
  - the engineering industry, particularly bell-founding
  - the glove-making and silk industries
  - the Army and the Salisbury Plain Training Area
  - Longleat
3. Development proposals for contemporary and innovative high-quality design that help to increase resilience to climate change and secure a sustainable future for designated and non-designated heritage assets will be supported and encouraged where they:
  - a. conserve (and where appropriate enhance/better reveal) the character, appearance and historical significance of the building and setting; or
- b. facilitate re-use where heritage assets have fallen into a state of disrepair or dereliction (subject to such a re-use being appropriate to the specific heritage asset); or
- c. prioritise the recovery, refurbishing and retrofitting of historic buildings;
4. Development proposals that would result in harm or loss to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting would require clear and convincing justification in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. Development proposals that affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets shall require a balanced judgement, considering the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Where harm cannot be realistically avoided, mitigation such as records’ surveys or archaeological excavations will be required.
5. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

d.48 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.8 – Heritage).

## Managing Flood Risk

d.49 The main town of Warminster is in a low-lying valley surrounded by hills. The River Wylde (part of the Hampshire Avon River System) runs through the south-eastern part of the parish. Its tributaries, the River Were and Cannimore Brook, bring floodwater through the built town. Surface water runs down the valley slopes into low lying residential streets.

d.50 Both the River Were and Cannimore Brook are partly culverted, reducing the area of their natural flood plains. The flood plain of the River Were has recently been further reduced by development at Grovelands and that of the River Wylde by recent development on former water meadows at Boreham Mead. The River Were has been adversely affected by silting from construction sites which in turn affects the River Wylde SAC.

d.51 This must change; every new build or redevelopment project must not add to this urgent local issue. The careful design of drainage and flood management to mimic natural processes is vital in achieving this aim. Natural flood management<sup>58</sup> uses natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding, for example by restoring bends in rivers, or changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water.



d.52 The policy recommends sequential tests and exceptions tests. The aim of sequential tests is to guide development to areas at lowest risk of flooding. The exceptions tests show how flood risk is managed on a proposed site. There are 3 flood zones as defined by the Environment Agency; Flood Zone 1, 2, and 3. The flood zones are based on the likelihood of an area flooding from rivers or the sea with catchments greater than 3km<sup>2</sup>. Flood Zone 1 areas are least likely to flood and Flood

The people of Warminster said:

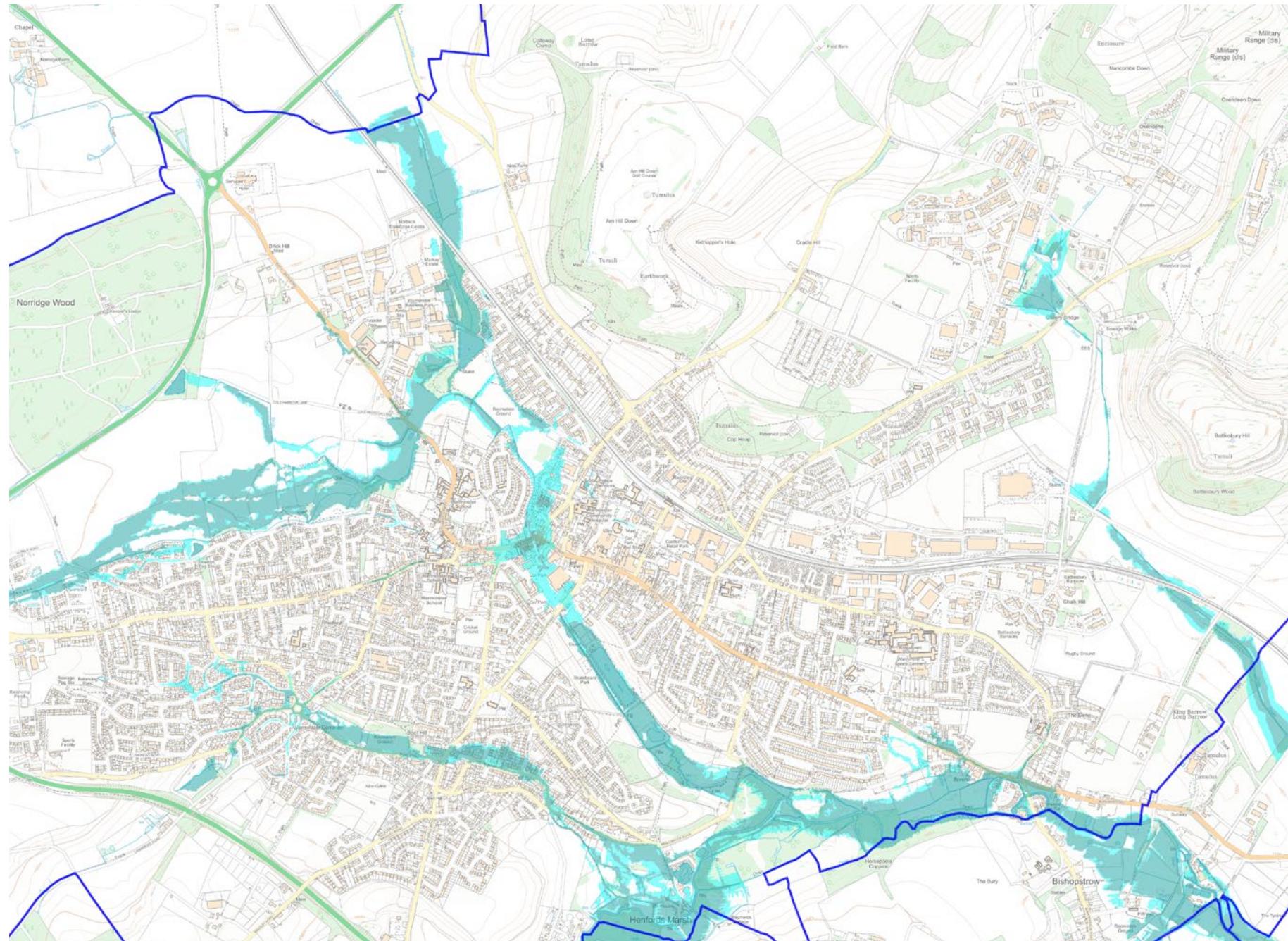
“Building should NOT be allowed in areas prone to flooding”

“Flood risk is a huge issue, highlighted by the flood by the new housing on Boreham road”

<sup>58</sup> Natural flood management programme – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>59</sup> <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

Figure J: Flood Zones



**Flood Zones**  
FZ2  
FZ3  
**Parish**

## Draft Policy EHD10 – Managing Flood Risk

### Supports Objectives O10, O11, O12, and O13

1. Development in areas at risk of flooding will not be supported. Development should be directed away from the areas at highest risk within flood zones 2 & 3 and from areas susceptible to flood risk sources. Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The sequential test, and if necessary, the exceptions test, will be applied, in accordance with national planning policy. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required for all development in flood zones 2 and 3.
2. Natural flood management works to conserve and enhance the ecological flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments, will be supported. Where relevant, proposals that result in de-culverting areas of the River Were and Cannimore Brook to promote natural drainage patterns will be supported. Any

proposals in areas of high flooding risk must demonstrate a drainage strategy which incorporates sustainable, natural flood management solutions which use the most up to date climate change modelling and address the cumulative effects of development in the Neighbourhood Area.

3. Development proposals should incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS), with run-off rates no greater than greenfield sites. The hierarchy of discharge option preference is:

- rainwater re-use (rainwater harvesting/greywater recycling);
- an adequate soakaway or other infiltration system;
- hybrid solution of infiltration and discharging to a surface water body;
- to a surface water body (e.g., an ordinary watercourse);
- to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or other drainage system;
- to a combined sewer.

4. All proposals will be required to assess the impact of surface, ground, and flood water on

the River Wylde Special Area of Conservation and to conform with the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

5. Development proposals should be designed, where possible, to contribute towards the wider Green and Blue Infrastructure network. Existing field boundaries, hedgerows, ponds, natural courses of rivers, streams and ditches will be retained and integrated. Planting of new trees and hedgerows and the creation of wetland as flood mitigation will be supported.

d.53 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.9. Managing Flood Risk).

