

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

25 February 2025

Notice of Motion No. 2025-04

Existing Employment Sites

From Cllr Philip Whitehead and Cllr Simon Jacobs

Preamble

Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted in January 2015. Although this Core Strategy is now aged it is still used by officers to determine planning applications. This Core Strategy includes the protection and delivery of a thriving economy and protection and enhancement of existing employment in Wiltshire.

We have seen developers argue that the Wiltshire Core Strategy does not specifically protect viable businesses in rural area and consequently I want to repeat and strengthen that support for rural businesses by Wiltshire Council.

This aligns with the NPPF Policy 88, (Supporting a prosperous rural economy) and Policy 98 (Providing social, recreation and cultural facilities and services the community needs)

This protection is essential where we have existing, successful and viable local businesses within our towns and villages employing local people and giving future opportunity to local children. In addition, many of our local businesses provide essential services to our rural communities that would not otherwise be available.

It is worth noting that our emerging Wiltshire Local Plan (Policy 65) strengthens this protection for all employment areas and therefore this interpretation is in line with our emerging Local Plan which has already been supported by this Council.

Motion

Wiltshire Council hereby wishes to express its strong support for the retention of viable and sustainable businesses in rural settlements, recognising the vital contribution that these businesses make to residents' lives and to the Wiltshire economy, as required by Policy 65 (Existing Employment Land) of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan, which has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination this year, and existing National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 88 and 98.