The application (24/02123/FUL) title claims to be for an agricultural building. However, the Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) states that the building will be used for the storage and conditioning of onions grown elsewhere in East Anglia. From our research, for a building to be claimed to be for agricultural purposes, an agricultural trade or business should be operating on the agricultural unit where the building is to be erected. The applicant is not conducting any agricultural activity on this site, nor is he proposing in the future to conduct any agricultural activity on this site. This application is for a storage and distribution facility.

There is a local storage and distribution facility which is North of the A1 and within 400 metres of this proposed site, the Crossway Distribution Centre. We do not believe that there should be industrial storage and distribution facilities south of the A1 close to the village of Alconbury Weston.

LP10 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan concerns proposed development in the open countryside. It states that 'Development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan'. The application for this development does not make reference to any other policy of the Local Plan.

The applicant believes that the development should be allowed; the PDAS states that the proposed building has been 'designed as a typical agricultural building' and therefore meets LP10. There is no other justification. In his 'Principle of Development' section of the PDAS the applicant does not say that the building will be used for agricultural purposes. As this application fails to satisfy any of the Local Policies the development clearly does not meet the requirements of LP10 and should be refused.

There are no other parts of the Local Plan that have been referenced that the applicant believes that he needs to meet. However, from our analysis, the parts of the Local Plan that are pertinent are discussed below.

LP2 - Strategy for Development states that it will: Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside, as well as Conserve and enhance the historic environment. The site for this application is within 200 metres of the houses on the north west side of Vinegar Hill, nearest Alconbury Weston. There has been approval to build 15 houses North of Butchers Close (23/02503/REM is the latest planning application relating to this site) and when this development is completed it will fill the gap between Alconbury Weston and the houses currently on Vinegar Hill, so extending the built-up area of Alconbury Weston. The proposed storage and distribution business would be too close to the new village boundary and would affect the setting so failing to meet LP2. Also, LP2 seeks to conserve the historic environment. This business seeks to convert an existing field access which is overgrown, with no obvious signs of recent use, into a business access that will be used by HGVs. This is immediately adjacent to the cottages at 1-4 Hill Top Cottages. Alconbury Hill is a hamlet with an historic site of considerable archaeological importance. This application fails to satisfy LP2

LP14 – Amenity. The application states that predicted adverse noise impacts, including internal and external levels, timing, duration and character, will be acceptable. There is no evidence to qualify this statement. The proposed entrance to this business would be immediately adjacent to 1-4 Hill Cottages (a row of 4 houses) located at Alconbury Hill. In the applicants PDAS in their section on Amenity they do not acknowledge the siting of the vehicle entrance to the site, which is immediately adjacent to Hill Cottages. They believe by siting the building at the southernmost point of the site will minimise impact on amenity. However, this building would be close to the built-up area of Alconbury Weston once the Butchers Close development is completed. The applicant also

chooses to describe the temporary entrance to the site for construction as being away from local residents as maintaining the amenity of local residents, which is irrelevant for planning purposes. The entrance to the site being adjacent to 4 Hill Cottage will see movements from up to 6 cars and 2 HGVs at any time, based on the parking slots that are proposed for the site. The applicant admits that the facility can be seen from the public road, and could also be seen from the eastern part of the village which will impact the vista from the Village. This development would see a considerable loss of amenity for the residents of Hill Cottages, Alconbury Hill and does not meet the requirements of LP14.

LP15 Surface Water – The proposed drainage plan places the development within 20 Metres of an existing watercourse, which is acknowledged in the redacted application, and the drainage plan does not reflect the proposed use of the access at Hill Cottages, Alconbury Hill as the primary site access. It shows the 'temporary access' as the main site access. Currently, the watercourse bordering this site regularly overflows onto the road leading into the Village putting the properties fronting the road on the Tanglewood development at risk of water ingress from surface water runoff. The lack of an up to date drainage plan that supports the application for this development is considered unacceptable and should be submitted and validated before we can determine if this development meets the requirements of LP15. Additionally, should this development go ahead the building should be moved to be at least 25M from the existing watercourse.

LP17 - Parking Provision and vehicle Movement states 'A clear justification for the space for vehicle movements and level of vehicle and cycle parking proposed will need to be provided taking account of: highway safety and access to and from the site; the amenity of existing and future occupiers and users of the development and nearby property.'

It will be difficult for HGVs to turn off the public highway without significant alteration to the current access to this site which is immediately adjacent to 4 Hill Cottage. Not only would the vehicles have to turn into this site from a blind bend on a National Speed limit road, they would be turning both into and out of the site right immediately adjacent to 4 Hill Cottage. We are unable to comment on the amount of movements, as the applicant has not informed us of this detail, but we note that the site provides parking for 2 HGVs and 6 Cars, and as the business is for storage and distribution we believe that this will attract a substantial amount of traffic movements. This will seriously affect the amenity of the residents at Alconbury Hill Cottages and we believe that this application does not meet the requirements of LP17.

LP19 – Rural Economy. This application fails to meet any of the requirements of LP19. This is a new business for the area, however, the applicant does say that he has an existing business for the production and supply of onions elsewhere in East Anglia. We have not seen any evidence that his business produces onions. His business is not located within the vicinity of the proposed site and from the application it would appear that the nearest business premises owned by the applicant are in Yaxley. This application does not meet the definitions of 'New Business Development' or 'Farm Diversification for LP19. As an existing business to meet the requirements of LP19 the proposal must satisfy the criteria for 'Expansion of an Existing Business'. From the description in the local plan we understand that expansion of an existing business would be an expansion adjacent to the site that the business is operating from. This is clearly not the case for this application. The applicant has not offered any evidence as to why requirements: e-reuse of existing buildings, or f-more efficient use of space within his current business sites are possible. The application is for a building on grade 3 agricultural land, which satisfies requirement g. We have already argued that the scale, character and siting of the proposal will have a detrimental impact on its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape , so it fails to meet requirement h. Finally, this is not an application for a rural

business and as such has no legitimate reason to be located in the countryside. This business, the storage and conditioning of onions, would be better located in our local Established Employment Area, the Crossways Distribution Centre. The only requirement that this application meets is that the proposal is for a development on grade 3 agricultural land. This application does not meet the requirements of LP19.

LP34 Heritage Assets and their settings – There is no assessment as to whether this application affects the setting of one of our heritage assets which is located at Alconbury Hill. This area is rich in archaeological features and before any development activity is carried out, there should be an appropriate investigation on the site.

This application claims to meet the requirements of LP 10 for development in open countryside, which is an LP that can only be satisfied by meeting the requirements of other policies within the Local Plan. The application does not provide any evidence that the development would satisfy any of the other policies within the Local Plan, and of the policies that LP10 refers to, the only policy that could be applicable to this application is LP19. This application fails to satisfy LP19, and therefore LP10. We recommend that this application is refused.