## Trees and Hedgerows

d.54 Warminster was once in the ancient Forest of Selwood. It still has a distinctive ‘treescape’ with just under 20% tree canopy cover scattered across the built town on average; the lowest levels are at 15.5% in Broadway Ward.<sup>60</sup> Tree canopy cover is the layer of leaves, branches and tree stems that cover the ground when viewed from above. The area of canopy cover can be used as a measure of the benefits of ‘ecosystem services’ provided by trees.

d.55 The WNP aims to protect the existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows and see an increase in tree and hedgerow planting. Developments should increase and maintain the town’s existing tree cover to at least 20% of the land area in each ward, particularly in Broadway Ward, in line with evidence and recommendations from the Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee Network.<sup>61</sup> Increasing tree cover is an important part of accelerating the drawdown of carbon from the atmosphere and contributing to ‘net zero’ goal that the UK is committed to under the 2015 Paris Climate Accord (The Paris

<sup>60</sup> GB Ward Canopy Cover WebMap (arcgis.com)

<sup>61</sup> How to protect and manage the urban forest – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

<sup>62</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)

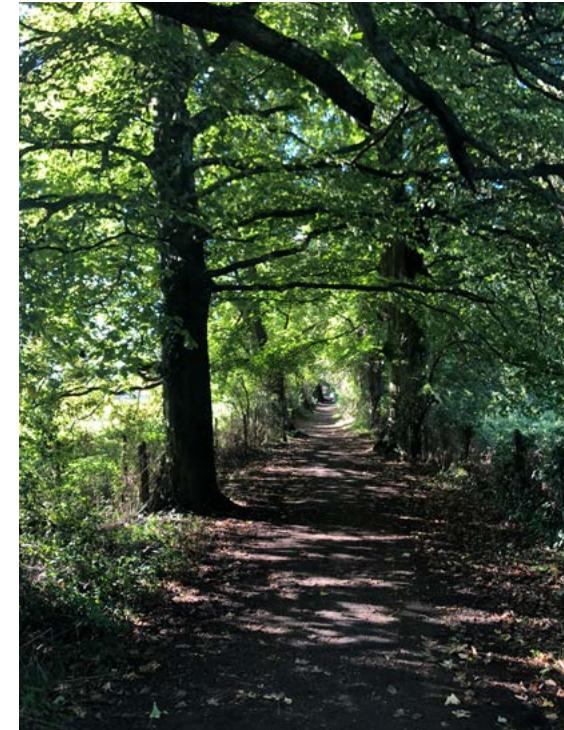
<sup>63</sup> Ancient Woodland – British Habitats – Woodland Trust

<sup>64</sup> <https://shared.xmap.cloud/?map=e4b3515f-e98f-4a1f-b5d1-1c207ab701b0>

<sup>65</sup> Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Agreement) and this is reinforced by the NPPF which sets out an expectation that new streets should be ‘tree-lined’ (para 136).<sup>62</sup>

d.56 Ancient woodlands are our richest land-based habitat for wildlife. According to the Woodland Trust,<sup>63</sup> they are home to more threatened species than any other habitat. In Warminster there are significant areas of ancient woodland, Norridge Wood in the west and Dirtley Wood in the northwest. There is also an ancient tree and a number of veteran and notable trees (mature trees which stand out in the local environment). These trees have been mapped as part of the work to update this Plan. The map is very detailed and best viewed via this link.<sup>64</sup> Government has issued specific planning guidance on ancient and veteran trees.<sup>65</sup>



The people of Warminster said:

“We need more trees, and more green spaces to help our declining wildlife. Trees have so many benefits including mitigation of flood risks and soil health, as well as helping to keep areas cool as temperatures increase”

## Draft Policy EHD11 – Trees And Hedgerows

### Supports objectives O9 to O13

#### Protection of Ancient and Veteran Trees

1. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees identified in Appendix 7.10 will not be permitted unless wholly exceptional reasons exist to justify any loss or deterioration and a suitable compensatory strategy has been proposed. Any ancient or veteran trees must be retained within a development site, including a root protection area and appropriate buffer zone in line with 'standing advice'<sup>66</sup> from Natural England.

#### 2. Other Existing Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

Proposals for new development will be expected to retain existing trees, particularly those of good arboricultural and biodiversity value or those identified as notable trees in Appendix 7.10. Protection before

and after development should be in accordance with British Standard BS5837.<sup>67</sup> Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees on site, the number and type of replacement trees should be informed by the quality and size of the lost trees as set out by the Tree Replacement Standard (see EHD Topic Papers – Trees and Hedgerows). To secure continuity of tree cover, trees of mixed ages should be retained on site wherever possible and new planting should be of mixed age.

#### 3. New Trees

New tree planting, in development proposals and in the built and natural environments of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, will be supported to maintain and increase the overall tree canopy cover of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, and to provide gateway and landmark trees that contribute to local distinctiveness and biodiversity net gain. This should be informed by relevant ecological and arboricultural assessment. Tree planting will be

of native or non-native climate resistant species of tree and shrub appropriate to the greensand and chalk soils of the parish. Trees should be planted in line with BS8545.<sup>68</sup> A list of recommended tree and hedgerow species is in the EHD Topic Papers – Trees and Hedgerows (Appendix 6.5) and should be consulted.

#### 4. Tree Canopy Cover

Developments that contribute to maintaining and increasing the town's existing tree cover to at least 20% of the land area in each ward, particularly in Broadway Ward, will be supported. This will principally be achieved through retention and planting of trees, but where it can be demonstrated that this is impractical, the use of other green infrastructure (e.g. green roofs, green walls, water features and wetland areas) can be used to deliver equivalent benefit. On residential development sites, some of this tree canopy cover should be met through new trees on streets as well as in gardens.

d.57 More detail on this subject is in the Environment, Heritage and Design Topic Papers (Appendix 7.10 – Trees and Hedgerows).

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions>

<sup>67</sup> BS 5837:2012 | 30 Apr 2012 | BSI Knowledge (bsigroup.com)

<sup>68</sup> BS 8545:2014 | 28 Feb 2014 | BSI Knowledge (bsigroup.com)

# e. Getting Around and Transport

## Introduction

e.1 Warminster is bypassed by the A36, with five main routes into the town centre:

1. Westbury Road
2. Bath Road – Church Street
3. Victoria Road – West Street – Vicarage Street
4. Deverill Road – Weymouth Street
5. Boreham Road

e.2 All five routes have a 7.5t HGV restriction, however three have the condition 'unless for access' which allows some HGV traffic into town to service businesses, with the remainder of 'through traffic' using the bypass.

e.3 The B3414 is the original east/west route through Warminster (Bath Road through to Boreham Road), whilst Warminster Train Station is in the centre of the town, enabling regional and national connections.

e.4 Warminster has many old narrow streets, with similarly narrow pavements, which do not lend themselves to the volume of modern traffic. The retail topography includes several 'large site' stores and industry in the heart of the town, which while a great draw for



residents, employees, and visitors, has a knock-on effect of increased HGV and commercial traffic travelling into the heart of the town. This is in contrast to other locations where 'large store retail parks' are located on the edges of town, which leads to town centres environments suffering. We need to understand and balance the positive impact this has on the town centre retail environment against the negative impact of congestion and noise/air pollution necessary to support those stores.

e.5 From the informal stage public consultation responses, it is clear there is desire to reduce car journeys in favour of more active travel. Key themes have been identified that are either preventing

or dissuading residents from walking or cycling around the town:

- Speed of traffic on roads with limited provision for pedestrians or cyclists;
- Potholes and the general poor state of roads for cyclists;
- On-road parking leading to poor visibility or lack of space for vehicles to pass safely;
- A lack of safe and protected bicycle parking.

e.6 In addition, residents cited several key roads where on-street parking created 'pinch-points' and preventing the free flow of traffic leading to congestion, frustration, and drivers mounting pavements to pass.

The people of Warminster said:

"Could do with car share schemes, shared taxi bus and revitalising bus service, linking into local attractions and areas of scenic beauty. Too much is car dependent locally. It is not possible to take advantage of evening cultural offer in Frome without a car, for example. This needs to change!"

