

Planning For Corsham

July 2023

1. Introduction

'Planning for Corsham' is a guide to how the Local Plan Review ('the Plan'), which will replace the Wiltshire Core Strategy, will affect the town over the coming years. It sets out the evidence and processes that have informed the policies of the Plan that relate to Corsham, as follows:

Policy	Title
12	Corsham Market Town
13	Land South of Dicketts Road

A table containing the current planning policies for Corsham, and their status, is included in Appendix 1.

The Plan sets what local priorities will shape development and future growth in Corsham ('place shaping priorities'). They include taking opportunities to improve the town for the local community and protect important assets. The Plan also sets a scale of growth, as part of a wider spatial strategy for Wiltshire, by which the town will expand over the plan period (2020-2038). This is expressed in additional homes and land for new businesses. It then identifies land to be built on, not just for new homes and business, but also for supporting infrastructure.

This document explains the context and rationale for these decisions. It summarises what significant change has taken place recently, what protections and constraints upon growth will continue and what is already set to take place. Local priorities need to be seen in this context. Shaping the town's future, to help deliver these priorities, this document explains what role growth will play; why some areas have been earmarked for development and others not; the direction for the town centre; and how the Plan supports the services and facilities the community requires. Altogether it tells how the Plan moves forward the existing planning framework for the town to meet fresh challenges and additional needs.

This document therefore combines many strands of evidence gathered over the preparation of the Plan. It pulls together the comments and advice received from, amongst others, local residents, landowners, business and service providers who also influenced the Plan content through consultation. All this information is available to read and is referenced so this further detail may also be examined.

2. Corsham - Context and challenges

Population	13,400 ¹	10th largest of the County's 16 main settlements
Strategic role	Market Town	Potential for significant development to help sustain, and where necessary, enhance their services and facilities, promoting better levels of self-containment and viable sustainable communities

Environment

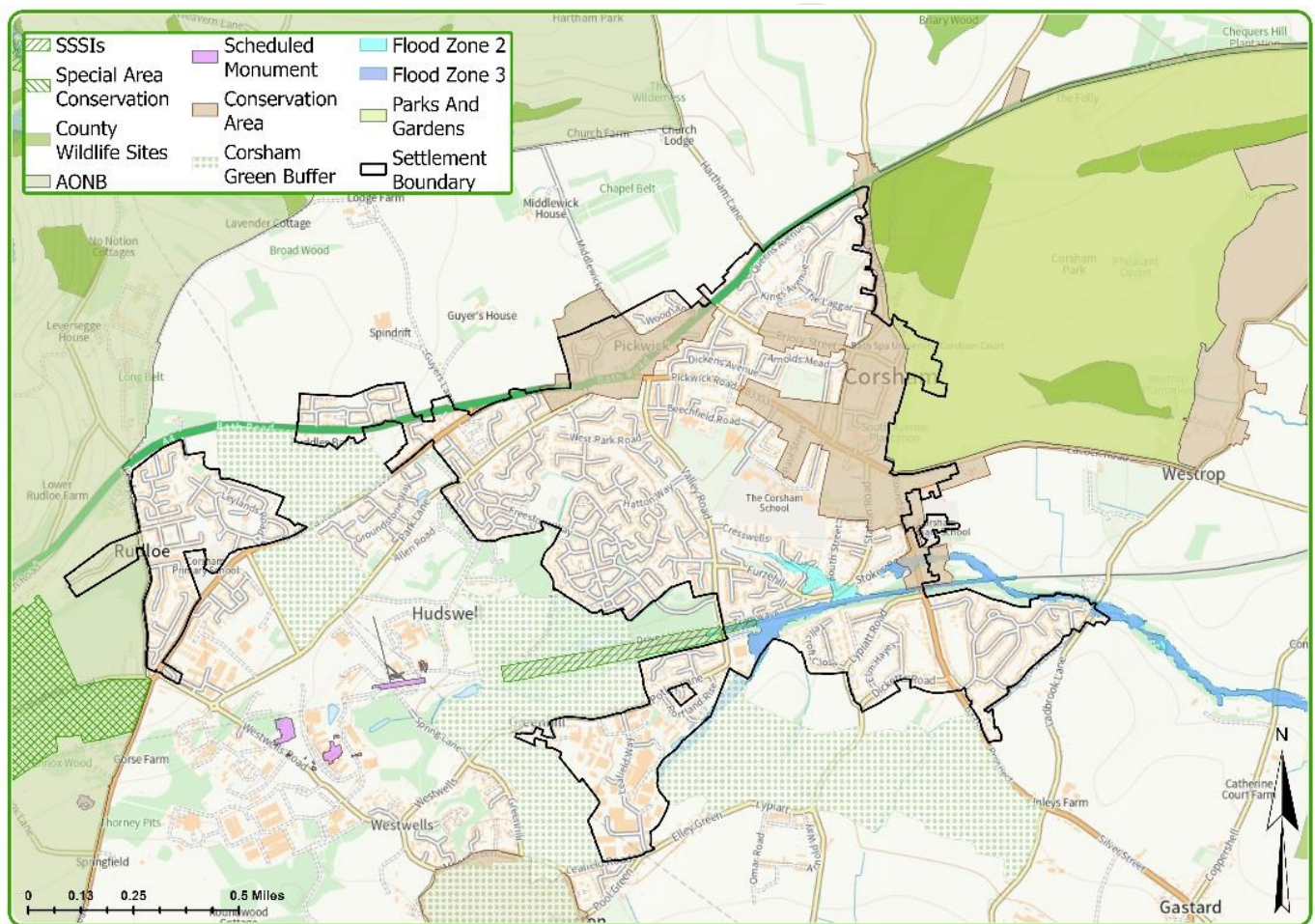


Figure 1. Environmental constraints and designations at Corsham

¹ [Census 2021, ONS](#)

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Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the west and associated foraging habitats and flight corridors are significant constraints to development. A Corsham Batscape Strategy, which accompanies the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan, sets out mitigation measures.

There are some areas of flood risk associated with the small tributaries heading east towards the River Avon.

The Historic Park and Garden of Corsham Court restricts development to the east of the town.

Historic and current mining activity has influenced historic growth and potentially limits options for future growth, particularly to the north at Hartham Park, which is an extensive and active mine.

The need to maintain the character and identity of the villages of Rudloe, Westwells and Neston also limits growth of the town. A rural green buffer has been identified in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the separation of settlements is maintained.

How has Corsham developed?

Strongly influenced by its Bath stone mining history, Corsham has generally grown in a north and then westward direction, between the A4 and the railway. More recent growth has extended towards Rudloe.

The following diagram shows how much housing has been delivered in Corsham from 2006 to 2022.

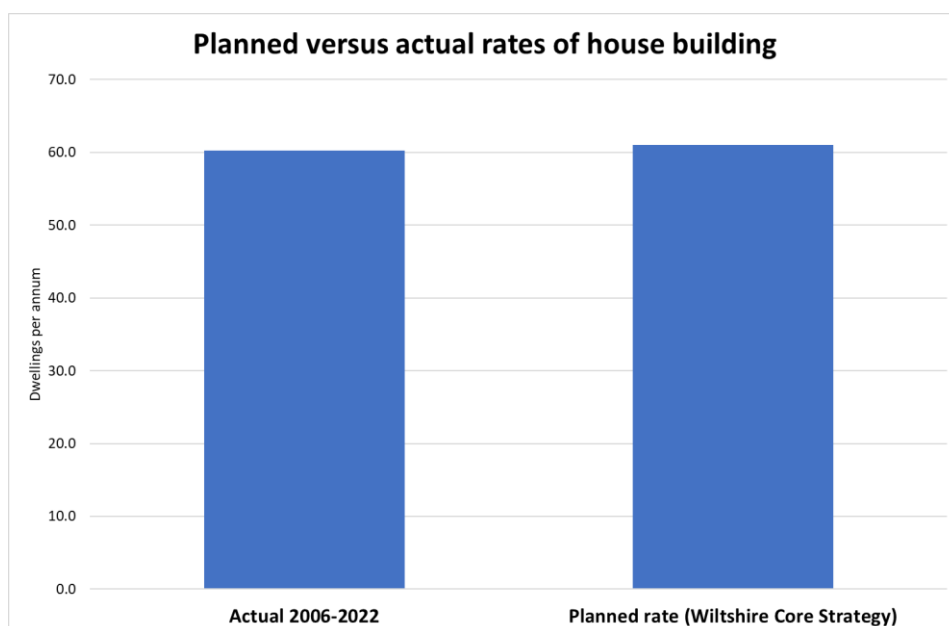


Figure 2. Wiltshire Core Strategy planned growth versus actual rates of house building.

The Real Estate sector in Corsham has an extremely high concentration of employment compared with the national average and is a relatively large employer in absolute terms. The Financial & Insurance sector has seen extremely high growth in recent years, but compared with the national average it remains a small employer. On the whole, office-based sectors have generally seen higher employment growth in recent years.

The presence of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Global Operations and Security Control Centre is significant. Corsham Science Park continues to grow, with Pharmaxo completing a new manufacturing/R&D facility and other business space and a third phase of 20 flexible business units designed to meet expected demand from science-related businesses. Digital Mansion Corsham acts as a hub and for tech growth SMEs and a catalyst for start-ups and is full; Ark Data Centres have continued to expand their large-scale data facilities at Spring Park.

The Wiltshire Retail and Town Centres Study (WRTCS)² concludes that, overall, Corsham performs a localised retail and service function. The convenience goods offer of the centre has remained constant over the past several years, continuing to focus upon primarily a top-up food shopping role, with main food shopping trips by local residents primarily flowing to nearby Chippenham. The role and function of the centre is influenced by nearby Chippenham. It is recommended the rise in vacancies in the centre over the past several years be monitored by the Council going forwards.

In terms of the quality, range and choice of convenience goods stores in Corsham, these include a medium sized Co-op store in the town centre, a smaller Co-Op at Macie Drive, along with a selection of small stores in the town centre including newsagent, butcher, baker, Spar convenience store and a greengrocer. These stores provide an important day-to-day function for the local population. However, the size and retail offer of these stores, along with the influence of nearby Chippenham (and to a lesser extent Melksham), mean that they are able to attract only 5% of main food shopping trips and retain one third of top-up food shopping trips. This suggests a qualitative case for improvement, which is supported by the Corsham neighbourhood plan, for a second supermarket, although care will need to be taken, in terms of the location and scale of any such new store, in order to protect the health of the town centre and also the finite level of expenditure capacity.

The comparison goods sector in Corsham is dominated by local independent traders who occupy small units and serve niche individual functions. They provide day to day shopping facilities for the population, which seek to differentiate themselves from the wider retail offer in Chippenham. There is nothing to suggest that any particular strategy needs to be adopted

² Wiltshire Retail and Town Centres Study (Avison Young, 2020)

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in order to change and/or expand the comparison goods retail sector in Corsham. It should, instead, be protected as far as practicably reasonable to do so, via development management policies in the Local Plan Review.

