

**Wiltshire Council**

**Western Area Planning Committee**

**12 October 2016**

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**Question From: Councillor Ernie Clark, Hilperton Division**

**Question**

I am advised that, in the near past, an approach has been made to the owner's land agent regarding employment allocation E1a with a view to the land being purchased by a commercial company. Amongst other uses for the land a new facility for Trowbridge Town football club was envisaged together with possibly an hotel etc.

I am led to believe that this approach was rebuffed by the agents. Was the WC spatial planning department aware of this? Or indeed anyone at WC?

The approach would have seen an employment use for E1a which, currently, would now seem destined to have an application for change of use to residential at some point in the future (presumably with WC being told that there was no interest in the land with its current designation).

If such an application is forthcoming, what enquires would WC make to investigate past approaches made by would-be purchasers of the employment site?

**Response**

To assist Members and to add a degree of context to the above question, the E1a site is a saved principal employment site allocation, located off the West Ashton Road in Trowbridge which forms part of the adopted Core Strategy. In addition to the Plan allocation, the site benefits from extant planning permission (which was allowed on appeal) pursuant to an employment (Class B1, B2 and B8) development. The consent runs until 24 May 2017 (application W/10/03031/FUL refers).

As a saved employment site allocation, the Council's Core Strategy seeks to support and safeguard it in accordance with Core Policy 35 to achieve inter alia, the strategic objective of delivering a thriving local economy and enhancing a range of job opportunities. Alder King is understood to be the marketing agents for the site to establish the commercial interest which extends to just over 12 hectares.

The noted example of a rebuffed commercial approach from the Trowbridge Football Club is duly noted and whilst the details of the rebuffed approach have not been shared with officers, such discussions or interest that may have taken place between the parties concerned are not obliged to be reported to the Council. Any future applicant seeking permission for an alternative use such as housing, would have to demonstrate what the material circumstances are to justify a different use to that set

out in the development plan and what evidence the applicants have to demonstrate this.