"Nowhere is easy to cycle to as there are no dedicated bike paths, no bike parking area. I cycle most of the time and it is really hard and unsafe"

## Sustainable And Active Travel

e.7 Active travel is a term used in planning that simply means making journeys in physically active ways – like walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling or scootering. Enabling more short trips in active ways is good for the environment, for health and social well-being,<sup>69</sup> and for the economy.<sup>70</sup> For that reason, sustainable transport is a key aim of national planning policy.<sup>71</sup> For longer distances, or for those who struggle to walk or cycle, then bus services should provide an attractive proposition.

e.8 Informal consultation with the community of Warminster to date, has recorded frequent mention of traffic problems. There is an expectation these will be made worse by new development and a hope that traffic issues both in the centre of the town and periphery could be addressed going forward. The Covid 19 pandemic and lockdown drove people to walk and cycle more. There is a general recognition that there are no easy solutions to these problems due to the historic nature of the road layout in the town, and as highlighted in the WDG, the design of

roads and streets is weighted heavily in favour of travel by car. However, people in the local community have highlighted that there is an extensive footpath network<sup>72</sup> which makes the town walkable for those that are able, and there are many who expressed a wish for an improved cycle network.

e.9 A key part of the local cycle network is the National Cycle Network (NCN 24)<sup>73</sup> route from Frome to Eastleigh via Warminster and Salisbury. NCN 24 starts in Bath and travels through Frome before arriving in Wiltshire to the west of Warminster. The short section in Warminster is very narrow. This is identified as a possible priority for improvement by Wiltshire Council.<sup>74</sup> Wiltshire Council is in the process of developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to identify preferred walking and cycling routes that have the potential to achieve a change in levels of cycling and the attractiveness of walking in the town. These routes do not necessarily offer the most attractive walking and cycling facilities currently. The purpose of the LCWIP is to identify the



necessary infrastructure improvements to make these routes the best available, taking into account projected future development in the town.

e.10 The Town Council has engaged in the production of the LCWIP and feedback into the prioritisation of routes that will form an overall network to provide health benefits for the community and for the surrounding natural environment.

The people of Warminster said:

“I spent a year here not realising how many footpaths there were or how many places were accessible by walking. Much greater awareness is needed.”

“Warminster is an old town with numerous footpaths, it is only the ‘new build’ estates that seem to lack them – a major flaw.”

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.healthystreets.com/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://kings-foundation.org/journal/walkability-report>

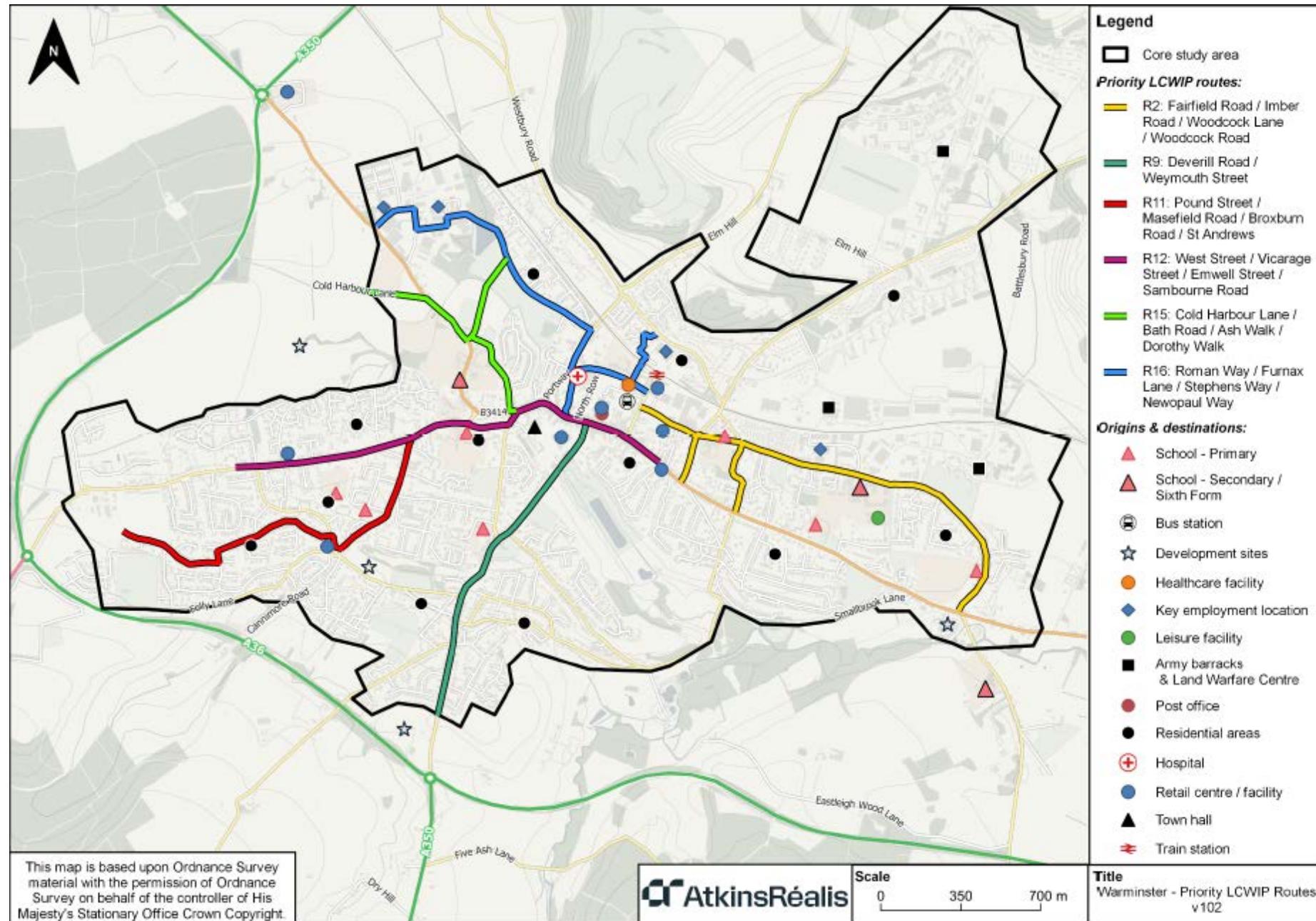
<sup>71</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>72</sup> These can be viewed via a Wiltshire Council online map: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/cae051befa5649fbb318c836afe901c1/page/Page/>

<sup>73</sup> Route 24 – Sustrans.org.uk

<sup>74</sup> Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) – Wiltshire Council

Figure K: LCWIP Priority Improvement Routes



e.11 The LCWIP is linked our aspiration for new development to deliver places which are well connected to the town centre or local facilities such as small shops. As part of this is the importance of planning new homes within 400 metres walking distance (= 5 minutes) of bus stops and within 800 metres (= 10 minutes) of small shops or community buildings.<sup>75</sup>

e.12 The Warminster Town Centre Masterplan<sup>76</sup> also identifies the importance of making it easier to walk, cycle or get public transport to and across the town centre. Potential improvements are shown on Figure L and are summarised as:

- Strategic **junction improvements** around the town centre (i.e. Portway / Copheap junction – funded by WWUE, Imber Road / Woodcock Road junction) to support alternative east-west car routes;
- **Improvements to existing footpaths** and potential for new footpaths to create a coherent east-west pedestrian route and possible cycle route. This may be supported by wayfinding strategies and school travel plans and pupil surveys to identify the most urgently needed route connections;

- Improvements to existing routes and footpaths to create a more coherent and accessible **cycle network** to the town centre, secondary schools and employment sites;
- Trial a new micro **mobility hub** at the railway station to support on-going travel for railway users. This would provide convenient and affordable alternative modes of transport to also serve the nearby community and health uses.

