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Contact: 07312 081892
Email: liam.beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Liam Beckett County Councillor
Brampton & Buckden Division
New Shire Hall, Emery Crescent,
Enterprise Campus, Alconbury Weald, PE28 4YE

Planning Application 25/01922/OUT - Newlands Park, Brookfield Farm, Ermine Street, Great Stukeley

Dear Development Management Committee Members,

I am writing to submit a formal objection to planning application **25/01922/OUT** for the proposed Newlands Park (formerly Hinchingsbrooke Logistics Park) at Brookfield Farm. Having reviewed the officer's report, the Environmental Statement, and the technical consultee responses, I believe the application conflicts with several key policies of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

My objection focuses on four principal areas:

1. **Excessive building heights and unacceptable visual/amenity harm**
2. **A fundamentally incomplete and unreliable Transport Assessment**
3. **Severe impacts on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road, emergency access and the A141 corridor**
4. **Unassessed impacts on Buckden Roundabout and the wider strategic network**

I also include a final section recommending **necessary conditions** should the Committee be minded to approve the application.

1. Building Heights - Conflict with LP10, LP11, LP12 and LP14

The proposed building heights of **18.5m, 21m and 24m** are wholly inappropriate for a site located:

- **150m from residential properties** (DMC Officers Report: "the closest proposed building would be not less than 150m away", quoting the report)
- **Immediately adjacent to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park**, one of the district's most sensitive landscape assets
- **On rising ground**, increasing visual prominence

The Council's own Landscape Consultant confirms that even after revisions:

“Residual moderate adverse landscape and visual effects would remain, for up to Year 15 post-development.”

(DMC Report, Landscape section)

Place Services similarly concluded that the height reductions were limited, and localised visual harm remains moderate adverse even at Year 15.

This directly conflicts with:

LP10: The Countryside

Requires development to respect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. A 24m skyline of industrial buildings cannot be reconciled with this requirement.

LP11 & LP12: Design Context and Implementation

Require development to respond positively to local character. The officer report acknowledges that the massing will remain visually intrusive for at least 15 years.

LP14: Amenity

Requires development to avoid oppressive or overbearing relationships. A 24m ridge height, on elevated plateaux, within 150m of homes, **is inherently overbearing.**

LP34: Heritage Assets

Historic England confirms the scheme causes *less than substantial harm* to the Grade II* Church of St Bartholomew and other listed assets.

This harm must be given **great weight.**

Why 24m is unnecessary

The applicant has already agreed to **21m maximum** at their Cambridge site. Many comparable logistics parks operate successfully at **15 - 18m.**

There is no functional requirement for 24m buildings here, and the applicant’s justification (“commercial drivers”) is not a material planning consideration.

Requested modification:

A site-wide height cap of **18m**, which would materially reduce visual harm and bring the scheme closer to Local Plan compliance.

2. Transport Assessment - Incomplete, inaccurate and unsafe

The Transport Assessment (TA) is not fit for purpose. This is not an opinion; it is the view of the **Highway Authority itself**.

The County Council's Transport Assessment Team states:

"The applicant's transport assessment is significantly under-representing congestion and delay... and is therefore not appropriate for use."

(Highways Response, p.1)

They further confirm:

"The network is already over capacity... the TA has not accurately shown the development's impacts."

(Highways Response, p.1)

This is a fundamental failure under:

LP16: Sustainable Travel

Requires full consideration of transport impacts. The TA demonstrably fails this test.

LP17: Vehicle Movement

Requires safe and suitable access for all users. Without accurate modelling, this cannot be demonstrated.

NPPF paragraph 116

Development should be refused where residual cumulative impacts are severe. Without a reliable TA, severity cannot be assessed.

Missing or flawed assessments include:

- **No modelling of Buckden Roundabout**, despite being a known over-capacity junction and a major HGV route. National Highways has not completed a traffic assessment regarding the impact on Buckden Roundabout.
- **No modelling of A1307 / Views Common Road / Hinchingbrooke Park Road**, despite CCC previously requiring it.
- **No modelling of the A1307**, because the applicant asserts - without evidence - that no traffic will use the A1307. The assertion is very likely untrue – anecdotally a simple google maps or apple maps search will direct traffic towards the site via the A1307.
- **Use of 2011 Census data** for worker travel patterns, which the Highway Authority notes is inappropriate and outdated.
- **No assessment of traffic displacement** into Great Stukeley, Little Stukeley, Brampton, Abbots Ripton or rural lanes - despite multiple parish councils raising this as a predictable outcome.

This is not a minor technical gap. **It is a systemic failure that makes the application unsafe to determine.**

3. Severe Impacts on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and Emergency Access

Hinchingsbrooke Park Road is already a single-access estate serving:

- 800+ homes
- Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
- Hinchingsbrooke School (2,100 pupils)
- Cromwell Academy
- Police HQ
- Fire HQ
- Country Park visitors

The DMC report acknowledges:

Residents report routine delays of 30 - 60 minutes... emergency vehicles already experience delays.