The map below illustrates the Wiltshire Core Strategy land use policies along with significant development sites at the town.

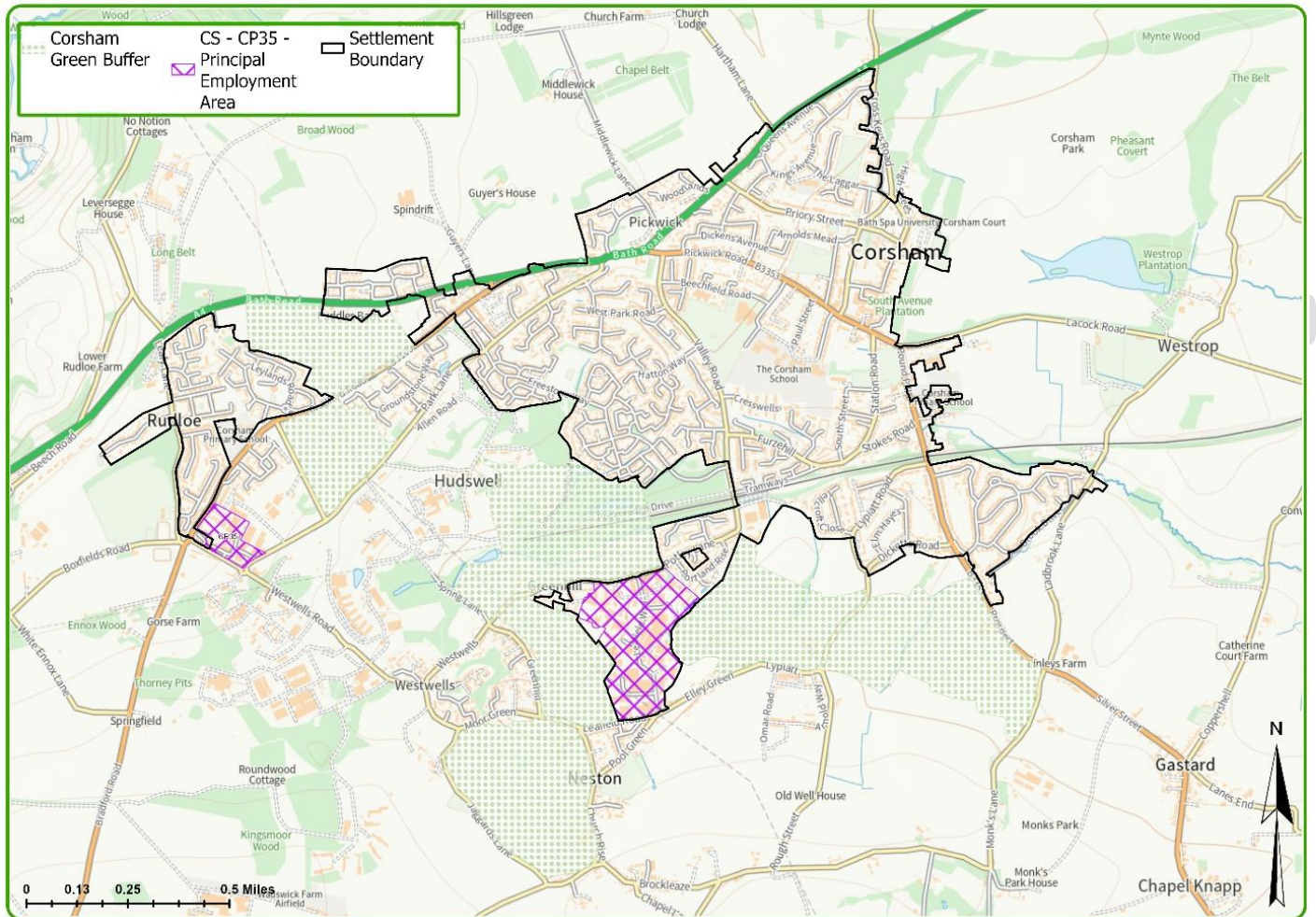


Figure 3. Current development plan commitments at Corsham.

Planning to 2038

Looking ahead, against the backdrop of its environmental context, the strategic direction that flows from how Corsham has developed over recent years is in summary:

Corsham has experienced significant greenfield housebuilding in recent years, although it does have significant constraints including stone mining areas, a rural green buffer and a bats corridor.

There has been some investment from business. The real estate and financial sectors have seen higher employment growth. The presence of the MOD Global Operations and Security Control

Centre is significant and Corsham Science Park continues to grow to meet an expected demand from science related businesses and Ark Data Centres continue to expand their large-scale data related facilities. Housebuilding needs to be balanced with maintaining the separate identities of Corsham from nearby villages, conserving and enhancing the distinctive characteristics of Corsham's historic landscape, whilst encouraging additional investment in business, services for the local community and a stronger town centre.

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A set of Place Shaping Priorities (PSPs) addresses matters first highlighted in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and new issues that now also need to be tackled as set out above. They result from working with Corsham Town Council and wider consultation with the community and other stakeholders carried out in 2021.

They are as follows:

PLACE SHAPING PRIORITIES

PSP 1 Rural Identity Maintain the separate identities of Corsham from the settlements to the west of around the town (Rudloe, Westwells, Gastard and Neston)

PSP 2 Town Centre Regeneration and revitalisation of Corsham Town Centre, in particular the Martingate Centre

PSP 3 Green Infrastructure Protect, Improve and extend the green and blue Infrastructure network, including protecting the important habitats for bats and providing additional allotment sites to meet high demand.

PSP 4 Transport Connectivity Improve public transport connectivity and pedestrian and cycle routes in and around Corsham and improve road network capacity (particularly to address congestion at junctions along the A4).

PSP 5 Transport Infrastructure Safeguard land for a new railway station

PSP 6 Retail Provision of a second supermarket for the town to provide the opportunity for people to shop locally.

PSP 7 Landscape To conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of Corsham's historic landscape, historic centre and other heritage rich areas including underground.

PSPs sit alongside the spatial strategy for Corsham. One of their purposes is to describe what growth intends to help deliver and how change should be managed. They form the basis for an overarching planning policy for Calne that guides development and the direction of growth.

PSPs therefore provide a succinct strategic context within which to better understand the spatial strategy for the main settlements. They also set a framework to co-ordinate the high level and strategic role of the Local Plan, with the function of neighbourhood plans, prepared by town and parish councils, setting more detailed visions for the future of each community. The two sets of plans therefore work in harness.

PSPs are also used to influence how, and more precisely where, development will take place as an important part in the selection of sites for new development. Some priorities apply equally everywhere, notably the need to address climate change and achieve carbon reduction. Others are more specific to a particular place. PSPs aim to address unresolved issues that were previously highlighted in the Wiltshire Core Strategy plus new issues that need to be tackled during the next plan period.

Scales of growth at the town, as set out in the Revised Spatial Strategy³, respond to concerns about the loss of greenfield land, coupled with the significant environmental constraints which restrict the availability of land for development.

The new strategy identifies a requirement of 360 homes for the plan period 2020 to 2038. A reduction in rates of house building at Corsham, compared to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, is justified moving forwards. Constraints in the area restrict the land that may be considered for further housing including the Rural Green Buffer, Bats Corridor and underground mines in Mineral Safeguarding Areas.

³ Wiltshire Local Plan Review Revised Spatial Strategy (Wiltshire Council, October 2023)

The Employment Land Review⁴ concludes there is an indicative forecast demand for around 7ha employment land at the town. There is demand for further employment land, preferably to the west of Corsham, near to the MOD site and the villages of Rudloe and Westwells.

Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE3 supports development which safeguards and/or contributes to the strengthening of the vitality and identity of West Corsham, which includes expanding the business potential of West Corsham, in accordance with an identified need.

However, constraints in the area restrict the land that may be considered for further employment uses including the Rural Green Buffer and Bats corridor.

Consequently, the employment land figure for Corsham has been reduced to 0ha during the plan period. Leafield Industrial Estate and Five Ways Trading Estate will continue to be designated as Principal Employment Areas.

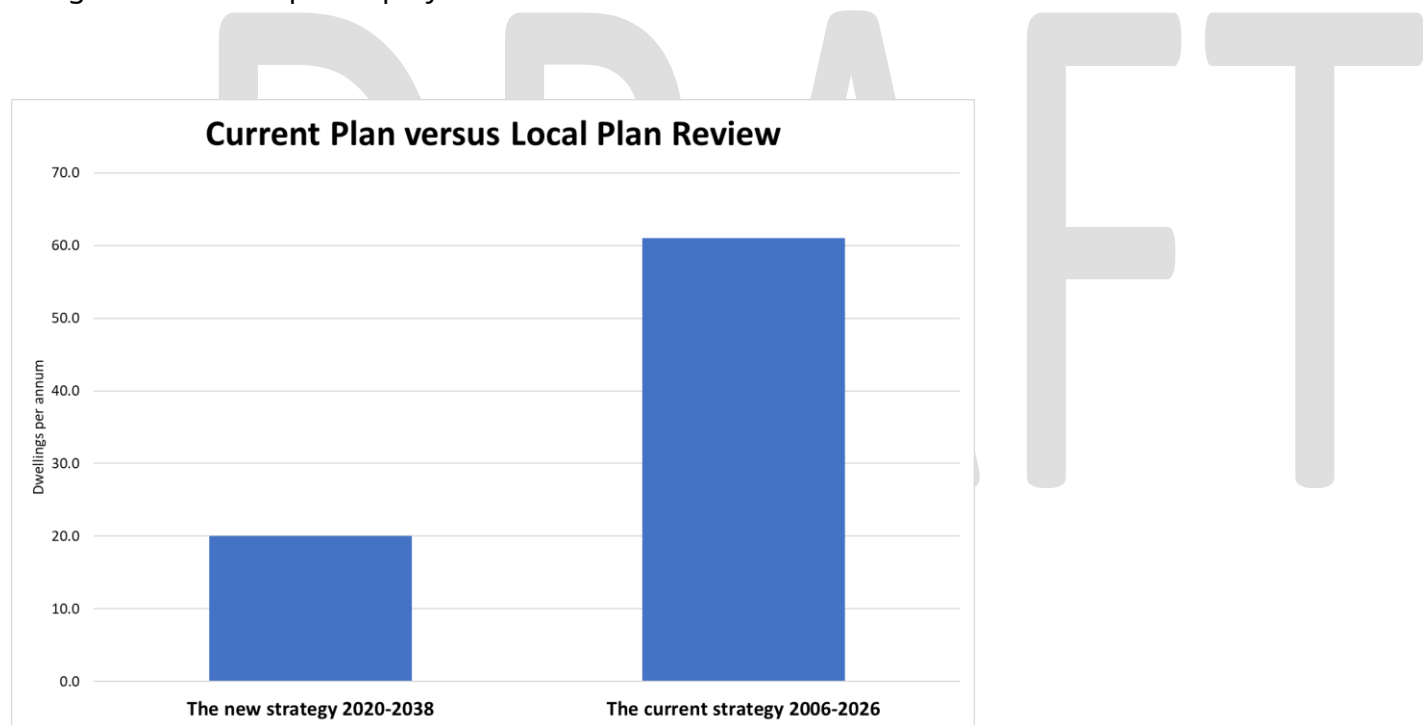


Figure 4. Wiltshire Core Strategy planned growth versus Wiltshire Local Plan Review planned growth.