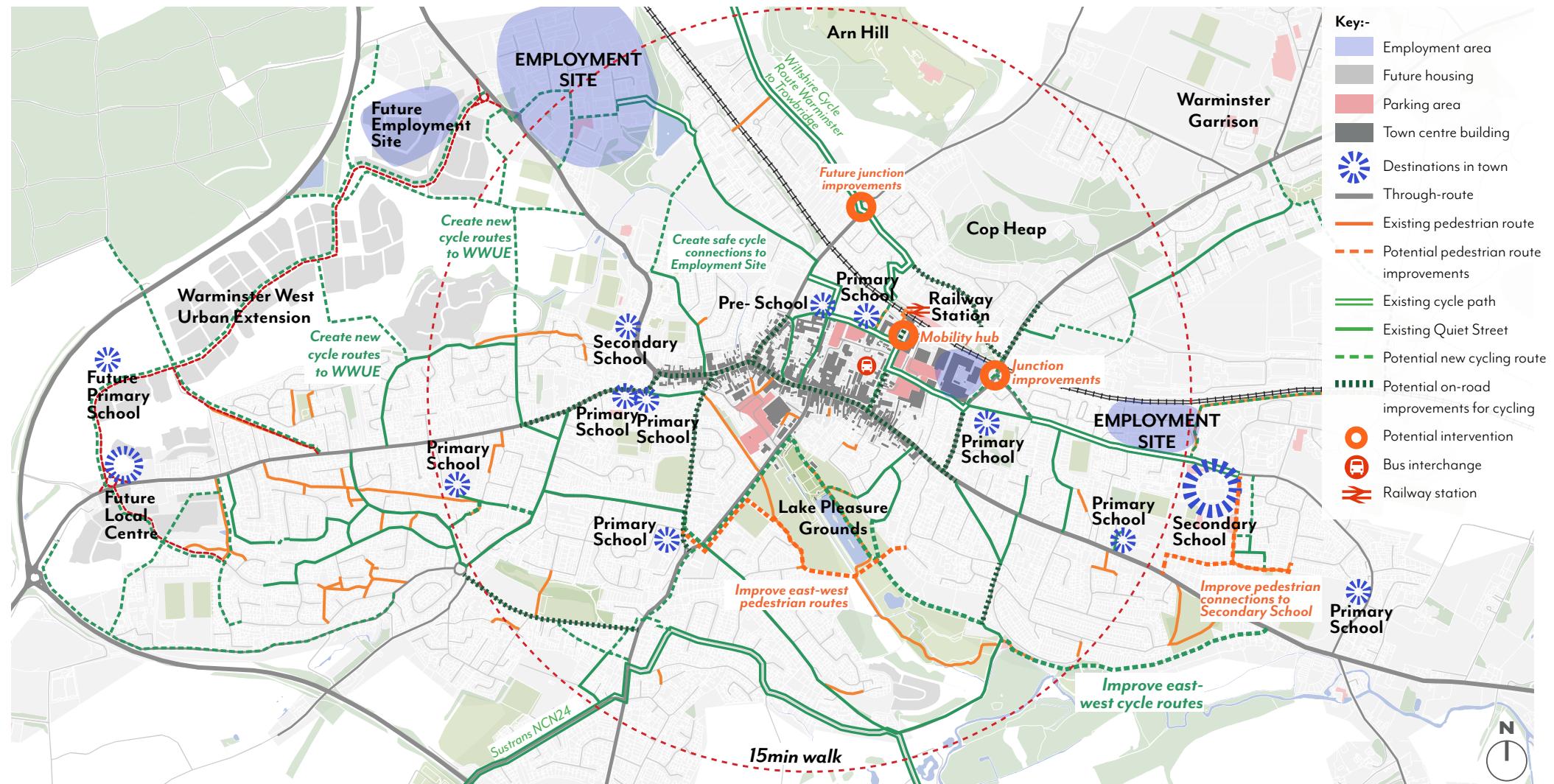
See Appendix 8 for more detail



<sup>75</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1165492/active-travel-england-standing-advice-note-active-travel-and-sustainable-development.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1165492/active-travel-england-standing-advice-note-active-travel-and-sustainable-development.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Annex 2 to this Neighbourhood Plan <https://www.warminsterplan.com/draftwnp-r14-consult>

Figure L: Routes, Destinations and Potential Improvements from the Town Centre Masterplan



## Draft Policy GA1 – Sustainable And Active Travel

### Supports Objectives O14, O15, and O16

1. Developments will set appropriate targets for modal shift towards more cycling and walking in a travel plan, informed by the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and demonstrate through ongoing monitoring whether these targets are being met. Transport assessments or site travel plans will demonstrate a reduction in the need to drive into and within the town centre, particularly for larger vehicles, and will encourage modal shift to more sustainable transport modes for this destination.
2. Where viable, and relevant to the development, financial contributions will be sought towards the improvement of the cycling and walking network as identified in the Town Centre Masterplan, Appendix 8 and the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.
3. Development that contributes to enabling people to get about by more sustainable means such as through the provision of mobility

hubs, access to bus stops or for parking for car club vehicles in new housing, employment and retail developments and electric cycle and scooter hire / parking, will be supported. As a guide, all buildings within major development proposals should be located within a maximum of 400m walking distance from an existing bus stop, or new bus stop (where this is to be provided as part of the development proposal).

4. Transport implications of development within the Warminster West Urban Extension, must be addressed as part of any relevant planning application. Where relevant this includes the use of transport assessments, transport, and travel plans. Development of this area must promote sustainable transport choices and enable people to easily and naturally choose to walk, cycle and / or use public transport for journeys across the entirety of the Plan area.
5. Where a Design and Access Statement is required as part of a planning application, there must be a clear demonstration of how the proposal has responded to the

design principles and guidance for Movement and Connectivity as detailed in the Warminster Design Guidance.

6. Wherever possible, sustainable transport schemes should align with and enhance Warminster's Blue and Green Infrastructure networks.
7. Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

## Parking

e.13 As set out in the WDG and highlighted in feedback from the informal stage public consultation, the tight street widths in some parts of the town, the result of existing historic building form, together with the presence of on-street parking, restricts pedestrian movement. The on-street parking in some locations such as George Street and Silver Street causes residents to move cars between paid parking (main car parks) during the day and on-street parking overnight thus creating unnecessary vehicle movements, which are bad for both safety and the environment. The lack of pull-in short stay parking for shops along George Street and Silver Street also creates a problem, particularly as this area houses a number of takeaway restaurants and cafes.

e.14 The NPPF<sup>77</sup> sets out that local authorities may decide whether there is a need for parking standards, for both residential and non-residential development, which Wiltshire Council has done through its Car Parking Strategy<sup>78</sup> and emerging Wiltshire-wide Active Travel parking standards<sup>79</sup> which sets out specific standards for cycle parking including the need for a minimum of 4 covered

cycle spaces for all major non-residential developments. While it is not for the WNP to aim to amend Wiltshire Council's basic parking standards, the specific circumstances underpin Draft Policy GA2.

### Draft Policy GA2 – Parking

#### Supports Objective O17

- As set out in the Warminster Design Guide and the Town Centre Masterplan, parking proposals which are designed, and would be managed in a way, to reduce the negative impact of cars on the street and on footways will be supported.**
- Development proposals that result in the loss of, or which have an adverse effect on, car parking provision will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the loss of parking will not have an adverse impact on existing parking issues in the nearby area, or adequate and convenient car parking of equivalent or better standard will be provided in the nearby area.**
- Development proposals must, wherever possible, provide adequate (proportionate to the scale of development) car parking on-site and not rely on on-street parking. All new development must comply with Wiltshire Council car parking standards as a minimum. Bicycle parking must also be incorporated to meet Wiltshire Council Active Travel Parking Standards and, where appropriate, contribute to off-site bicycle parking provision.**
- Development proposals that would lead to increased parking on existing streets where the streets are narrow, already heavily trafficked, have identified parking issues and where such on-street parking would impact on the safety of road users or impact adversely on the character of the area, will not be supported.**

The people of Warminster said:

“West Street – parking both sides of road dangerous for cyclists”.

“There are no facilities for bicycle parking on the Western edge of the town centre – i.e. Silver Street. One of the local cafes recently received a fantastic write-up in a national cycling magazine, yet it was compelled to mention that there was no nearby facility for securing bicycles.”

<sup>77</sup> NPPF Paragraph 113 makes clear that maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF\\_December\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF_December_2023.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> Car Parking Strategy ([wiltshire.gov.uk](http://wiltshire.gov.uk))

<sup>79</sup> As set out in paragraph 111 of the NPPF and realised through the Wiltshire Active\_travel\_parking\_standards\_Consultation\_Draft.pdf ([wiltshire.gov.uk](http://wiltshire.gov.uk))

## Electric Vehicle Charging

e.15 Warminster has minimal Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging infrastructure: the two Wiltshire Council provided public charging points (CP) are offline and unreparable (and have been since 2021) with no confirmed date for replacement. There is currently one CP in Morrisons' car park and recently installed CPs in Three Horseshoes Walk car park and near MacDonald's, Fairfield Road.

e.16 This lack of infrastructure and investment is reflected in 95% of survey respondents owning a standard petrol or diesel car, with only 25% considering an EV as their next vehicle. It also contributes to a degradation in Air Quality from ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) congestion and negates Warminster as a retail or social destination where you can contribute to the town's economy whilst charging your vehicle.

e.17 EV infrastructure in new development will need to be implemented in accordance with relevant national and local guidance. In support of Part S of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010, the Government has published 'Infrastructure for the Charging of Electric Vehicles – Approved Document S (2021 Edition)'.<sup>80</sup> In March 2022, the Government published 'Taking

charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy'.<sup>81</sup> This strategy sets out the Government's vision and action plan for the rollout of EV charging infrastructure in the UK and includes the requirement for each local transport authority to develop a local EV infrastructure strategy.

e.18 The WLP has been updated to reflect the requirement for EV infrastructure in new developments, in particular through policies on Transport and Development (Policy 61) and Sustainable Transport (Policy 70). The WNP supports this and can add local detail in policy by indicating potential suitable locations for public charging points.