A video submitted to the Council shows an ambulance unable to exit the estate due to congestion.

I am personally familiar with this congestion too, having first experienced it when my daughter was admitted to hospital in 2024. A trip home to Offord Cluny to collect clothes took over 2 hours due to congestion leaving Hinchingsbrooke Road.

The development adds:

- **2,448 HGV movements per day**
- **5,000 - 7,500 total daily vehicle movements**
- **24/7 operations**

This is incompatible with:

LP12: Design Implementation

Requires safe access for emergency vehicles.

LP14: Amenity

Requires protection from noise, disturbance and traffic impacts.

NPPF paragraph 135(f)

Requires developments to avoid undermining community safety.

The Highway Authority confirms:

“This part of the network is heavily congested with extensive queuing... the TA significantly under-represents congestion.”

Without a **Blue Light Impact Assessment**, the application cannot be safely approved.

4. Unassessed Impacts on Buckden Roundabout and the A1/A14 Corridor

Buckden Roundabout is already a recognised congestion hotspot. The development will generate:

- A high proportion of **southbound HGVs**
- Additional LGVs and employee traffic
- Increased pressure on the A1 and A14 corridors

Yet National Highways has not completed a traffic assessment regarding the impact on Buckden Roundabout.

This is a clear breach of:

LP4: Infrastructure Delivery

Requires adequate capacity in the strategic network.

NPPF paragraph 104

Requires developments to consider cumulative impacts on the wider transport network.

Until National Highways completes a full assessment, the application is premature.

5. Additional Material Conflicts with the Local Plan

Loss of tranquillity and landscape character (LP10, LP11, LP12)

The Council’s Landscape Consultant confirms long-term loss of tranquillity.

Heritage harm (LP34)

Historic England identifies less-than-substantial harm to multiple listed buildings.

Tree loss (LP31)

The proposal removes a Category A Giant Redwood and a linear woodland belt.

Cumulative impact not assessed (LP2, LP18)

The site sits within the emerging North Huntingdon Growth Cluster.
The application is premature without a cluster-wide transport and infrastructure assessment.

6. Requested Conditions if the Committee is Minded to Approve

If approval is granted, the following conditions are essential to mitigate harm:

1. Building Height Cap: Maximum 18m

Justification:

- Reduces visual harm
- Aligns with comparable Newlands schemes
- Supports LP10, LP11, LP12, LP14 and LP34

2. Restricted Operating Hours

07:00 - 21:00 only (Mon-Fri), no 24/7 operations. **08:30 – 20:00** Weekends and bank Holidays, no 24/7 operations.

Justification:

- Protects residential amenity (LP14)
- Reduces night-time noise and light pollution
- Reduces air pollution
- Supports bat protection and dark skies

3. Mandatory Noise Reduction Measures

A continuous acoustic barrier along the **eastern boundary** facing Hinchbrooke and restrictions on tonal reversing noise at unsociable hours (i.e. applicable beyond the hours

suggested in the section (2) above, if this condition is not applied)

Justification:

- Required to meet BS4142 thresholds
- Supports LP14 and NE3

4. Upgrade of Hinchingsbrooke Road / Views Common Road Junction

A full junction capacity upgrade must be secured via S106.

Justification:

- Multiple parish councils and the HRA identify this as a critical bottleneck
- Required to maintain emergency access (LP12)

5. Blue Light Impact Assessment

Must be completed and approved before any development commences.

6. ANPR Enforcement of Weight Limits

To prevent HGVs using Views Common Road or residential streets.

7. Full, independently verified Transport Assessment

Including:

- Buckden Roundabout
- A1307
- Hinchingsbrooke Park Road
- J13/J14
- Traffic displacement modelling

Conclusion

The application, in its current form, is **not compliant** with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan or the NPPF.

The evidence from the Council's own consultees - particularly the Highway Authority - demonstrates that the Transport Assessment is incomplete and unreliable, making the application unsafe to determine.

The scale, height and massing of the proposed buildings cause unacceptable visual, amenity and heritage harm.

The impacts on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and emergency access are severe and unmitigated.

The absence of thorough, accurate modelling for the A1307 is a **critical omission**:

- 2,448 HGV movements per day
- 5,000 - 7,500 total daily vehicle movements
- 24/7 operations

Any error in the traffic modelling - even a small one - risks creating serious danger for the public. If HGVs divert through Brampton or along the A1307 (a high possibility given a simple test on google maps demonstrates this), they will be travelling through residential streets used daily by families, schoolchildren and vulnerable road users. These routes already struggle with ordinary traffic levels; adding the volumes predicted for this development would push them beyond safe capacity. **The applicant simply can't mitigate this risk** – it would be impossible to completely ensure that all signage makes it certain that the operations would not impact the local residents that have elected me to represent them.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee **refuse** the application, or at minimum **defer** it pending completion of the missing assessments.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Liam Beckett

County Councillor for Buckden & Brampton