The growth planned for Corsham is modest and recognises that the town has already experienced significant greenfield housebuilding and does have some environmental constraints which restrict further extensive development. The growth planned will help to ensure that Corsham remains an important employment location in Wiltshire. and will help to facilitate the delivery of improved services and facilities in the Corsham area including any forthcoming proposals for the redevelopment of the Corsham Railway Station site. The railway

⁴ Wiltshire Employment Land Review, paragraph 6.3.12 (Hardisty Jones Associates, 2023)

station is currently a safeguarded site under saved Policy T5 from the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 and will continue to be safeguarded in the Local Plan Review as part of Policy 75 Strategic Transport Network.

3. Local Plan Proposals

Protecting the environment

Corsham is constrained in environmental terms when compared with other towns in the area - Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and associated foraging habitats and flight corridors to the west, some areas of flood risk associated with small tributaries heading east towards the River Avon, the Historic Park and Garden of Corsham Court to the east of the town, historic and current mining activity to the north at Hartham Park which is an extensive and active mine and a rural green buffer to the west and south of the town to maintain the character and identity of the villages of Rudloe, Westwells, Gastard and Neston. The Local Plan recognises and protects their importance.

How many more homes?

From the reduced scale of growth over the plan period (see above) can be deducted homes already built and those already in the pipeline. What is left and necessary to plan for is called the residual requirement. When the number of homes built and in the pipeline is deducted it leaves a further 260 homes to be accommodated at Corsham up until 2038.

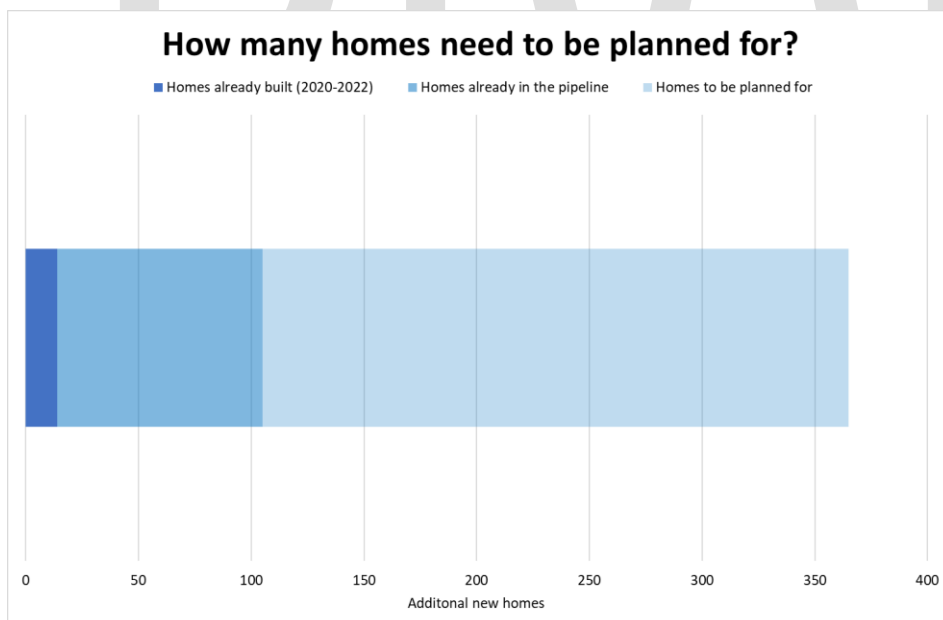


Figure 5. Calculating how many homes need to be planned for at Corsham.

Selecting sites

Five sites were considered reasonable alternatives for new homes and assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal. (See map)

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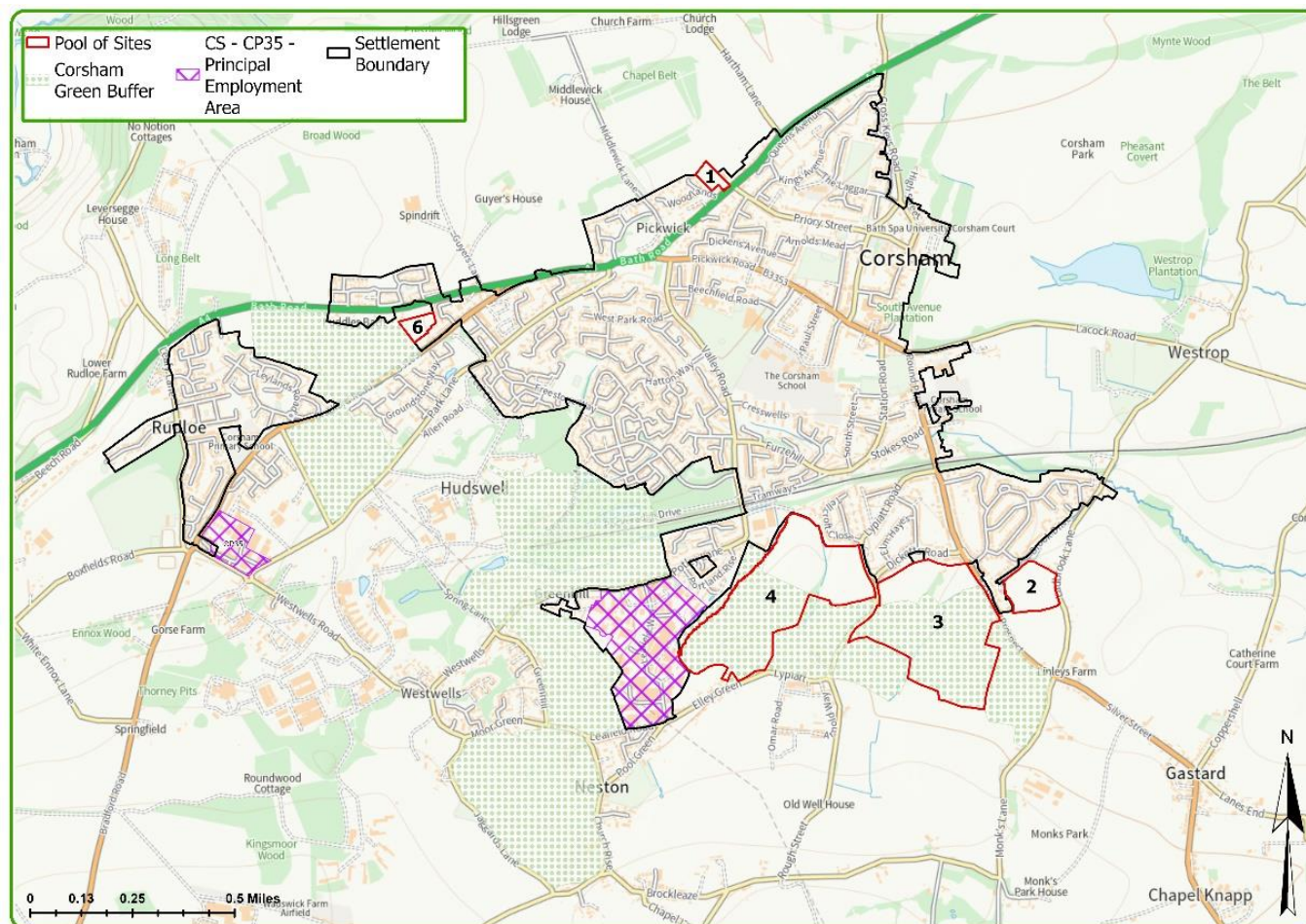


Figure 6. The pool of sites for the Sustainability Appraisal at Corsham.

These sites resulted from a two-stage sifting process that removed land incapable of being developed without unacceptable impacts. The Sustainability Appraisal assesses what likely significant effects development of a site would incur, both positive and negative. Those sites that performed better in sustainability terms were those that were considered likely to have fewer significant adverse environmental effects and greater social and economic benefits. The Sustainability Appraisal ranked sites by their social, environmental and economic effects.

Representations were submitted to the Regulation 18 consultation in 2021 by the MOD asking for Site 5 to be removed from further consideration as part of the site selection process due to the site still being in operational use.

Following this, the sites were assessed by their performance against the Place Shaping Priorities. Preferred sites were identified through a combination of assessment against the Sustainability Appraisal and the Place Shaping Priorities.

The Sustainability Appraisal showed that all the sites had a range of negative environmental effects.

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From the five sites assessed through the SA, Site 1, in overall terms, scores better than the other sites due to having less impact on biodiversity, although it does have an adverse impact on historic assets. Sites 2, 3, 4 and 6, in overall terms, are less sustainable. Sites 3 and 4 perform marginally better than Sites 2 and 6. Site 6 is less sustainable due to the impact on inclusive communities. Site 2 is less sustainable due to the impact on biodiversity and landscape.

All the sites were then evaluated according to how well they could support the PSPs.

Site 1 performed worse due to the impact on historic assets and because it is located away from the railway line and will not enable a new railway station to be safeguarded and delivered.

Site 2 is adjacent to the settlement boundary, has existing housing on one side and is outside the local green buffer. It performed better in sustainability terms, but poorly against one of the PSPs because it is not located near enough to the railway line to be able to contribute to the delivery of a new railway station. The site could be suitable for a small housing development to round off the housing in that area but is of a size that it would only provide a small proportion of the residual housing requirement and is not suitable for employment land. It could be a possible site for the Neighbourhood Plan to consider.

Site 6 is adjacent to the settlement boundary, has existing housing on three sides and is outside the local green buffer. It performed better in sustainability terms and against the PSPs and could be suitable for a small housing development to round off the housing in that area but is of a size that it would only provide a small proportion of the residual housing requirement and wouldn't be large enough to provide employment land. Both a bat survey and biodiversity net gain would be required, which may result in a lower number of houses being provided. It could be a possible site for the Neighbourhood Plan to consider.

Sites 3 and 4 also performed better in both sustainability terms and against the PSPs. Both sites are located nearest to the existing safeguarded railway station site and may provide the opportunity for a new southern expansion of Corsham, linked to the delivery of a new railway station on the safeguarded site. Both sites contain some land which has been designated as local green buffer in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan, the purpose of which is to maintain the separation between Corsham and the surrounding villages, which in this case are Gastard and Neston. Both sites contain land which is nearest to existing built up areas of Corsham which is not designated as local green buffer.

However, in this plan period, due to there being a low residual housing requirement, only Site 3 is required during this plan period, with Site 4 identified as a reserve site should, for any reason, other allocations be delayed or the contribution from small sites fail to materialise or it could be identified as a site allocation in a future review of the Corsham neighbourhood plan.

