

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**



Date of Meeting 6 January 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **Employment Land Review 2024-25 - Committee report**

### **Report summary:**

This report provides a summary of employment monitoring work focused on employment land development to the year ending 31st March 2025.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes ☐ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☐ No ☐

### **Recommendation:**

That Strategic Planning Committee note the information set out in the Employment Land Review 2024-25 and agree for it to be published on the Council's website. .

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To advise committee of ongoing employment land monitoring

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Economy
- ☐ Finance and Assets
- ☒ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information**

## **Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
  - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
  - ☒ Resilient economy that supports local business
  - ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of services
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## **Report in full**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Through the Planning Policy team, the East Devon District Council (EDDC) produces an annual Employment Land Review (ELR), as appended to this report. This report to Committee forms the monitoring report for the year ending 31 March 2025. This document largely focuses on the successful development of both employment floorspace and the larger plots of land on which development took place. Monitoring is in line with National Planning Policy Guidance requirements for employment and follows advise on what employment considerations can and should be monitored. Satisfying the employment monitoring requirements therefor allows this report to be seen as part of the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) monitoring requirements.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Authorities to support sustainable economic growth by setting out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area and to ensure there is sufficient land available to support growth. To achieve this, an understanding of what development has taken place is foundational.

### **2. Employment Land Use Monitoring in East Devon**

#### **2.1 Monitoring is based on the assessment of the following:**

- B2: General Industrial.
- B8: Storage and Distribution.
- E(g) class which covers:
  - i) Offices to carry out operational and administrative functions.
  - ii) Research and development of products or processes.
  - iii) Industrial processes.
- 'Sui Generis' or other uses that occupy employment sites, that do not fall into a B/E(g) category, but which are similar in nature, are also monitored.

#### **2.2 Employment sites are mapped out within the full ELR report if they cover at least 1,000 square metres (0.1 ha) or form part of a larger employment area such as a business park or industrial estate and is useful for reference. For avoidance of any confusion, "site" in this context constitutes a whole employment area or estate rather than an individual plot of land; so, for example, Heathpark in Honiton is classified as an employment site and within Heathpark there are vacant plots of land, as well as many existing businesses and buildings. A list of small sites is also monitored on an annual basis.**

#### **2.3 Records are available for 2024-25 and the previous 11 years covering:**

- A full schedule of sites which were under construction, with extant permission, and allocated for development informing a source of supply figure for East Devon.
- Detail of annual completions with site areas and resulting building floorspace broken down by land use types.
- Progress of development against allocated areas in the current local plan.
- Floor space lost to non-employment uses.
- Occupancy of business premises using non-domestic rated unit data.

### 3. Overview of Employment Land Review

#### 3.1 Planning Permissions

15 monitored planning permissions were granted during 2024-25 and amounted to approximately 7.54 hectares of net additional site area. Some planning permissions were within monitored employment sites; however, some occurred on small sites outside of monitored areas. Requirements for monitoring are set out in paragraph 2.1 and 2.2.

#### 3.2 Outstanding Permissions

A total of 49.93 Hectares of land has extant planning permission but development is yet to commence as of March 31st, 2025. This area is spread over 44 outstanding permissions.

#### 3.3 Permissions under Construction

The amount of land which is recorded as under construction is higher than in previous years at 3.81 Hectares.

3.4 Previous annually reported data is available in the appended employment land monitoring document, with further detail available in the separate appended Appendix 2 document.

#### 3.4 Completions

16 completions were recorded during the 2024-25 monitoring period which amounted to 5.76 hectares of net additional site area being developed, as of March 31st, 2025. More detail is available in Appendix 2. A comparison of completions with previous years is available in the table below.

Completion Year	Completions (No. Sites)	Land Developed (Ha)
2013-14	15	4.20
2014-15	9	2.10
2015-16	28	7.90
2016-17	15	3.10
2017-18	31	30.80
2018-19	17	5.80
2019-20	22	23.50
2020-21	27	6.02
2021-22	36	14.35
2022-23	19	9.09
2023-24	14	3.08
2024-25	16	5.76
<b>Totals</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>115.69</b>

### 3.5 **Allocated Sites**

A total of 75.54Ha of land has been permitted for development on all employment or mixed-use allocations within the Local plan, Cranbrook Plan and Neighbourhood plans. The remaining total area of land allocated is 122.87Ha. Appendix 5 of the Employment Land Review breaks down the permissions and development across each allocation.