### Draft Policy GA3 – Electric Vehicle Charging

#### Supports Objectives O14 and O17

- 1. In line with relevant national and local guidance, electric vehicle infrastructure in new development will be required and is supported by Warminster Town Council.**
- 2. To increase the attractiveness and use of low emission vehicles, additional infrastructure for electric vehicle charging is encouraged at public parking locations where space allows, particularly at the following destinations and locations:**
  - a. Central Car Park**
  - b. Western Car Park**

<sup>80</sup> Approved Document S: Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles (publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>81</sup> CBP-7480.pdf (parliament.uk)

## Highway Impact and Safety

e.19 Traffic levels in the town are a point of concern for many in the community. There are some common 'hot spots' and themes that emerged from the informal stage public consultation:

1. Victoria Road – West Street – Vicarage Street (which is likely to see higher levels of traffic as a key route into town from the WWUE);
2. Bath Road – Church Street (which is likely to see higher levels of traffic as a key route into town from the WWUE);
3. Market Place and High Street through the heart of the town centre;
4. On-road parking;
5. HGV and commercial traffic through the centre of the town.

e.20 The NPPF makes clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. The NPPF also requires that all developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment.

### Draft Policy GA4 – Highway Impact and Safety

#### Supports Objectives O15, and O16

1. **The transport implications of development must be addressed as part of any relevant planning application. Where relevant, this includes the use of transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans. All developments affecting the transport network will be required to:**
  - a. **provide effective and safe access and egress to the existing highway network;**
  - b. **include appropriate measures to avoid, mitigate and manage any significant impact on highway capacity, congestion or on highway safety, including any contribution to cumulative impacts including in identified 'hotspots';**
  - c. **facilitate the safe use of the network, including suitable crossing points, footways and dedicated provision for cyclists where possible as identified in the LCWIP, the Town Centre Masterplan and Appendix 7;**
  - d. **suitably accommodate the delivery of goods and supplies,**
2. **Development proposals must also demonstrate compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as per Draft Policy EHD1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.**

**access for maintenance and refuse collection where necessary; and**

- e. **minimise any adverse impact on communities and the environment, including noise and air quality.**

The people of Warminster said:

"TRAFFIC!!! Narrow old roads, far too many people, and more housing going up all the time!"

# 6. Delivering the Plan

## 6.1 This section sets out what actions are required to turn the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan into reality on the ground.

6.2 The Town Council need the help of public and private partners to create a sustainable community and deliver the policies set out in the WNP. The Town Council will work with a number of partners, including Wiltshire Council, statutory bodies, local groups and private developers to implement the Plan.

6.3 New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure, facilities and services to successfully incorporate new development sustainably into the surrounding area to benefit existing, new and future residents. As provided for within national planning policy, appropriate financial contributions will be obtained from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure.

6.4 The Town Council is committed to bringing greater locally informed influence over planning decisions and these will be the key organisations in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will build upon the excellent track record in

engaging in planning decisions (reactively through being consulted and proactively through promoting the policies and proposals of this Plan), and by delivering projects and infrastructure for the local community.

## Developer Contributions and Funding

6.5 There will be many instances where planning obligations will be used and developers will be required to pay for the necessary infrastructure. Planning obligations, often called Section 106 (S106) agreements, are legally binding agreements between a developer and a local planning authority. They are used to make a proposed development acceptable in planning terms by addressing its impacts on the local area. S106 monies need to meet relevant planning tests and be applied to the obligations set out in the S106 agreements.

6.6 Planning obligations are different from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is a separate levy that local authorities can charge on new development to help fund a wider range of infrastructure.

6.7 In England, communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan and secure the



consent of local people in a referendum, which is then legally “Made”, benefit from 25% of the CIL revenues arising from development that takes place in their area. Warminster has been benefitting from this extra income to achieve local objectives since the first Plan.

6.8 Major and strategic infrastructure will be delivered by Wiltshire Council paid for from the county portion (75%) of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds and other funding sources.

## Community Projects

6.9 This update to the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan is also an opportunity to set out how developer contributions collected through CIL will be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development.

6.10 There are a series of environmental and infrastructure improvement projects which complement the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan. These are detailed in Appendix 3.

6.11 The Town Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids aimed at achieving Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include the Lottery and UK Government programmes. Involvement of the existing network of established local community groups will be used where appropriate and residents have a vital role in holding all those involved in decision making to account to reflect the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Monitoring and Review

6.12 After the Plan is made, the Town Council will use the updated Neighbourhood Plan to structure its response to planning application consultations in its role as statutory consultee. The Town Council will monitor the use of the Plan by both the Town Council and Wiltshire Council in terms of planning applications and environmental projects.

6.13 Whilst it is not a legislative requirement to review a Neighbourhood Plan, it is good practice to do so periodically. Future reviews will enable the Town Council to keep the Plan up to date in general terms, to respond to any changes in national policy and to ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan.



## **Regulation 14 Consultation Schedule for Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2, 2026-38**

### **Time Line**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January - Full Council meets and endorses Draft Neighbourhood Plan and Regulation 14 Consultation Schedule

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Consultation starts

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – Consultation ends

### **Prior to Regulation 14 consultation period.**

Advance publicity – Press releases and social media posts - consultation is starting soon

Preparation of communication to be sent to statutory consultees.

Preparation of other communications

### **During Regulation 14 consultation period.**

#### **1. Coverage in the Warminster Journal**

Copy to be submitted for the following issues – including Adverts and Articles

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March

#### **2. Coverage in other papers – Press releases**

Wiltshire Times

Valley News

#### **3. Social Media Campaign**

Minimum one post a week on Warminster Town Council's Facebook and Instagram Account for 8 weeks in total.

w/c 26<sup>th</sup> January

w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> February

w/c 9<sup>th</sup> February

w/c 16<sup>th</sup> February

w/c 23<sup>rd</sup> February

w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> March

w/c 9<sup>th</sup> March

w/c 16<sup>th</sup> March

Key posts pinned to top of the page

Social Media posts co-ordinated topics with press releases and Warminster Journal

Emphasis on key topics

## **Videos**

Interviews with Councillors/Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group about the Neighbourhood Plan process to be filmed and uploaded on the Neighbourhood Plan Website and social media.

### **4. Radio Interviews**

Interviews to be offered to:

Warminster Community Radio and BBC Radio Wiltshire – as requested

Suggested topics to include: Local Green Space, Site Allocation, Town Centre.

### **5. Display Boards**

Display of key information on display boards at the Civic Centre - Monday 26th January to Monday 23rd March.

### **6. Posters**

To be distributed to shops and other interested parties encouraging people to take part and giving details of how to submit feedback, including website and QR code.

Including Warminster Town Council Notice and Information Boards

### **7. Websites – use of Warminster Town Council Website – including ‘pop ups’**

<https://www.warminsterplan.com/>

<https://warminster-tc.gov.uk/>

<https://www.warminsterplan.com/> to contain all supporting documents.

### **8. Flyers**

To be distributed to members of the public - encouraging people to take part and giving details of how to submit feedback, including website and QR code.

w/c 26th January

w/c 2nd February

w/c 9th February

w/c 16th February

w/c 23rd February

w/c 2nd March

w/c 9th March

w/c 16th March

### **Locations**

**1 hour slots at:**

Morrisons x 2  
Three Horse Shoe Walk  
Library  
Waitrose  
Town Centre opposite – town pets  
Tesco's  
George/Silver Street  
others as volunteers allow.

#### **9. Summary Leaflets – Distribution Points**

Warminster Civic Centre  
Warminster Library  
Warminster Sports Centre  
The Athenaeum  
Football Club  
Rugby Club  
Shops, businesses and meeting points to be asked to take copies.

#### **10. Emails to be sent to:**

People signed up to Neighbourhood Plan updates  
People signed up to Warminster Town Council updates  
People signed up to Warminster Business updates  
Targeted community groups with public email addresses e.g. local Schools, Charities, sports clubs, societies etc with request it is forwarded to their mailing lists.

#### **11. In person events at Warminster Civic Centre**

Launch Event: Sat 31<sup>st</sup> January - 2 hours, 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Halfway Event: Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February, 5pm to 7pm

Any last questions? Event: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 11am – 2 pm.