There may be a need for a new water pumping station within Site 3. There is an existing public water main crossing Site 4 and Wessex Water are proposing a new sewer scheme to replace a strategic sewer currently running close to the railway track. Suitable easements will need to be observed.

Sites 3 and 4 are also located within an important corridor for bats between Drews Pond, Devizes, Biss Wood, Trowbridge and Box Mines identified in the Corsham Batscape Strategy. Further survey work may be necessary to establish the use of the sites by bats and any mitigation measures required.

The methodology and detailed assessments made in the site selection process are all explained in the appendix. The Sustainability Appraisal process and its results are contained in a separate report⁵.

What development is proposed?

Site 3 is more than capable of meeting the scale of residual requirements for new homes that should be planned for in this plan period. Site 4 is identified as a reserve site. Both sites are located near to the safeguarded railway station site for which there is work underway to secure funding for its reopening.

In due course, a review of the Corsham Community Neighbourhood Plan may lead to the allocation of additional land for development. Neighbourhood planning lends itself to identifying small to medium sized sites for housing and other forms of development. Smaller sites in the neighbourhood plan will supplement proposals of the Local Plan Review.

The Local Plan Review, however, proposes the central, strategic, development proposals. They are explained below.

Site 3: Land South of Dicketts Road

Use	Scale/Area
Residential	Approximately 105 dwellings
Green space	Approximately 5.7ha

Vehicular access is possible from both Prospect and Lypiatt Road. There is already a children's play area to the north on Dicketts Road that is easily accessible from the site. The site would also include allotments to help meet demand in Corsham. The

⁵ Wiltshire Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal Report (Wiltshire Council, October 2023)

greenspace would help to safeguard against adverse effects of recreation pressures on protected sites for biodiversity off site.

The site's main role is to provide additional homes over the plan period. There will be a variety of dwelling types, including a significant proportion of affordable homes.

The site is reasonably well connected to the town centre; within an approximate 15-minute walk to the town centre. There would be the opportunity to improve the pedestrian and cycleways to and from the town centre, so residents would be able to easily visit the town centre through sustainable transport modes, which would help to increase footfall and boost local trade.

The site is also in close proximity to a range of employment opportunities at Leaffield Trading Estate, with alternative employment opportunities available in the west of Corsham area and in the town centre.

The proposals support Place Shaping Priorities by maintaining the separate identities of Corsham from the settlements to the west of around the town (PSP1), contributing to a more vibrant town centre (PSP2) and improving sustainable travel choices (PSP3).

There is a PSP for a new retail supermarket. Site 3 is unlikely to be suitable, taking into consideration, as set out in the Retail Study, that it is important when considering the location of a new supermarket to take into account the potential impact on the town centre shops and, in this case, the site is located on the edge of the town.

Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy BE2 supports the development of a hotel in a convenient and sustainable location within walking distance of the site safeguarded for the future Railway Station. Site 3 is within walking distance of the safeguarded railway station, but the land available may not be large enough to be able to provide a hotel as well. This potential opportunity could be explored further as part of any future allocation of Site 4.

Evidence establishes potential for a range of negative effects that will be mitigated as follows:

- The site lies within the greater horseshoe bat 4km core area / consultation zone around the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon (BBOA) Bats SAC. Loss of and/or impacts to bat habitat at the sites has potential to lead to likely significant effects on the SAC and its qualifying species. Any residential development scheme will need to adhere to the Corsham Batscape Strategy.
- It is likely that significant off-site water supply and foul water infrastructure reinforcement would be required. - An existing public water main crosses the site which will require suitable easements. Land may need to be put aside for a pumping station.

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- Surface water would need to be discharged in accordance with local and national policy, and there must be no surface water connections to the foul sewer network. If surface water from this development is to connect upstream to the Southerwicks / Station Road surface water network appraisal must assess impact and mitigation measures.
- Sustainable transport enhancements are required across the site and to the surrounding area to support access to onsite and offsite employment uses, as well as the town centre.

How the site may be developed is shown on the draft framework plan below. This illustrates one treatment of the sites that meets mitigation requirements and the homes, other uses and infrastructure envisaged.

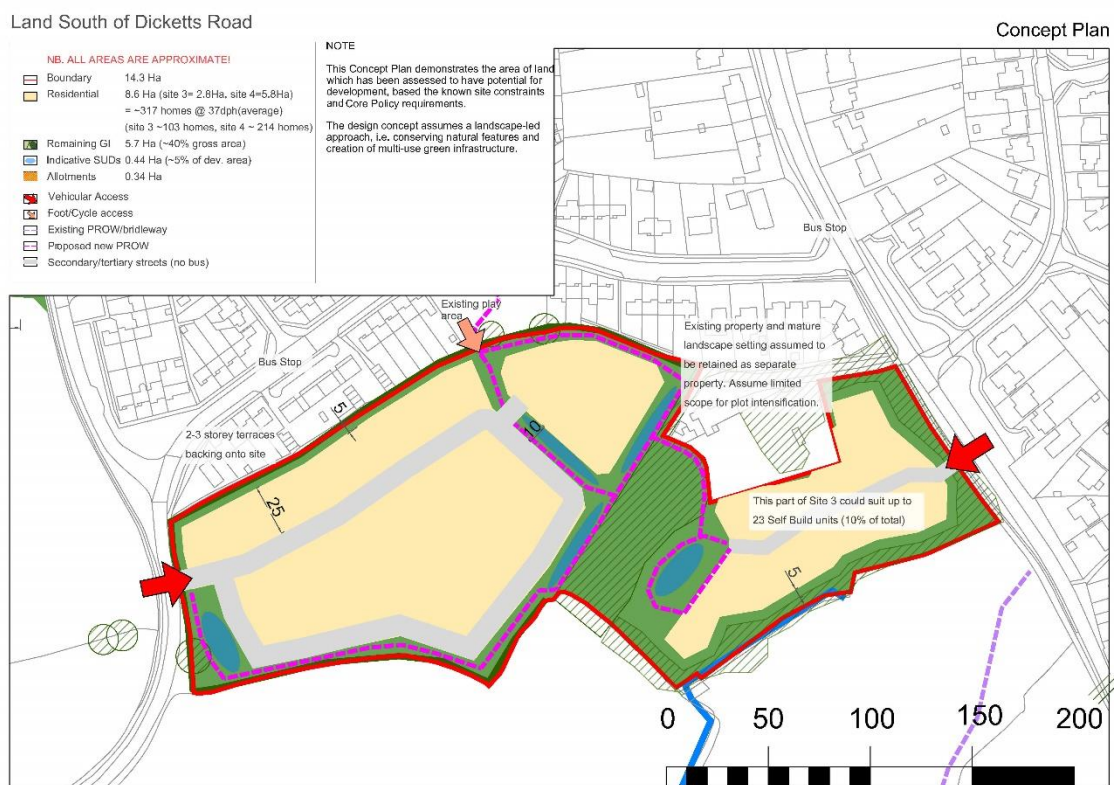


Figure 7. Concept plan for Land south of Dicketts Road.

Reserve Site

Reserve sites are proposed at main settlements and will only be released for development should, for any reason, other allocations be delayed or the contribution from small sites fail to materialise. A strategic policy of the Plan sets out precisely, in what circumstances and under what conditions, a reserve site may obtain planning permission.

At Corsham, Site 4 Land East of Leafield is identified as a reserve site.

Supporting the Town Centre

The Local Plan contains a framework that describes how all the different uses found in the central area function together. It provides context and certainty to business and services. It indicates how the area will operate over the plan period.

The Local Plan Review defines a hierarchy of town centres and the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas. The town centre hierarchy is largely consistent with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy 68 - Managing Town Centres. The role of each centre correlates to the role of the wider settlement within the settlement hierarchy. The town centre hierarchy defines Town Centres Boundaries and Primary Shopping Areas within Principal Settlement, Market Towns and Local Service Centres. Within this hierarchy, Principal Settlements provide strategic centres; Market Towns are large shopping and service focused centres with smaller catchments; and Local Service Centres provide a range of shops and services for the local population, thus serving a village centre function.

The Town Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Area Boundaries were identified in the 2015 Retail Review. The 2020 Wiltshire Retail and Town Study reviewed these boundaries and found them to be up to date.

Corsham is defined as a Market Town in the town centre hierarchy. The town centre boundary and primary shopping area can be found on the policy map.

The Local Plan's aim is to strengthen the town centre.

Corsham's town centre is attractive and characterful, set within a conservation area and benefits from many historic buildings and points of interest, such as Corsham Court and its listed parkland. The town centre area occupies much of the Anglo-Saxon core of Corsham, along with the site of a short-lived 12th century Benedictine Abbey. It is important to conserve and enhance Corsham's historic centre, whilst also supporting innovatively designed proposals which add to the vitality.

The town centre performs a localised retail and service function. The convenience goods offer has remained constant over the past several years, continuing to focus upon primarily a top-up food shopping role, with main food shopping trips by local residents primarily flowing to nearby Chippenham. There is an opportunity to enhance or remodel the Martingate Shopping Centre. An opportunity for new convenience retail floorspace catering for main food shopping to promote self-containment could also be supported with care taken relating to scale and location to protect town centre vitality and viability.

The Retail and Town Centres Study 2020 indicates a small oversupply of retail floorspace through the period to 2035, however there is some potential for a new food store to come forward within the town centre during the plan period, to provide a better range of and to further support local shopping needs. The Study outlines a sufficient supply of comparison good retail floorspace at the town, which supports local independent traders and differentiates from the retail offer at Chippenham. There is also a small potential to grow the food and beverage market over the plan period.

The town has below national average town centre unit vacancy rates, although there has been a rise in vacancies in the centre over the past several years and this should be monitored going forwards.

The Corsham Community Area Framework 2016 suggested a significant opportunity, comprising the remodelling of the development fronting the southern extent of Newlands Road, to transform Newlands Road into a street environment for people rather than a through route for vehicles. It would also provide a positive and welcoming first impression to visitors and encourage people to stop and explore Corsham.

The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (made 2019) supports development that will enhance the vitality of the town centre for residents of Corsham and visitors. It says there are opportunities to enhance and remodel the Martingate Centre and to develop a new supermarket, along with mixed-use opportunities and associated infrastructure, although any loss of car parking spaces would be detrimental to the town.

4. How will growth be delivered?

Landowners, business and housebuilders are the main drivers of development over the plan period. Service providers will also come forward with proposals to invest in new facilities that support growth in new homes and local business. The Council, as local planning authority, determines planning applications in accordance with the Local Plan. It also determines them in accordance with policies of a neighbourhood plan that serves to guide the shape and form of non-strategic aspects of development, such as developing locally distinctive policies on design.

Role of Neighbourhood planning

The Local Plan sets the overarching context for neighbourhood planning in Wiltshire. Strategic policies of the Local Plan are high level and limited to those necessary to address strategic priorities in Wiltshire. At a local level, communities can play an important role in shaping their areas by producing neighbourhood plans which direct where new development should take place, and how it should look. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic

policies set by the Local Plan but can add further locally specific requirements that reflect the wishes of the local community.

