

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

24 May 2011

**Public Participation
Statement from Mr John Bowley, Warminster
On the Wiltshire Core Strategy**

I object to new housing allocations in greenfield areas and to new sales conglomerates, which I believe to be unnecessary, not viable, not really wanted and counter-productive.

Planning for new housing out to the Warminster Bypass line has always been expected, though it seems to contradict previous denials that such would have been an outcome of the proposed, failed, Westbury Bypass project. The new housing market is anyway weak. No reasonable case exists for blighting countryside by hanging housing allocations over it.

I am reminded of an observation of a West Ashton parish councillor that the land allocated for a business park or suchlike on that side of Trowbridge had not been developed during the recent past best years of the British economy; therefore it is illogical to expect it now.

There is poor employment in West Wiltshire, but, for example, we recall Ushers Brewery being shut down for no good reason, blowing away lots of local jobs, and Wiltshire Council counter-productively shedding its skilled staff over many years. I contend that it is absurd of Wiltshire Council to allocate new business areas on the argument of local job creation.

New shopping centres are likely to be counter-productive for our town centres. Here in Warminster, there are conspicuous empty premises on the High Street and East Street. Many shops are struggling. New retail conglomerations would suck the life out of them.

Another example of bad planning which comes to mind is the vanity pavement widening here in Warminster. This burnt-off lots of public money counter-productively. The historic character of the Market Place has been eroded as the once wide road has been narrowed. Most of the rearrangements have been a waste of effort. They appear not to be enforced. Selfish people are regularly parking their cars in the marked loading bays. Vans drive up over and park on the pavements. Lorries, unable or not bothered to use the loading bays, stop doubled-parked in the roadway. So it has all been counter-productive and wasteful.

With many examples, I have no confidence in Wiltshire Council's ability to plan usefully.