NFDC 34: Note on the definition of employment uses

The Council has been asked to clarify its definition of "employment uses" in the Local Plan in terms of what sort of uses would be acceptable on existing employment sites and proposed employment allocations in the Local Plan Part 2.

Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy refers to industrial and office development, warehousing, managed workspace and marine industries. Policy CS17 mentions the acceptability on suitable sites of a number of other uses including training facilities, and child care facilities. CS17 also includes a note to clause (d) of the policy clarifying that:

"Employment sites can include sui-generis land uses where there is employment and business activity"

Policy CS19 is also relevant and recognises the contribution of tourism to the local economy.

The Local Plan First Alteration includes a definition at paragraph E3.2, which states:

"The phrase "employment sites" is used to refer to all sites in industrial / office / business, or storage or distribution, or financial or professional services, or similar employment uses."

The Council has used both these definitions in implementing its policies. The Local Plan definition is used as a basis for acceptable uses on employment sites, but the Core Strategy is somewhat more flexible in its interpretation of acceptable uses.

In practice, the Council has demonstrated flexibility in appropriate circumstances, for example, in allowing some D1 uses on suitable employment sites. However, these cases are considered on their merits, and are viewed as exceptions to normal employment site policies. The Council considers that some D1 uses would definitely not be appropriate on employment sites and would not wish to incorporate this use class within any definition.

The Council considers that a composite definition of acceptable uses based on those outlined in the Core Strategy and Local Plan First Alteration would adequately reflect its intentions for employment sites and offer suitable flexibility in taking forward the Core Strategy objective for the Economy (page 28 of the CS).

**Proposed definition**

Uses which are considered appropriate on employment sites include industrial, office, business, storage and distribution uses falling within classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order. Other uses which are compatible with those listed above, and which also generate employment, may be appropriate and can include those uses referred to in policies CS17 and CS18 of the Core Strategy, as well as leisure and hotel uses, and small-scale convenience retail stores to serve the locality.

*Footnote: Employment involved in the construction stage of a development is not included in this definition.*