The Local Plan sets out a series of Place Shaping Priorities for Corsham that have been devised in consultation with Corsham Town Council. The Place Shaping Priorities set a range of outcomes for the town over the lifetime of the Local Plan to 2038. The Place Shaping Priorities also provide a context that can influence the direction of neighbourhood plans.

In order to assist in the production of neighbourhood plans, Wiltshire Council is also required to provide a scale of housing to plan for, for each one. Sites allocated through neighbourhood plans contribute towards meeting the overall of scale of growth set by the Local Plan, as well as meeting local needs identified through the evidence gathering process for the neighbourhood plan. An element of the Local Plan strategy is therefore to be delivered by neighbourhood plans.

To set an appropriate scale of growth to be planned for through neighbourhood plans at the main settlements (Principal Settlements and Market Towns), a range of factors have been considered:

- Neighbourhood planning lends itself to identifying small to medium sized sites for housing development; and national planning policy sets a target of 10% of overall requirements to be met on sites no larger than a hectare.
- The stage a neighbourhood plan has reached in its preparation, the community's appetite to plan for new homes and its focus all affect the degree to which neighbourhood planning can contribute. The neighbourhood plan can help to meet housing needs in a form that matches local needs.
- The nature and extent of the area designation and what scope there is to identify sites for housing development may be limited, for example, if boundaries are drawn tight to the built-up area and most opportunities will be windfall and difficult to identify.

The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP) was 'made' (adopted) on 15 November 2019. The Neighbourhood Plan contains the vision, objectives and policies identified by the community and that are at the heart of future sustainable development in Corsham over the period 2019 to 2026. By 2026 Corsham will achieve development of high-quality homes, education, health and wellbeing opportunities and a thriving economy providing employment locally, all of which are supported by improved transport infrastructure and sustainable and sensitive use of our environment preserving its heritage. Corsham will be a place where people will continue to enjoy living and working and plan to spend their future. Currently, the Town Council are considering whether to review the adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Corsham, and if so, whether to allocate some sites for housing.

There are likely to be opportunities for the neighbourhood planning process to identify small to medium scale sites to deliver a modest level of growth over the Local Plan period. This could include brownfield sites or land within the built edges of the settlement where potential impacts on the historic environment are likely to be reduced.

There are no other Local Service Centres or Larges Villages within the Corsham neighbourhood area (parish boundary) that have their own separate indicative rural housing requirements⁶. Ten per cent of the scale of growth identified at Corsham suggests a neighbourhood area requirement for Corsham of approximately 36 dwellings. The limits of development for the Corsham area are restricted by environmental constraints. However, there may be some opportunities for medium or smaller sites, within or adjacent to the built-up area, which are suitable to be allocated for housing. A total neighbourhood area designation housing requirement is therefore set at 40 dwellings.

The neighbourhood area requirement should be considered in combination with other evidence of local needs as determined by the neighbourhood planning group. The neighbourhood area requirement is for the Local Plan period up to 2038, and therefore may be delivered over one or more iterations of a neighbourhood plan within this period.

Corsham neighbourhood area requirement (up to 2038)	40
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Local Infrastructure

The growth of Corsham needs to be supported by the correct infrastructure, services and facilities. When planning for growth, it is important to consider the characteristics of the town in terms of key services and infrastructure (e.g. community facilities, green infrastructure, health, education, transport and utilities), as well as housing need and the local economy. The following summarises the key measures required to be put in place to address growth proposals for Corsham as well as known infrastructure issues and their timing, what additional provision is necessary to support growth and what other opportunities there may be.

Education

If there is a shortfall of places financial contributions would be required for the expansion of local nurseries, a local primary school and the secondary school.

Sustainable transport

Corsham is well served by the A4 which provides a direct link to Chippenham and Bath, connecting northwards towards the M4 via the A350. The main highway routes radiate outwards from the A4 and provide links towards the east, south and west of the community area. Corsham is well served by bus routes with regular services to Bath and Chippenham and less frequent services to Trowbridge.

Current transport constraints/concerns include:

- AM and PM peak hour delays on the A4 particularly at the Cross Keys and Chequers junctions.

⁶ Neighbourhood area requirements for the rural parishes are calculated separately, as set out within the Rural Housing Requirements Methodology paper.

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- Peak hour delays on the A4 and into key destinations also affect bus services (partly as a result of a lack of bus priority measures).
- Bus services to outlying settlements are limited unless they lie on key routes.
- Corsham has no railway station – the nearest station is at Chippenham.
- The urban form of Corsham has a strong impact on pedestrian connectivity.
- Facilitating future development growth would increase pressure on the A4 through Corsham and at its junction with the A350.
- Pressure on car parking leading to increasing parking in residential areas and/or illegal parking.

The key improvements are set out below as indicative scheme options that could contribute to the overall ambition for Corsham:

- Improvements to A4 would help relieve a local congestion hot spot.
- Potential reopening of Corsham Station is identified and is also an emerging place shaping priority for the town. Initial feasibility work has been undertaken.
- Strategic parking plan, to make best use of available parking to maximise accessibility but manage private car demand.
- Traffic management and re-routing to ensure vehicle movements are focused on the most appropriate routes.
- Invest in electric vehicle infrastructure.
- Review the HGV network.
- Active travel promotional campaigns.

Health and social care

There is one GP surgery in Corsham and one GP Surgery in Box. Both surgeries have capacity issues. The sites will be expected to provide a financial contribution towards health service provision.

Utilities

The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety, Melksham and Mannington are all constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained.

With the uptake of low carbon technology and the move towards net zero, there are estimates that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something Scottish and Southern Electricity Network (SSEN), as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure.

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In Corsham, it is considered that the current energy infrastructure could withstand further development however reinforcement works may be required to increase network capacity. Further discussions with SSEN would be required.

With regard to water supply and foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required.

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Appendix 1 Policy Context

Strategic policy	Title	Retained, Replaced or Deleted
WCS Core Policy 11	Spatial Strategy for the Corsham Community Area Including Principal Employment Areas – Leaffield Industrial Estate and Five ways Trading Estate	Replace with Policy 12 Corsham
North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Policy T5	Safeguarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corsham Railway Station 	Retain
North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Policy R1	Town centre primary frontage areas	Deleted and Replaced with Policy 68 Managing Town Centres
North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Policy R2	Town centre secondary frontage areas	Deleted and Replaced with Policy 68 Managing Town Centres
North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Policy R7	Upper floors in town centres	Deleted and Replaced with Policy 68 Managing Town Centres

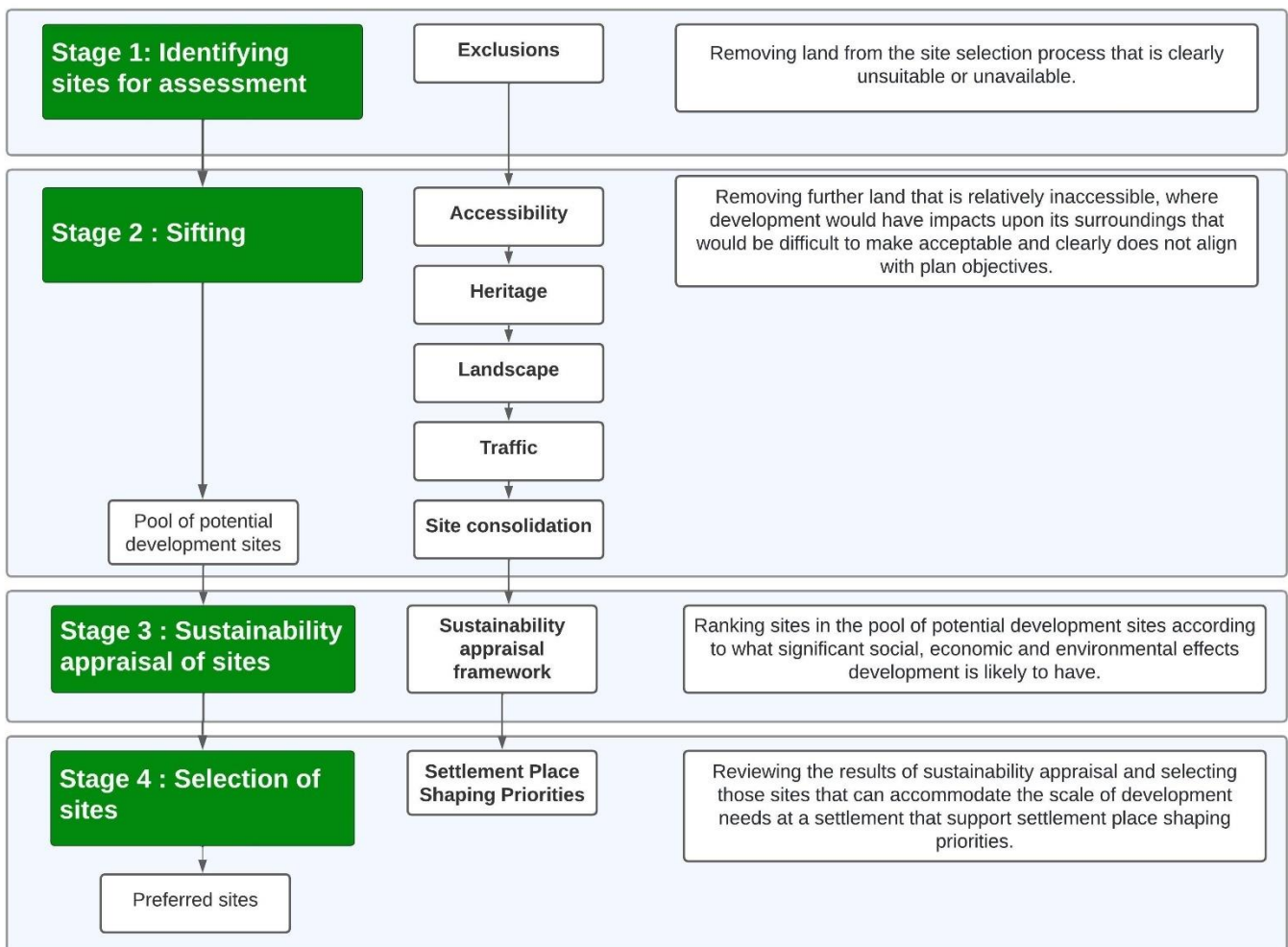
Appendix 2 Site Selection

Site Selection: Corsham

The purpose of this appendix is to explain the site selection process at Corsham, which takes place over a number of stages, as illustrated in the flow diagram below. The full methodology can be found in the supporting Site Selection Methodology report.

This appendix briefly describes the methodology, and explains the outputs that emerge from Stages 1-4, with the concluding stages set out within the main body of this paper.