#### **12. TV Interviews**

Interviews to be offered to BBC, ITV and That's TV

#### **13. Feedback and Survey Forms**

To be available at the Civic Centre and online

#### **14. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, and other consultation and publicity may be undertaken during the Regulation 14 period.**

# Updating the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan

have  
your say  
by 23<sup>rd</sup>  
March

**The first formal consultation on the whole DRAFT updated plan is LIVE!**  
**Take action today: read the plan, have your say**

## WHO WRITES IT?

**Representatives of the town community, supported by planning professionals. BUT the final Plan content will be shaped by the collective community feedback.**

## WHAT IS FOR?

**It takes the big picture rules for development set at a national and Wiltshire level, and adds local and specific detail.**

## WHY UPDATE IT?

**Without an updated plan in place, development may take place speculatively and may fail to consider the needs of our town's communities.**

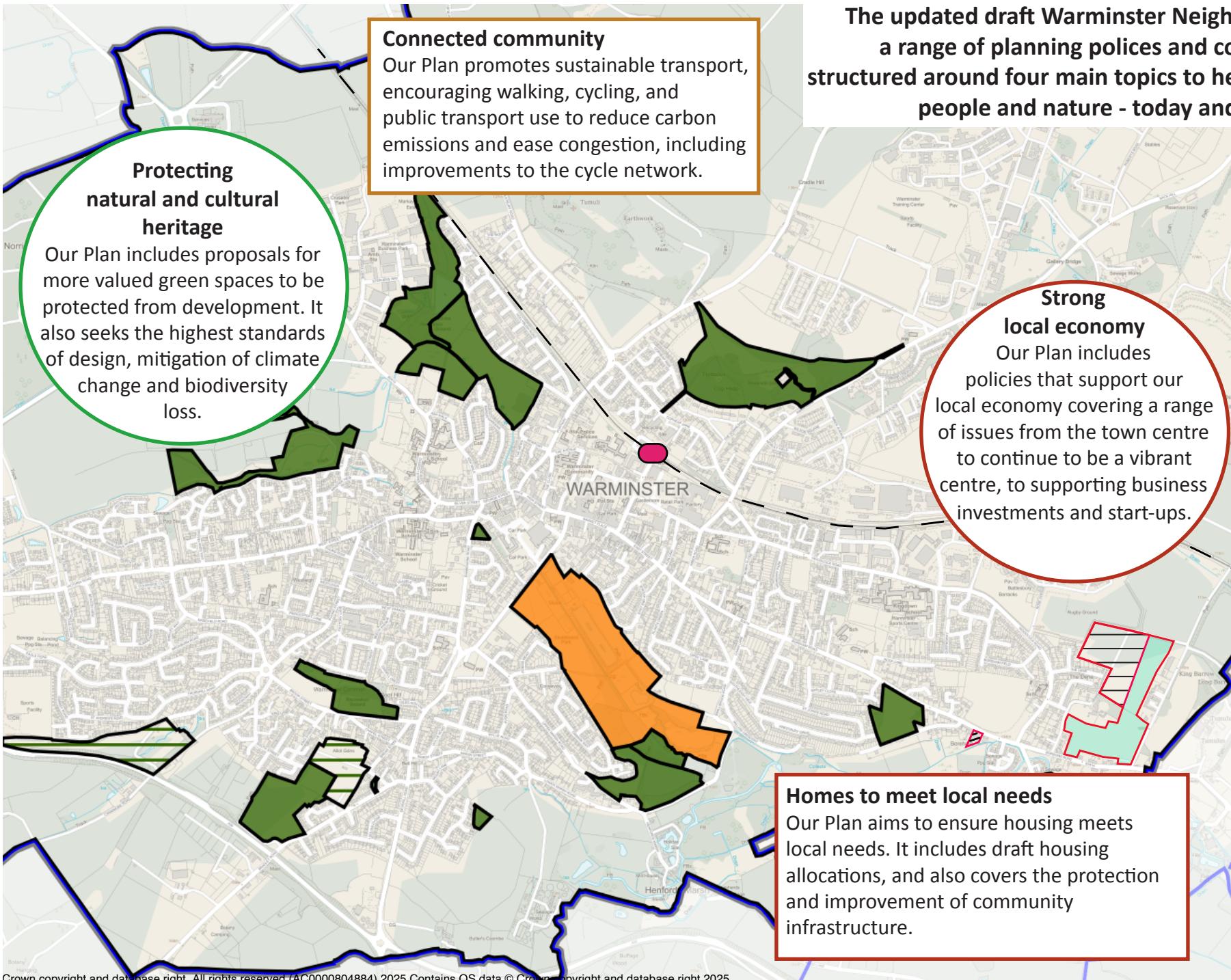
## DOES IT HAVE POWER?

**It can be powerful in setting the local rules for how development looks and where exactly it goes. It can't stop or undermine needed housing delivery.**

## WHAT'S ITS GOAL?

**To give our community the strongest possible role in shaping development that is appropriate for the area and reflects the community's shared vision and priorities (like protecting green spaces or ensuring good design).**





# Tell us what matters to you.

Consultation  
open  
26<sup>th</sup> Jan -  
23<sup>rd</sup> March

**1. Read the draft plan:** Download the Pre-Submission Draft Warminster Neighbourhood Plan. Hard Copies will also be available at the Civic Centre, the Library, the Sports Centre and the Athenaeum.

**2. Chat to the people involved in preparing the plan:** We'll be popping up at various places around the town. Find out when on the website. You can also call the Town Council if you want to talk to someone about it.

**3. Submit your comments:** All feedback must be submitted for formal review via the Survey by **midnight on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March**. It's a **draft Plan** - it can and will be updated in response to feedback!

**[warminsterplan.com](http://warminsterplan.com)**

## Questions?

**Email:** [admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk)

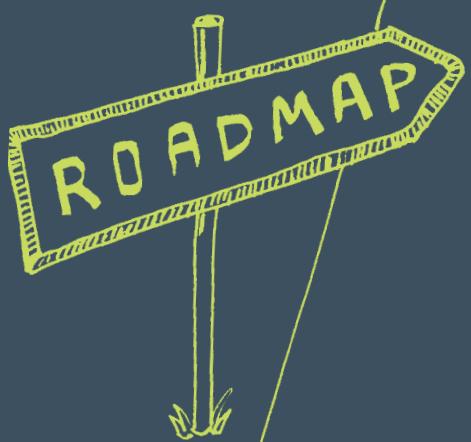
**Phone:** 01985 214874

**Pop-in:** to the Civic Centre

scan me to see  
the plan and  
give your  
comments



locality



# Quick Guide to Neighbourhood Plans

# Contents

- 2 Introduction
- 5 Producing a Neighbourhood Plan
- 11 Bringing the Plan into Legal Force

## Introduction

Since April 2012, local communities have been able to produce Neighbourhood Plans for their local area, putting in place planning policies for the future development and growth of the neighbourhood.

This guide gives a concise summary of the process for producing a Neighbourhood Plan under the Localism Act, together with suggestions for good practice.

This guide focuses on Neighbourhood Plans rather than Neighbourhood Development Orders or Community Right to Build Orders or other community-led planning tools.



## Elements of Neighbourhood Planning

The elements of neighbourhood planning under the Localism Act are:

### Neighbourhood Plans

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development and growth of an area. It may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. All Neighbourhood Plans must meet Basic Conditions, which are described later in this guide.

Neighbourhood plans relate to the use and development of land and associated social, economic and environmental issues. It may deal with a wide range of issues (like housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues that are of particular importance in a local area.

A Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to examination and referendum and then form part of the Local Development Plan. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than some other local planning documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements.

### Neighbourhood Development Orders

A Neighbourhood Development Order is a means for parish/town councils or neighbourhood forums to grant planning permission for certain kinds of development within a specified area. These orders may apply to the whole or just part of the neighbourhood area.

### Community Right to Build Orders

A Community Right to Build Order can be used to grant planning permission for development schemes, e.g. housing. Local community organisations that meet certain requirements or parish/town councils are able to prepare Community Right to Build Orders.

It is necessary to gain a more than 50% 'yes' vote in a public referendum to bring these plans and orders into force.

## Making the Decision to Prepare a Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Plans enable communities to take the lead in producing part of the statutory development plan for the area. Crucially, unlike a parish plan, these neighbourhood plans must be used to determine planning applications in a neighbourhood area. It can represent a serious commitment and any group of people considering preparing a Neighbourhood Plan will need to carefully weigh the opportunities against the time/cost implications and come to a balanced view. This is where the flexibility of neighbourhood planning to adapt to time/resource considerations is important. Obviously, a simpler plan with few policies will have less resource implications than a more comprehensive and complex one. Possible sources of help should be identified e.g. the local authority through its duty to support.

Considerations may include what other tools can be used to deliver the community's ambitions, the adequacy of existing local policies, skills available and alternative use of resources, such as delivering existing parish or community plans.

## Project Plan

Effective project planning is important to successful neighbourhood planning. A project plan can identify key stages, actions, an indicative timetable, and available resources and costs. The plan could also allocate responsibilities for coordinating different aspects of the process.