### 3.6 **Non-Domestic Rated Properties**

On April 1st, 2024, there were 1,326 premises within East Devon employment sites rated for non-domestic use; 109 of which (8%) were classed as empty, up 3% from 2022-23. Resulting in an occupancy of 92%. More detail is available in appendix 4 of the ELR.

### 3.7 **Loss of Employment land**

There was a total of 6 sites of previous employment land use which now have non-employment land uses. As a result of granted planning permissions, a loss of 3,119 Square Metres of employment floorspace has been seen. 2024-25 saw an above average floor space loss compared to the average of the previous six years, 1,632 Square Metres. More detail and annual breakdowns are available in appendix 3 of the ELR.

### 3.8 **Vacant Plots with no Allocation**

There is around 10Ha of vacant, but not allocated, land within or around employment sites in East Devon. If an application were submitted on one of these sites there would be a reasonable prospect, in principle, of permission being granted. This section should not be seen as prejudging the planning application process. These sites tend to be outside of the west end offering a wider range of development potential across East Devon. Additional detail surrounding vacant plots is available in Appendix 6 of the ELR.

## 4. **Employment Floorspace created**

- 4.1 10,693 Square Metres of employment floorspace was created in 2024-25. Together, since 2007, there has been 305,985 Square Metres of net floorspace developed. In 2024-25, most floorspace was created within the B2 land use class, 4,874 Sqm Although the total floor space created in 2024-25 falls below the average annual floorspace created over the last 17 years, completions in 2017/2018 raised the average. Potentially a result of the implementation of allocations from the 2011-2031 LP published in 2016 and enterprise zones in the west end.

- 4.2 Tabled below is information from 2007/08 through to 2024/25 for net additional floorspace built for B1/E(g), B2, B8 and recorded Sui Generis uses. Yearly totals are present alongside with resulting annual averages.

Completion Year	Net additional floorspace built in Sqm				
	B1 / E(g)	B2	B8	Sui Generis	Total
2007-08	1,947	1,200	42	353	3,542
2008-09	3630	50	3,300	1,295	8,275
2009-10	485	6,502	778	0	7,765
2010-11	1,038	2,348	7,442	-229	10,599
2011-12	2,326	1,574	4,648	6,163	14,711
2012-13	1,088	4,602	-1,733	170	4,127
2013-14	2,213	1,917	2,191	1,858	8,179
2014-15	1,091	662	1,477	2,269	5,499
2015-16	8,434	2,387	21,986	264	33,071
2016-17	2,092	7,603	1,338	0	11,033
2017-18	9,337	2,366	74,734	0	86,437
2018-19	11,547	123	6,524	142	18,336
2019-20	1,378	5,806	8,183	26	15,393
2020-21	3,287	557	4,644	0	8,487
2021-22	7,135	548	23,815	-20	31,478
2022-23	19,590	70	799	341	20,800
2023-24	2,146	3,618	2,142	-346	7,560
2024-25	4,875	1,434	2,576	1,808	10,693
<b>Totals (M<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>83,639</b>	<b>43,367</b>	<b>164,886</b>	<b>14,094</b>	<b>305,985</b>
<b>Total (Ha)</b>	<b>8.36</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>16.49</b>	<b>1.41</b>	<b>30.60</b>
<b>Annual Average (M<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>4,647</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>9,160</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>16,999</b>

## 5. Future work

- 5.1 For future iterations, we will explore how 'market facing' evidence on supply and demand can be integrated into the ELR. This could include data on actively marketed available employment land and developed units, as well as commercial property enquiries logged with the council. We will also explore how commercial agents can input into the work, providing valuable insight to help provide context to emerging trends and a better understanding of how the market is functioning across the district.

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### Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications identified within the report. (AB-12/12/2025)

### Legal implications:

There are no direct legal implications identified within the report (DH – 15.12.25 – 002533)