Arboricultural Consultation Response

Application No: 25/00406/FUL	**Location:** The Old Camp Site Molesworth Road Old Weston
Case Officer: JW	**Proposals:** - Erection of new storage building and extension to existing building to provide office accommodation

Observations:

The proposal is not located within the Conservation Area, but there are a number of established mature trees growing nearby that form an important landscape and ecological feature. The trees are within influencing distance of the proposal and need to be consideration as part of the design and application processes.



2020



2025

Any application would therefore have to demonstrate that there will be no significant impact to these trees and that any retained trees will be protected during the construction process.

The imagery provided with the Arb Survey below shows the approximate location of the proposal and details that 51 mature trees will need to be entirely removed in order to allow the development. This would go against every planning and policy that the NPPF and Huntingdonshire Council publish.

The report acknowledges that the woodland was already established in 1998, and imaging from this time shows shadowing stretching across the road nearby indicating that the trees has been in some time by then. As such we have a woodland or group of trees that has been at least 35 years and has good diversity of species.



A tree count by species was undertaken within the proposed build area with a +/- 5% accuracy depending on the precise building footprint, a range of diameters to give an average per species was also recorded, the average diameters by species are in brackets.

Field Maple 3 (240), Oak 4 (165), Corsican Pine 17 (235), Ash 19 (325), Sycamore 8 (243).

The proposed footprint was marked out with pegs on the ground; the area is approximately 25m wide from east to west and 52m from north to south, with 17m of tree cover extending from the proposed northern build-out edge to the road boundary.

This assessment extended a further 3m beyond the edges of the building footprint to allow for workspace and RPA clearances.

It is not clear how many replacement trees would need to be planted to offset this wholesale removal, however it is likely to involve a significant area, and many hundreds of trees. It is not clear why the building cannot simply be located to the South of the woodland area in what used to be agricultural land, but has clearly change purpose over the past few years. This would have zero impact on trees nearby and would result in very low environmental impacts.

It is not clear how anyone involved thought this would be an allowable development, and there is no way I can be in support of it.

LP 30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

This policy focuses on safeguarding and enhancing the district's ecological value.

- **Development must avoid harm** to biodiversity and geodiversity assets, including trees, woodlands, and habitats.
- Proposals should align with national planning policy.
- If harm is unavoidable, it must be **minimised and mitigated**, with compensation as a last resort.
- The policy supports the **protection of trees** as part of wider ecological networks—especially those with veteran or ancient status.

This indirectly reinforces the protection of RPAs by discouraging development that would damage root systems or tree health.

LP 31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows

- Development proposals must **retain and protect existing trees**, especially those of high arboricultural or landscape value.
- **Encroachment into RPAs is discouraged**, and any such impact must be justified and mitigated.

- Proposals should include **tree surveys and arboricultural impact assessments**, following BS5837 standards.
- New planting is encouraged to **enhance green infrastructure** and compensate for unavoidable losses.

Recommendation: Refuse Application – It is not essential, does not take account of the trees on site, could be located elsewhere, and is against all the applicable planning policies.

Signed: NS	**Date: 16/10/2025**