# Producing a Neighbourhood Plan

## Neighbourhood Area

The first formal step in neighbourhood planning is the submission of the proposed neighbourhood area to the local planning authority for designation. The following must be submitted in the area application:

- a map identifying the proposed neighbourhood area
- a statement explaining why the area is appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area
- a statement explaining that the body making the area application (the parish or town council or prospective neighbourhood forum) is capable of being a qualifying body.

For town or parish councils, there is a strong presumption that the neighbourhood area will be the same as the parish boundary. However, they may choose a smaller and more focused area, such as a town or local centre, or an area beyond the parish's boundaries if that makes a sensible area to plan for. Adjacent parish/town councils may agree to work in partnership to produce a joint Neighbourhood Plan.

Prospective 'neighbourhood forums' (see below) will also need to apply for a neighbourhood area to be designated.

## Qualifying Bodies

Where there is a town or parish council, then that is the qualifying body for leading a Neighbourhood Plan in a designated neighbourhood area that includes all or part of the council's area. Further arrangements apply in a multi-parished area, which are not set out here.

Where there is no parish or town council, a neighbourhood forum of at least 21 people must be formed for the neighbourhood area. This should reflect the "inclusivity, diversity and character of the area" and efforts must be made to include at least one person living in the area, one person working in the area and one councillor. The forum will lead the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

An application by the prospective neighbourhood forum to be designated as the "neighbourhood forum" for a particular neighbourhood area has to be submitted to the local planning authority.



The following must be submitted in the forum's application:

- the name of the proposed neighbourhood forum
- a written constitution for the proposed neighbourhood forum
- the name of the neighbourhood area to which the forum relates and a map identifying that area
- contact details of at least one member of the proposed neighbourhood forum (this will be made public)
- a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets legal requirements (see below).

## Duty to Support

Once the neighbourhood area is designated by the local planning authority, that authority is legally required to provide advice and assistance to those bodies producing a Neighbourhood Plan in its area. This 'duty to support' could include things like:

- making existing data and maps available for the evidence base
- identifying key local strategic policies from the Local Plan
- advising on relevant national policies/guidance
- sharing information on key contacts, stakeholders and best practice plan-making activity
- making available venues and helping to arrange community engagement activities
- checking the plan prior to formal submission to give community confidence
- providing technical support, such as assistance in laying out and illustrating a plan and writing plan policies
- providing members for neighbourhood forums or more informal working groups
- setting up a neighbourhood planning web page on the local authority's website.

## Building the Evidence Base

Planning policy and proposals need to be based on a proper understanding of the place they relate to, if they are to be relevant, realistic and to address local issues effectively. It is therefore important that Neighbourhood Plans are based on robust information and analysis of the local area; this is called the evidence base.

A review of existing evidence should be undertaken – particularly as there is already lots of evidence for planning. This may include things like:

- the evidence under-pinning the Local Plan
- socio-economic data for district/ward (census, ONS, etc.)
- technical reports (e.g. retail studies)
- transport studies and public transport data
- mapping of local area
- conservation area appraisals and statutory lists (listed buildings, historic environment record and scheduled ancient monuments)
- details of environmental protection designations, such as tree preservation orders and sites of special scientific interest
- plans from other public bodies or statutory undertakers
- existing plans for an area, such as a community plan or parish plan.

It may be necessary to develop new evidence (or update existing evidence) at neighbourhood level. This could include:

**Economic:** business surveys, viability, vacancy/floorspace survey, available sites survey, land values, employment need survey, etc.

**Social/Community:** housing condition survey, housing needs survey, audit of community facilities, 'Building for Life' assessment of housing, etc.

**Environmental:** heritage audit, conservation area appraisals, review of local lists, urban design analysis, open space survey & analysis, etc.

**Infrastructure:** transport linkages, schools capacity, transport capacity analysis, traffic/pedestrian flow surveys, etc.

## Community Engagement

Community engagement is necessary and important for several reasons. It is a requirement of planning legislation including for Neighbourhood Plans. It is essential in developing consensus and creating community support. Finding out what people think and drawing on their skills and knowledge is an important part of developing the evidence base for an area and developing the Neighbourhood Plan, leading to more realistic and deliverable plans and policies. Failure to engage communities properly at an early stage is one of the main causes of conflict later in the planning process. This can lead to additional costs and delays.



The referendum will involve a simple 'yes' or 'no' vote on the Neighbourhood Plan. Properly engaging people from the beginning of the process ensures that there is an opportunity to influence the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan, rather than just having the option to accept or reject the whole plan.

Where intensive community engagement has recently been undertaken, such as in respect of the community plan, the material obtained will be useful in informing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Good practice examples of community engagement include:

**Front Loading:** Community engagement should be undertaken before work commences on the plan (this is called front loading) and throughout the process of plan preparation. The purpose of the first stages of community engagement is to help define issues and aims for the plan, and to inform an overall vision and to start to create a sense of wider ownership for the plan.

**Publicity and Awareness:** It is important to publicise the proposed Neighbourhood (development) Plan as widely as possible using different media right at the beginning of the process. Feedback should be provided throughout the process.

**Local Partnerships:** Key partners and stakeholders should be identified. These can provide easier access and support in involving minority groups, different communities, residents, the business community, hard-to-engage communities, etc.

**Capacity Building:** It will often be necessary to include capacity building (education/training) so that those participating in community engagement events are well informed about the plan and the issues it is dealing with.

**Avoid Tokenism:** The purpose of undertaking community engagement is to inform the content of the plan. If the outcomes have already been determined, then community engagement is tokenistic (marketing).

**Specialist advice and enabling:** It may be necessary for those leading and participating in the planning process to bring in specialist advice and support.

**Being Creative:** Community engagement needs to engage people using a range of approaches and media. It should be stimulating and enjoyable.

**Managing Expectations:** It is necessary to balance ambitions with realism and practical and legal limitations.

**Targeting:** Whilst some people will naturally want to get involved in neighbourhood planning, with other groups, people targeting will be necessary. This could include the elderly, young people, ethnic groups and other minority or hard-to-engage groups.

**Making it Accessible:** Careful thought needs to be given to make events and material accessible, including location, timing, media, format, etc. Events should be informal and unintimidating.

### Common Mistakes – What to avoid!

Common mistakes include things like consulting too late, placing a thick document on a stand in the library or on a web site and expecting people to read it, or talking at people at a public meeting. Asking consultants to produce options before consulting the community is also poor practice. Consultation should not be treated as a one-off tick-box exercise. Also, analysis of consultation responses is not about counting the number of consultees making a comment, but considering the depth and range of responses.

## Writing the Neighbourhood Plan

There is considerable flexibility over how a plan is structured and written.



Careful consideration should be made of how the plan will be delivered and this will require constructive dialogue with key stakeholders, such as development managers in the local authority, public agencies, landowners and developers.

The following are suggestions for possible content of the plan:

**Vision and Aims.** The Neighbourhood Plan can set out the community's overall vision for the area and should include overall aims for its future development and growth. These can relate to a wide range of planning and regeneration matters – social, economic and environmental. The vision and aims of the plan can then be translated into detailed policies, guidance and proposals.

**Planning Policies.** A Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will form part of the statutory local development plan for the area and its policies will be used to determine development proposals in the neighbourhood. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan's policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The policies in the plan could be supplemented if necessary by explanatory text or illustrations to help with their interpretation.

**Site Allocations.** The Neighbourhood Plan may identify key sites for specific kinds of development, such as housing, retail, employment or mixed use.

**Community Proposals.** Regeneration or enhancement proposals relating to the use and development of land could be included in the plan. For example, it could include policies around improving key public spaces and pedestrian links or allocate sites for new community facilities, such as a community centre.

To keep the Neighbourhood Plan concise, focused and clear on what are the proposed "policies", a background document could be created, listing the sources of evidence, summarising any new evidence and describing the outcomes of the community engagement programme at different stages in the plan process.

## Bringing the Plan into Force

### Pre-Submission Consultation

It is a legal requirement that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is publicised and the subject of public consultation, before it is submitted to the local planning authority. This includes:

- publicising the plan in a manner which brings it to the attention of people who live, work or run businesses in the neighbourhood area. This should include details of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan, details of where and when it may be viewed (e.g. local fairs, schools, etc.), details on how to make comments on the plan and the date by which comments must be received (at least six weeks from the date on which it is first publicised)
- consulting bodies whose interests may be affected by the plan. The local council should be able to advise on this, but it is likely to include the county council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage
- sending a copy of the proposed plan to the local authority
- consulting any neighbouring local, town or parish councils, significant landowners, local businesses and local community organisations, such as chambers of commerce, civic societies and local trusts.

It may be useful to produce a concise summary of the plan for those that don't wish to read the full document.