Summary of the site selection process



Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment

The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment⁷ (SHELAA) provides the initial pool of land from which sites may be selected. The SHELAA is a register of land promoted for development by landowners and prospective developers. Parcels of land are submitted to Wiltshire Council for consideration as potential allocations in the Local Plan, as well as Parish and Town Council neighbourhood plans⁸. Plan preparation, and not the SHELAA, determines what land is suitable for development through a process of selecting the most appropriate sites.

Only sites that were not spatially separated from the built-up edge were considered. The map below shows the SHELAA sites that were considered through the site selection process at Corsham.

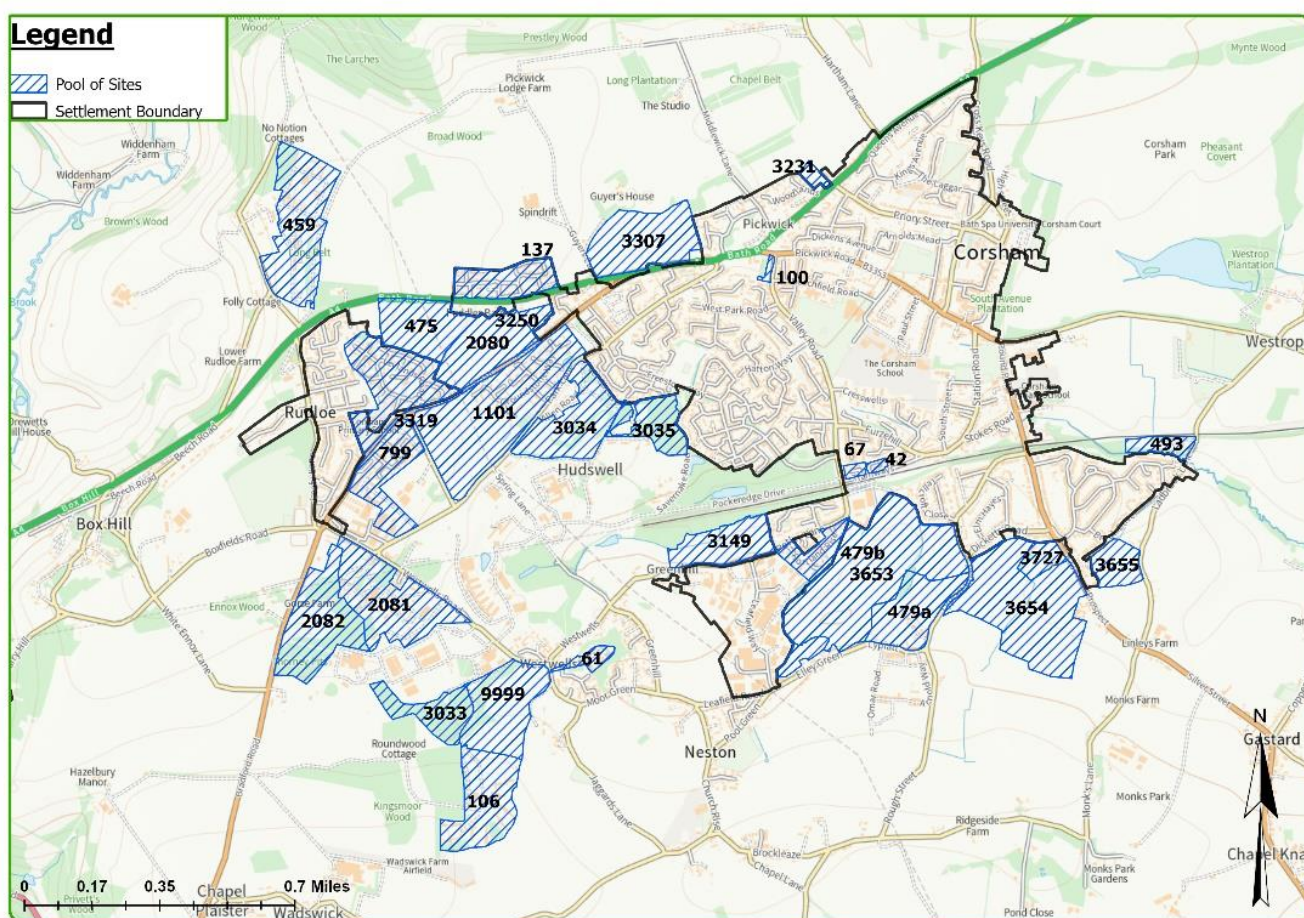


Figure 8. The pool of sites at the start of the site selection process at Corsham.

The following paragraphs summarise the stages of assessment undertaken through the site selection process.

⁷ Information about the [Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment](#) can be found on the Council website.

⁸ Other land, not included in the SHELAA, may be capable of development but because neither a developer nor landowner has promoted the site for development, the site cannot readily be said to be available within the plan period.

Stage 1 – Identifying Sites for Assessment

The initial stage excluded SHELAA sites from further consideration that constituted unsuitable land for development if they were unavailable, separated from the built-edge or clearly unsuitable for development for a range of other reasons, as described within the Site Selection Methodology.

Fourteen sites at Corsham were excluded at Stage 1.

Table 1 Sites Excluded

Site ref.	Reason for removal at Stage 1
3034	Unavailable. Withdrawn from further consideration at the Regulation 18 consultation stage.
137	Built out
100	Small Site
42	Small Site
67	Small Site
479b	Built Out
799	Built out
2081	Part of Rudloe, separate from Corsham
2082	Part of Rudloe, separate from Corsham
3033	Part of Westwells Village separate from Corsham
9999	Part of Westwells Village, separate from Corsham
106	Part of Westwells Village, separate from Corsham
61	Small Site
459	Part of Rudloe, separate from Corsham

Stage 2 – Site Sifting

Using the land that passed through Stage 1, a second assessment stage used a limited set of strategic criteria (proportionate evidence⁹) to further refine the list of sites to a set of *reasonable alternatives* for further assessment using the Sustainability Appraisal. The criteria considered at Stage 2 were related to **Accessibility and Wider Impacts**, and **Strategic Context**, and can be summarised as follows:

- **Accessibility and Wider Impacts**

⁹ To meet national requirements, plans must be sound, justified by having an appropriate strategy, considering reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence.

The merits of each site were assessed to understand strengths and weaknesses in terms of how accessible a site location may be and what wider impacts could result from their development. Sites deemed to be inaccessible, for example if no reasonable means of access to the site could be secured without third party land, were excluded from further consideration. This is further detailed in the Site Selection Methodology.

In addition to accessibility, the following strategic considerations were tested through Stage 2:

1. **Landscape:** A site that was highly likely to lead to landscape or visual harm, that was unlikely to be possible to be mitigated, was rejected.
2. **Heritage:** A site that contained or was within the setting of a heritage asset, that was likely to lead to significant and unmitigable harm was rejected.
3. **Flood Risk:** A site that was wholly within an area at risk from flooding (e.g. in Flood Zones 2 or 3 or other high-risk source of flooding) was rejected.
4. **Traffic:** A site that was likely to lead to an unacceptable degree of harm in terms of traffic and congestion impacts was rejected.

The outcomes from this element of Stage 2 were categorised as high risk of harm (red), medium risk of harm (amber) and low risk of harm (green).

- **Strategic Context**

This part of the Stage 2 assessment considered the pool of sites, in relation to the strategic context of the settlement, having regard to:

- Long-term patterns of development
- Significant environmental factors
- Scale of growth and place shaping priorities
- Future growth possibilities for the urban area

This part of the assessment made a judgement on what pool of possible sites constitute a set of reasonable alternatives for further consideration. This does not pre-judge more detailed testing through the Sustainability Appraisal but enables sites that are clearly at odds with the strategic context for the settlement, to be ruled out.

Strategic Context – Corsham:

Context criteria	Detail
Long-term pattern of development	Strongly influenced by its Bath stone mining history, Corsham has generally grown in a north and then westward direction between the A4 and the railway. More recent growth has extended towards Rudloe.
Significant environmental factors	Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the west and associated foraging habitats and flight corridors are significant constraints to development.

	<p>There are some areas of flood risk associated with small tributaries heading east towards the River Avon.</p> <p>The Historic Park and Garden of Corsham Court restricts development to the east of the town.</p> <p>Historic and current mining activity has influenced historic growth and potentially limits options for future growth, particularly to the north at Hartham Park, which is an extensive and active mine.</p> <p>The need to maintain the character and identity of the villages of Rudloe, Westwells and Neston also limits growth of the town. A rural green buffer has been identified in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the separation of settlements is maintained.</p>
<p>Scale of growth and strategic priorities</p>	<p>The scale of growth is relatively low, reflecting constraints to development at Corsham.</p> <p>Place-shaping priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the separate identities of Corsham from the settlements around the town (Rudloe, Westwells, <u>Gastard</u> and Neston) • Regeneration and revitalisation of Corsham Town Centre, in particular the Martingate Centre • Protect, improve and extend the Green Infrastructure network, including protecting the important habitats for bats and providing additional allotment sites to meet high demand. • Improve transport infrastructure public transport connectivity and pedestrian and cycle routes <u>in</u> and around Corsham and improve road network capacity (particularly to address congestion at junctions along the A4) • Safeguard land for a new railway station • Provision of a second supermarket for the town to provide the opportunity for people to shop locally. • To conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of Corsham’s historic landscape, historic centre and other heritage rich areas including underground mines.
<p>Future growth possibilities for the urban area</p>	<p>The likeliest future growth possibilities are through small extensions to the town to the west and south.</p> <p>There are SHELAA sites being promoted between Corsham and Rudloe, which are in close proximity to ecological constraints (Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC) and may not support the maintenance of separation of settlements. Nor would this be consistent with the role and status of the large village of Rudloe. In this sense, sites to the south of the town (3653, 3654 and 3655) are potentially better located.</p> <p>It would be logical to consider this area comprehensively, to what extent and for what uses the area may be suitable for development.</p>

Table 2: Stage 2 assessment conclusions

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
475	Land Adjacent to A4 at Rudloe						<p>The site falls wholly within the Corsham Rural Green Buffer, designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (Policy CNP E5). The buffer seeks to retain open space to prevent coalescence of settlements and ensure that bat habitat, connected to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC, is protected from unsuitable development. Part of the site is also adjacent to Rudloe and is, there seems, limited scope to allow development of this site without unacceptable narrowing of the gap between Rudloe and Corsham, compromising the neighbourhood plan policy.</p> <p>The site has below average accessibility and is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds.</p>	
479a	Land to the east of Leaffield Trading Estate						<p>The Corsham Rural Green Buffer is a constraint to development of this site in landscape terms (coalescence of settlements).</p> <p>The site is open to potential long-distance views to Bowden Hill to the east although this could be mitigated with suitable planting along the eastern boundary.</p>	

