WOODBURY PARISH COUNCIL representation at the East Devon District Council Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 21st October 2025.

Good morning, Chairman and Councillors. Before I begin, Woodbury Parish Council would like to give thanks to East Devon District Council, Devon County Council, and everyone else that is involved in the wonderful annual Farmwise event at Westpoint, and others alike.

It's events like this which truly showcase the best of our community. The fact that at this event each year over 1,600 of our primary school children get to learn about farming, from gate to plate, with all those interactive zones… it's invaluable. A shining example of how to engage with agriculture and our rural identity in a positive, educational, and sustainable way.

And while we all support educating children and as mentioned the likes of Farmwise already exist. For schools to visit this proposed site, we must ask: at what cost? The very schools this venture claims to support cannot afford coach visits at a reported £30-£50 per child. In a cost-of-living crisis, this immediately excludes the most disadvantaged children and schools, turning a claimed public benefit into a privilege for the few.

It is precisely because we value this community, its landscape, and its future so deeply, that we must stand today and wholeheartedly support the officer's recommendation to **refuse** this application.

The officer's report lays out the undeniable planning harms with crystal clarity. This development is a clear and unjustified departure from East Devon's Local Plan.
It would cause significant, irreversible harm to our cherished landscape and agricultural land; a blot that will be detrimental to tourism which is the other key sector of our area, it erodes the openness of our Coastal Preservation Area , and be a harm to the setting of our precious Grade II listed buildings. These are not all minor concerns; they are the very foundations of the policies designed to protect our parish's character.

Furthermore, when we look at this proposal, serious questions remain unanswered that go to the very heart of its credibility.

It appears to be a convenient land deal, and we cannot ascertain how the company can fund it. This financial vagueness presents an unacceptable risk to our community. The applicant claims other sites are not 'viable,' yet has provided no financial evidence to demonstrate this. From our local knowledge, we know that some key landowners have not even been approached.

And what of the 100 promised jobs? How many will be *genuine* new positions for local people, and how many just staff relocated from the Darts Farm site? Relocated jobs are not a new wealth for our community.

Furthermore, the location with already strained infrastructure, is unviable and unsustainable. A 24-hour industrial operation, with overnight HGVs, is completely at odds with our tranquil countryside, conflicting with **Strategy 7**. With no footpaths on these dangerous lanes, it forces total car dependency, directly contravening the sustainable transport aims of **Strategy 5B and Policy TC2**

Finally, all these serious questions remain, this isn't about being resistant to a good business, it's about protecting what we have. The harms significantly outweigh the benefits; this location is just not suitable. We have a duty to be the stewards of this parish and we must stand and protect our landscape and not be left with a damaged one.
We hope this committees supports their officer's recommendation and local plan and **refuses** this application.