A brief report must be produced, summarising comments received, issues raised by those comments and describing if and how the plan has been modified in response to the issues raised. This is known as the 'consultation statement' which is a legal requirement for all Neighbourhood Plans.

### Submitting the Plan

Following any amendments resulting from the pre-submission consultation stage, the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should be submitted to the local planning authority by the qualifying body. The local authority is



responsible for publicising the plan that has been submitted to them and arranging for the independent examination and referendum to take place into that submitted plan.

The submission to the local planning authority must include the following:

- a map or statement, which identifies the area to which the plan relates
- a consultation statement (see below)
- the proposed Neighbourhood Plan
- a statement on how the plan fulfils the Basic Conditions (see later section on the 'Basic Conditions').

The consultation statement should contain the following:

- details of people and organisations consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan
- details of how they were consulted
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process
- descriptions of how these issues and concerns were considered and addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Upon receiving the submitted Neighbourhood Plan proposal the local authority will publicise it and invite comments (six weeks). These comments will be sent subsequently to the independent examiner for their consideration.

## Meeting the Basic Conditions

The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are specified by law:

- must be appropriate having regard to national policy
- must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area
- must be compatible with human rights requirements
- must be compatible with EU obligations.

Neighbourhood Plans must not breach and must be compatible with EU and human rights obligations, including the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive. Neighbourhood Plans should be screened at an early stage to ascertain whether they are likely to trigger significant environmental effects and thus whether an SEA needs to be carried out. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) should undertake this screening assessment, consulting relevant national bodies in coming to its screening opinion. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that a sustainability appraisal should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, but the particular assessment requirements need to respond to the scale, status and scope of the plan being developed.

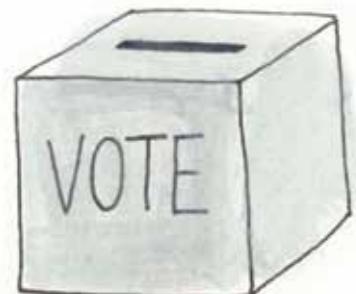


## Independent Examination

It is the responsibility of the local authority to organise and cover the costs of the independent examination and referendum. The independent examiner will be appointed by the local authority with the consent of the qualifying body.

The independent examination will consider the submitted documents and any comments made during the consultation period on the submitted plan proposal. The independent examiner will examine whether the plan meets the 'Basic Conditions' and other relevant legal requirements (e.g. consultation).

The independent examiner may recommend that the plan proceed to the referendum stage (i.e. it meets all the legal requirements) or may suggest that modifications are needed to the plan before it can proceed to the referendum. Or they may recommend that it does not proceed to the referendum, if it does not meet the relevant legal requirements. In addition, they may recommend that the referendum area include individuals beyond the boundary of the neighbourhood area.



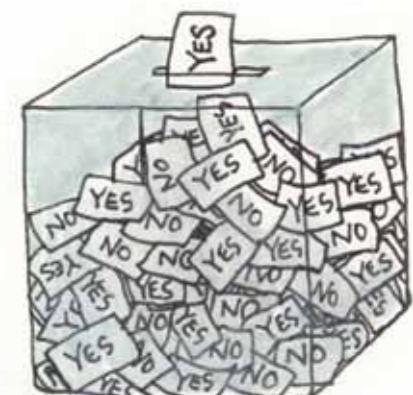
## Modifications

The local planning authority must make modifications to the plan if, with those modifications, the plan could comply with the Basic Conditions. The local community may withdraw the plan if it is unhappy with modifications being made.

## Referendum

If the plan is found to be satisfactory (i.e. complies with the key legal requirements) with modifications if necessary, then the local authority must arrange for the referendum to take place. It must give at least 28 working days notice of the referendum before the date of the referendum. The qualifying body may campaign before the referendum, subject to rules over expenses.

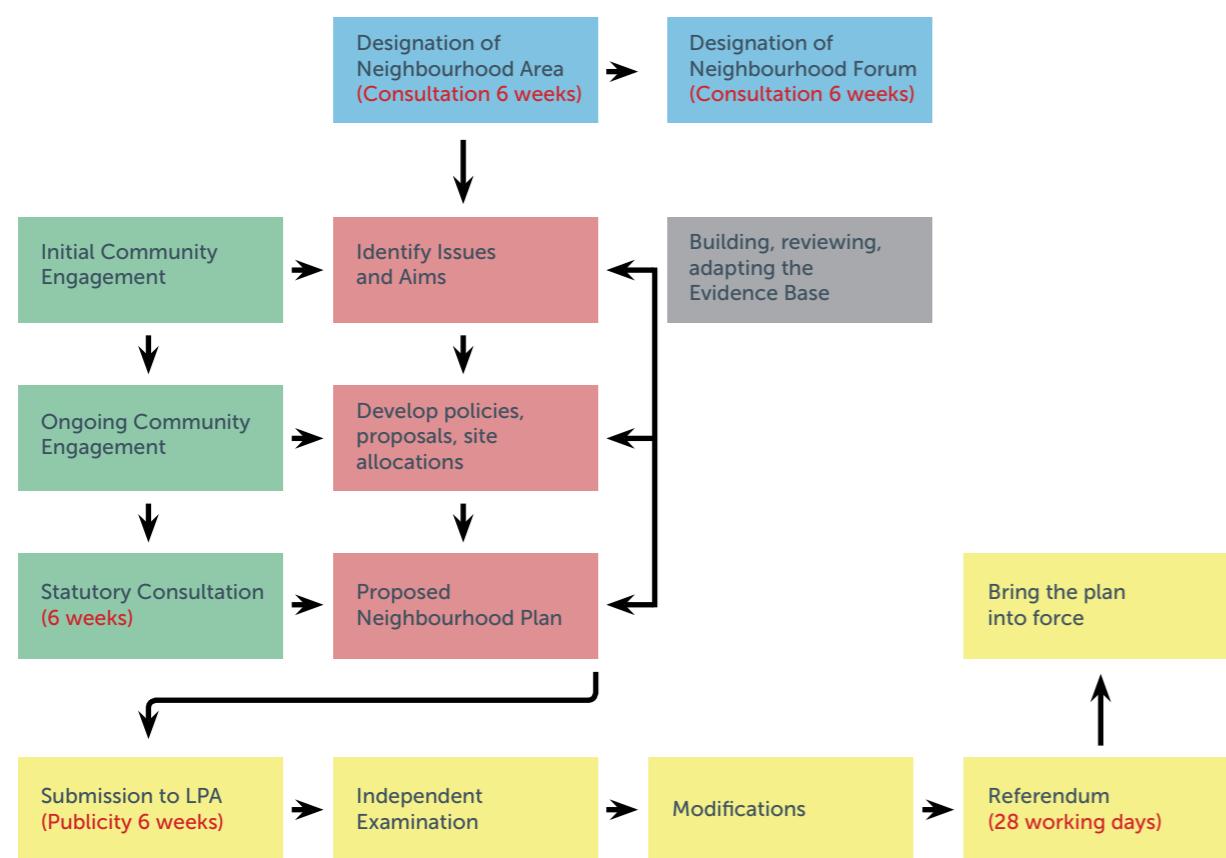
If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes', then the council will bring the plan into legal force.



## Delivery

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is made (i.e. brought into legal force by the local authority), it will be used to determine planning applications and guide planning decisions in the neighbourhood area. Having a plan and waiting for development is one thing, but elements of the plan will need active interventions on the part of the community, the local planning authority, developers and other key stakeholders.

## Process Diagram



## About Locality

Locality is the leading nationwide network of settlements, development trusts, social action centres and community enterprises. We help people to set up locally owned and led organisations. We support existing organisations to work effectively through peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge and best practice on community asset ownership, community enterprise, collaboration, commissioning support, social action, community voice, community rights and regeneration. We have been working with communities involved in neighbourhood planning over the past 18 months.

Locality also works to influence government and others at national and local level to build support and investment for the movement. Locality was formed in April 2011 by the merger of BASSAC and the Development Trusts Association; two leading networks of community owned and led organisations.

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## About the Author

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Dave Chetwyn is Managing Director of Urban Vision Enterprise CIC and a Design Council CABE Built Environment Expert. Other roles include Planning Chair with Civic Voice, Vice Chair of the National Planning Forum and Vice Chair of the Historic Towns Forum. He is also Planning Adviser to Locality and Heritage Specialist on Crossrail (Thames Tunnels section).

Former roles include Head of Planning Aid England, UK Chair of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and a team leader in local Government. He has advised and participated in various Government groups, reviews and Parliamentary select committees on planning, regeneration, heritage, urban design, economic development, state aid and community engagement. Dave is a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management.

## Urban Vision Enterprise CIC

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