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							<p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Development of this site would be likely to result in unacceptable narrowing of the gap between Gastard and Corsham. Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds.</p>	
1101 (part of)	Land at Rudloe						<p>The undeveloped part of this site falls wholly within the Corsham Rural Green Buffer, designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (Policy CNP E5). The buffer seeks to retain open space to prevent coalescence of settlements and ensure that bat habitat connected to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC is protected from unsuitable development. The land to the northeast of the site, which was permitted at appeal, is currently being built out. The approved layout of the site includes housing close to the site boundary.</p> <p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Development of this site would be likely to result in unacceptable narrowing of the gap between Rudloe</p>	X

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SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							and Corsham. Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds.	
2080	Box School						<p>The site falls wholly within the Corsham Rural Green Buffer, designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (Policy CNP E5). The buffer seeks to retain open space to prevent coalescence of settlements and ensure that bat habitat connected to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC is protected from unsuitable development.</p> <p>The site has below average accessibility and is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Development of this site would result in unacceptable narrowing of the gap between Rudloe and Corsham. Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds.</p>	X
3035 CCC Wood	CCC Wood						<p>The site is a densely covered woodland area which provides a valuable green infrastructure corridor into the centre of Corsham. There is likely to be considerable harm to the green infrastructure of Katherine Park Field to the north if this site was developed.</p> <p>The site also constitutes a significant green gap maintaining relationship of historic core with rural surroundings and constituting rural setting of properties 17 and 19.</p>	X

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							<p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,000m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds</p>	
3231	Pickwick Paddock, Bath Road						<p>Whilst the site allows views into the wider countryside, there is potential for a carefully designed small-scale scheme to be developed on the western half of the site, retaining connectivity with the rural setting. The number of dwellings deliverable on this site would, however, be reduced significantly (estimated in the region of 15 dwellings). Access appears be achievable. Traffic impact from a scheme this size is unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>These issues are not considered sufficient to warrant excluding the site at this stage. Carry forward to next stage to test feasibility of achieving an acceptable layout in landscape terms.</p>	✓
3250	Land to the north of 16 Bradford Road						<p>No significant issues are identified. The site is generally well screened from views to the north and south and is immediately adjacent to existing housing. Its small size and location</p>	✓

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							<p>ensure there is not a risk to coalescence with Rudloe and Corsham. The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,000m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development. Traffic impact from a scheme this size unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>Carry forward to next stage of assessment.</p>	
3653	Land east of Leaffield Trading Estate & west of Lypiatt Road						<p>The Corsham Rural Green Buffer is a constraint to development of this site in landscape terms (coalescence of settlements). However, the part of the site outside of the Green Buffer, and closer to the urban form at Corsham, is 9.3 hectares in area so could still accommodate a reasonably large-scale development. The site is open to potential long-distance views to Bowden Hill to the east although this could be mitigated with suitable planting along the eastern boundary.</p> <p>A limited area along the western boundary of the site is within flood risk zones 2 and 3 but this shouldn't impede significantly on the development potential of the site.</p> <p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p>	✓

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							<p>These issues are not considered sufficient to warrant excluding the site at this stage.</p> <p>Carry forward to next stage for further assessment, including part of site within the Green Buffer which may have potential to provide mitigation through habitat/ landscape enhancement.</p> <p>The site is close to 3654, albeit separated by the Lypiatt Road, so these sites could be considered in combination.</p>	
3654	Land east of Lypiatt Road and west of B3353						<p>The Corsham Rural Green Buffer is a constraint to development of this site in landscape terms (coalescence of settlements). However, the part of the site outside of the Green Buffer, and closer to the urban form at Corsham, is 2.7 hectares in area so still offers reasonable potential for development.</p> <p>In heritage terms, the farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland and mitigation is likely to be a significant constraint here, although avoiding development within the Rural Green Buffer is likely to go some way to mitigate this impact.</p> <p>The site has above average accessibility and less impact on congested corridors, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p>	✓

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
		Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	<p>The part of the site within the Green Buffer may have potential habitat/landscape enhancement. The site is close to 3653, albeit separated by the Lypiatt Road, so these sites could be considered in combination.</p> <p>These issues are not considered sufficient to warrant excluding the site at this stage.</p> <p>Carry forward to next stage of assessment</p>	Green
3655	Land South of Brook Drive	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	<p>The site is open to potential long-distance views to Bowden Hill to the east, although this could be mitigated with suitable planting along the eastern boundary.</p> <p>The existing settlement boundary is open, with built forms visible, so developing this site provides the opportunity to create a stronger urban / rural settlement edge.</p> <p>The site would form a logical extension to the existing built area.</p> <p>The site has below average accessibility but is less likely to impact on congested corridors. These issues are not considered sufficient to warrant excluding the site at this stage.</p> <p>Carry forward to next stage of assessment</p>	Green ✓

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
3149 Land North	Land North of Leaffield Industrial Estate	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	<p>The site falls wholly within the Corsham Rural Green Buffer, designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (Policy CNP E5). The buffer seeks to retain open space to prevent coalescence of settlements and ensure that bat habitat, connected to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC is protected from unsuitable development.</p> <p>The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,500m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Remove from further consideration on landscape grounds</p>	X
3727	South of Dicketts Road	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	<p>The existing settlement boundary is open, with built forms visible, so developing this site provides the opportunity to create a stronger urban / rural settlement edge.</p> <p>The site would form a logical extension to the existing built area.</p> <p>The site has below average accessibility but is less likely to impact on congested corridors. These issues are not considered sufficient to warrant excluding the site at this stage.</p> <p>Carry forward to next stage of assessment</p>	✓
3307	Land North of Bath Road	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	The 10ha site is located to the immediate north of the A4 Bath Road,	

SHELAA Reference	Site Address	Accessibility	Flood Risk	Heritage	Landscape	Traffic	Stage 2A and Stage 2B – Strategic context and overall judgement	Taken Forward
							<p>toward the western side of Corsham and comprises a large arable field, with a smaller historic pasture inset. A public right of way crosses the site from southeast to northwest, linking Corsham Town to the listed Guyers House, which is located a short distance from the northern site boundary. Some harm to the setting of Guyers House would be experienced. The Corsham Conservation Area borders the site and in the immediate vicinity notable buildings include the Grade II-listed St Patrick’s Church and The Coach House, together with the unlisted but historic no.51 Pickwick. The site has above average accessibility but is within 1,000m of a congested corridor, although this does not in itself preclude development.</p> <p>Hartham Park Stone Quarry is located beneath the site. The consented mineral workings have progressed in a south-westerly direction from the oldest part of the mine, away from the site. The consent runs until 2042. There is the potential for noise and vibration to pose a risk to the amenity of residents above ground.</p> <p>Until 2021 the site benefitted from an outline planning consent for 150 homes. The planning permission lapsed in 2021 for reasons relating to the underground quarry. For this reason, the site is not taken forward for further consideration.</p>	X

Of those sites that are taken forward, it was appropriate, in some cases, to combine sites for the purpose of assessment, where this created more sensible or logical land parcels for further consideration.

Sites combined	Reason
3654 & 3727	Two sites adjacent to one another.

In preparation for Stage 3, the remaining sites were relabelled for ease of understanding, as follows:

Site no.	Site Name	SHELAA reference
1	Site 1 Pickwick Paddock, Bath Road	3231
2	Site 2 Land South of Brook Drive	3655
3	Site 3 Land South of Dicketts Road	3654 & 3727
4	Site 4 Land East of Leafield Estate	3653
5	Site 6 Land North of 16 Bradford Road	3250

Stage 3 – Sustainability Appraisal

At Stage 3, each of the remaining sites in the pool of sites (reasonable alternatives) were examined through the Sustainability Appraisal, by assessing the likely significant effects of potential development under a set of twelve objectives covering social, economic and environmental considerations. A full explanation of the Sustainability Appraisal methodology is provided in a separate report, which also includes the detailed assessments made for each site ¹⁰

The Sustainability Appraisal enabled sites to be scored by their respective sustainability benefits and disadvantages. It also identified where it may be possible to mitigate adverse effects, as well as measures which could increase the benefits of development. Stage 3 enabled sites to be ranked in order of most sustainable to least sustainable, based on the Sustainability Appraisal criteria used.

The table below shows the Sustainability Appraisal conclusions for the reasonable alternative sites that were assessed. The overall Sustainability Appraisal score is shown in column 3 of the table.

The Sustainability Appraisal weights all ‘objectives’ (shown in the top row, below) equally. There are more environmental objectives than others – scores against this

¹⁰ Wiltshire Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal Report Annex 2.5 Chippenham Sites Assessment (Wiltshire Council July 2023)

type of objective typically tend to be negative. The overall score resulting from the potential development of greenfield sites generally yield a negative value.

Reasonable alternatives are rejected at Stage 3, where the Sustainability Appraisal concludes that development would result in one or more 'major adverse effect' (highlighted in red with a triple negative).

Five sites assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal at Stage 3, were taken forward for further consideration at Stage 4:

Site 1 Pickwick Paddock, Bath Road

Site 2 Land South of Brook Drive

Site 3 Land South of Dicketts Road

Site 4 Land East of Leafield Estate

Site 6 Land North of 16 Bradford Road

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- Major adverse effect (---) = -3 points (Mitigation unachievable – recommended that site is not considered further)
- Moderate adverse effect (--) = -2 points (Mitigation achievable but problematic)
- Minor adverse effect (-) = -1 point (Mitigation easily achievable)
- Neutral effect (0) = 0 points
- Minor positive effect (+) = +1 point
- Moderate positive effect (++) = +2 points
- Major positive effect (+++) = +3 points

Corsham: Table showing summary of assessment scores listed in order of site sustainability performance (More \uparrow Less)

SITE	Sustainability performance (MORE→LESS)	Overall site score (+ position)	SA obj 1 (Biodiversity) overall score	SA obj 2 (Land + soil) overall score	SA obj 3 (Water) overall score	SA obj 4 (Air/poll'n) overall score	SA obj 5 (Climate) overall score	SA obj 6 (Energy) overall score	SA obj 7 (Heritage) overall score	SA obj 8 (Landscape) overall score	SA obj 9 (Housing) overall score	SA obj 10 (Inc comms) overall score	SA obj 11 (Transport) overall score	SA obj 12 (Economic) overall score	
Site 2		-7 (1 st Joint)	--	-	--	-	-	+	-	--	+	+	-	+	
Site 3		-7(1 st Joint)	--	--	--	-	--	0	-	--	+++	++	--	++	
Site 4		-7 (1 st Joint)	--	--	--	-	-	0	--	--	+++	++	--	++	
Site 6		-8 (4 th)	--	-	--	--	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	--	0
Site 1		-9 (5 th)	--	-	--	--	-	-	0	---	-	+	++	-	+

Stage 4 – Selection of Sites

Stage 4 enabled the results of the Sustainability Appraisal outcome to be qualitatively examined by consideration of sites in terms of their capability of supporting the Local Plan’s objectives for each community – in particular the identified ‘Place Shaping Priorities’ that are listed in Section 2 of this report. Stage 4 also provides discussion and analysis of the scale of growth that would be required to be drawn from the pool of the most sustainable site options, in or to meet the identified housing and employments needs for the settlement.

The outcome of Stage 4 refined the results of the Stage 3 Sustainability Appraisal and identified preferred sites that are more sustainable and support the Local Plan objectives.

The sites were evaluated against the Place Shaping Priorities, looking at their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). This enabled decisions to be made between sites options where Stage 3 outcomes were finely balanced.

The SWOT assessment concluded the following outcomes for each site and Place Shaping Priority:

	Significant strength and/or opportunity
	No significant SWOTs
	Significant weakness and/or threat

Broad proposals were then developed for each of the preferred sites. Proposed uses were identified, including the infrastructure and mitigation necessary to enable development to proceed.

Potential sites at Corsham were assessed against the Place Shaping Priorities, which are set out in the following table:

Table 4: Place Shaping Priorities Assessment

	PSP1 Separate Identity	PSP2 Town Centre Regeneration	PSP3 GI Network	PSP4 Transport	PSP5 New Railway Station	PSP6 New Supermarket	PSP7 Historic Environment
	Strength	Neutral	Weakness	Neutral	Weakness	Weakness	Neutral
Site 1	This is a smaller site, located in the Pickwick area to the north of the town and therefore will not have an impact on the separate identity of surrounding villages.	The town centre is accessible from the site, although improvements would be required to the pedestrian and cycle networks. The site is likely to support the vitality and viability of the town shops through new users.	This is a smaller site and, as such, is unlikely to enable the GI network to be expanded including measures to protect the bats habitat or to include plots for allotments.	There are bus stops linking Corsham with other towns. The site is accessed from the A4 Bath Road, which does have issues with congestion. Development is unlikely to resolve this issue. Further improvements could be made to the pedestrian and cycleway network.	This site is not located near to the safeguarded railway station site.	This site is too small to accommodate a new supermarket.	The site is in a conservation area and a minerals safeguarding area. The site, if developed, could be designed so as to enhance the historic characteristic.
	Strength	Neutral	Strength	Neutral	Weakness	Neutral	Neutral
Site 2	This site is located to the southwest	The site is within a 20 min walk of the	This site may be able to include	There are bus stops nearby	This site is not located near to the	This site could include a new	The site is in a minerals

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	PSP1 Separate Identity	PSP2 Town Centre Regeneration	PSP3 GI Network	PSP4 Transport	PSP5 New Railway Station	PSP6 New Supermarket	PSP7 Historic Environment
	of the town but will not have an impact on the separate identity of surrounding villages.	town centre. Some improvements would be required to the pedestrian and cycle network. The site is likely to support the vitality and viability of the town shops through new users.	some GI and additional plots for allotments.	along the B3353 served by services which link the site to other towns. Further improvements could be made to the pedestrian and cycleway network.	safeguarded railway station site.	supermarket but is located outside the town centre.	safeguarding area. The site if developed could be designed so as to enhance the historic characteristic.
	Neutral	Neutral	Strength	Neutral	Strength	Weakness	Neutral
Site 3	This is a large site and includes land which is designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan as a green buffer. There is a parcel of land adjacent to the existing built-up area which is outside the designation and	The site is within a 20 min walk of the town centre. Some improvements would be required to the pedestrian and cycle network. The site is likely to support the vitality and viability of the town shops through new users.	The site is large enough to include measures to increase GI and, by excluding the southern part of the site, will enable the bats corridors to be maintained and measures to increase habitat for bats to be incorporated.	There are bus stops nearby along the B3353 served by services which link the site to Corsham and other towns. Further improvements could be made to the pedestrian and cycleway network.	The site is on the southern side of the town and is near to the safeguarded railway station site.	The site is large enough for a new supermarket, but this would be located outside the town centre.	The site is in a minerals safeguarding area. The site, if developed, could be designed so as to enhance the historic characteristic.

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	PSP1 Separate Identity	PSP2 Town Centre Regeneration	PSP3 GI Network	PSP4 Transport	PSP5 New Railway Station	PSP6 New Supermarket	PSP7 Historic Environment
	may be suitable for development.						
	Neutral	Neutral	Strength	Neutral	Strength	Neutral	Neutral
Site 4	This is a large site and includes land which is designated in the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan as a green buffer. There is a parcel of land adjacent to the existing built-up area which is outside the designation and may be suitable for development.	The site is within a 20 min walk of the town centre. Some improvements would be required to the pedestrian and cycle network. The site is likely to support the vitality and viability of the town shops through new users.	The site is large enough to include measures to increase GI and, by excluding the southern part of the site, will enable the bats corridors to be maintained and measures to increase the habitat for bats be incorporated.	There are bus stops nearby along the B3353 served by services which link the site to Corsham and other towns including Melksham. and Chippenham. Further improvements could be made to the pedestrian and cycleway network.	The site is on the southern side of the town and is near to the safeguarded railway station site.	The site is large enough for a new supermarket, but this would be located outside the town centre.	The site is in a minerals safeguarding area. The site, if developed, could be designed so as to enhance the historic characteristic.
	Strength	Neutral	Weakness	Neutral	Weakness	Weakness	Neutral
Site 6	This land is located outside the designated Green buffer area.	The site is within a 20 min walk of the town centre. Some improvements would be required to the pedestrian	This is a smaller site and as such is unlikely to enable the GI network to be expanded and will restrict the	This site is located between the A4 Bath Road and Bradford Road. There are bus stops along	This site is not located near to the safeguarded railway station site.	This site is too small to accommodate a new supermarket.	The site is in a minerals safeguarding area. The site, if developed, could be designed so as

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	PSP1 Separate Identity	PSP2 Town Centre Regeneration	PSP3 GI Network	PSP4 Transport	PSP5 New Railway Station	PSP6 New Supermarket	PSP7 Historic Environment
		and cycle network. The site is likely to support the vitality and viability of the town shops through new users.	ability to include measures to protect the bats habitat or to include plots for allotments.	Bradford Road within 400m of the proposed development site. These bus stops are served by the X31 service which links Bath and Chippenham. The site has poor access to the public transport network. Opportunities to enhance connectivity may be limited due to the size of the site.			to enhance the historic characteristic.

Summary

Site	Stage 4 Ranking	SA Ranking of Site	PSP1	PSP2	PSP3	PSP4	PSP5	PSP6	PSP7	Change from SA Ranking
1	3 rd Joint	5 th	✓	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	+/-	↑
2	2 nd	1 st Joint	✓	+/-	✓	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	↓
3	1 st Joint	1 st Joint	+/-	+/-	✓	+/-	✓	+/-	+/-	↔

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4	1 st Joint	1 st Joint	+/-	+/-	✓	+/-	✓	+/-	+/-	↔
6	3 rd Joint	4 th	✓	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	+/-	↓

The outcome of Stage 4 of the site selection process for Corsham can be summarised under the ‘What development is proposed’ section earlier in this paper; concluding that Site 3 Land South of Dicketts Road emerged as the preferred site at Corsham and Site 4 Land East of Leafield identified as a reserve site.

The map below illustrates the outcome of the site selection process (Stages 1-4) at Corsham.

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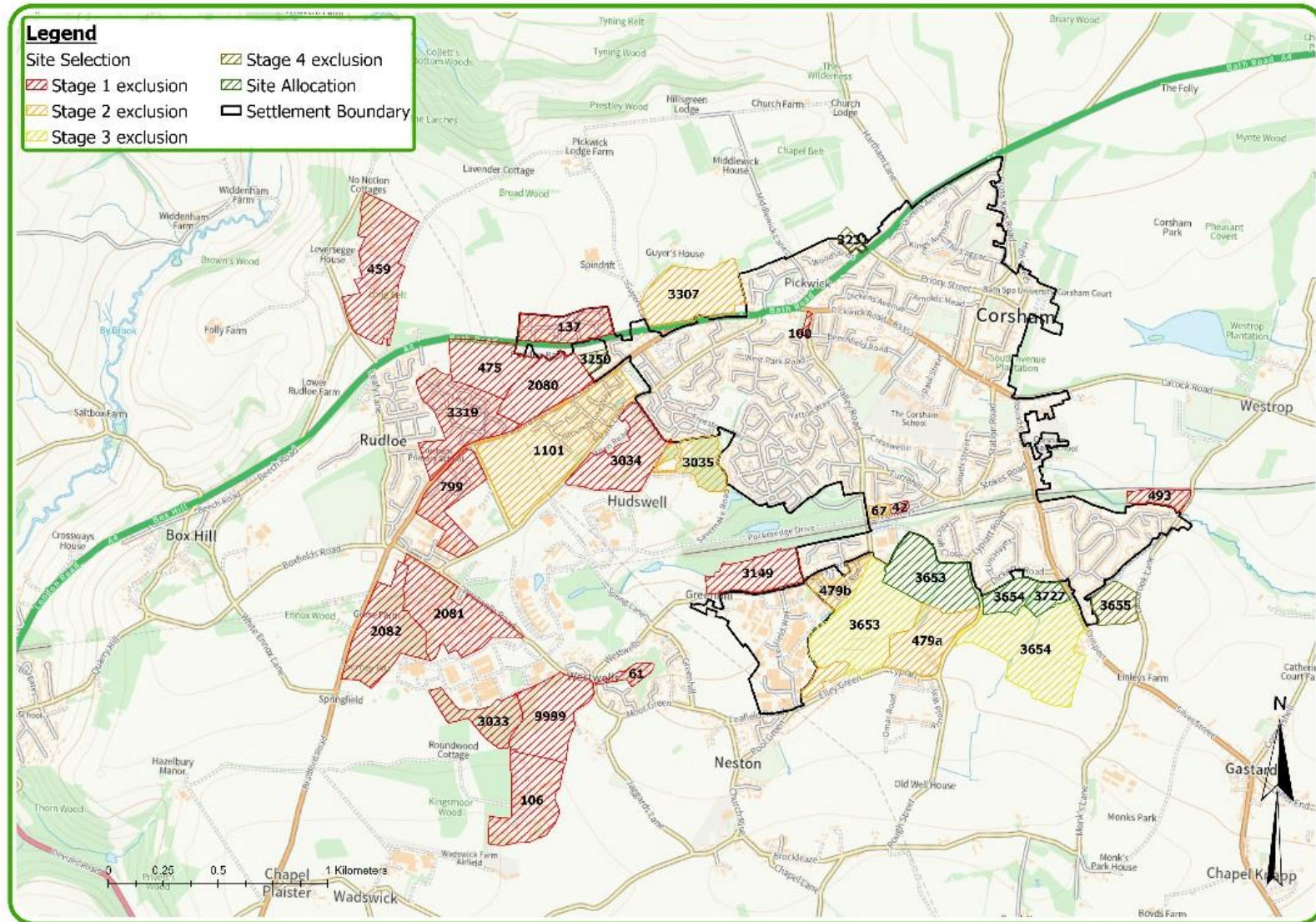


Figure 9. The results of the site selection process at Corsham.