Alconbury Parish Council

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Endurance Estates Limited
Unit 1 The Press
Station Road
Foxton
Cambridge
CB22 6SA

Dear Sirs,

Objection to Proposed Commercial Development known as Brampton Cross

We are writing to formally object to aspects of the proposed commercial development known as Brampton Cross, with particular reference to transport access and egress, traffic flow, infrastructure capacity, building scale, and environmental concerns including flooding risk. These objections are not only based on longstanding local knowledge, but also supported by data gathered during the public exhibition held on Saturday 21 June 2025, at which residents were invited to complete questionnaires regarding the development.

The exhibition attracted significant public interest, with respondents from across the local area: 71.7% were from Alconbury, 19.2% from Alconbury Weston, 4.2% from Brampton, 2.5% from Barham & Woolley, 0.8% from Kimbolton, and 1.7% were of unknown origin. The results of the survey make community sentiment clear:

- Only 13.3% were in favour of the development, while 80.8% opposed it, and 5.8% were unsure or did not comment;
- 95% of respondents expressed concern about traffic impact, with just 0.8% unconcerned; 4.2% gave no comment. Even if traffic concerns were mitigated, 61.7% would still oppose the development, 30% might then support it, and 8.3% were unsure or did not comment;

- 89.2% were concerned about flooding, with 8.3% not concerned and 2.5% unsure or not commenting. If the Alconbury Flood Group were to endorse the developers' mitigation plans, 40% said they might be reassured, but 50.8% would remain concerned, and 9.2% were undecided or did not comment;
- 87.5% were concerned about the proposed building height and massing, with only 11.7% not concerned and 0.8% not commenting. If buildings were scaled appropriately, 25.8% could be placated, but 59.2% would still be concerned, and 15% were uncertain or did not comment.

These results clearly demonstrate that the majority of local residents have serious and unresolved concerns about the proposed development, particularly in relation to traffic, flooding, the disproportionate scale of construction and the potentially inappropriate visual and character impact on the northern aspect of your site from Alconbury village. It is vital that these concerns are addressed in a transparent and meaningful way.

1. Proposed Bus Route into Northern Corner of the Site

The inclusion of a bus route entering the northern corner of the site raises serious safety, environmental, and logistical concerns:

- **Heritage Bridge Weight Restriction**: The proposed bus route currently crosses a heritage-listed bridge which is subject to strict weight restrictions. It is acknowledged that, during the process of the first public consultation, there appeared to be a change in tone from the developers' consultants, suggesting a possible acknowledgement that this route is unviable. It was implied that the bus route may need to be re-routed along the B1043, then down Great North Road, before continuing onto Globe Lane as originally proposed. However, this alternative presents its own serious issues and has not been clearly addressed in the current plans;
- **Inadequacy of Globe Lane**: The proposed route then proceeds along Globe Lane, which is a single-track road with only limited passing bays. This road is entirely unsuitable for large vehicles, such as buses, due to its constrained geometry and lack of visibility in places. The unsuitability is further exacerbated by the anticipated frequency of such heavy vehicles, which would significantly increase the risk of congestion, delays, and potential safety issues along this narrow route;
- **Environmental Damage to Protected Road Verges (W02 and W03)**: Any effort to widen or upgrade Globe Lane to accommodate bus traffic would inevitably damage the adjacent Protected Road Verges. There are two in close proximity and on roads adjacent to Brampton Cross: one near the bottom of Globe Lane and the other along Woolley Road going towards LabCorp (these are designated W02 and W03). These

areas are ecologically sensitive and safeguarded by Cambridgeshire County Council, and their disturbance is wholly unacceptable;

- **Inherent Danger of Mixing Buses and Bicycles**: The development's promotion of shared use between buses and cyclists along such a narrow and restricted corridor presents a significant safety hazard. The space is insufficient to accommodate both safely, increasing the risk of serious accidents;
- **Lack of Long-Term Guarantees for Bus Provision**: There is no binding commitment that bus services will be maintained in perpetuity. Without a legally enforceable, long-term transport plan, the assumed benefits of public transport access may not be realised, leaving residents and visitors dependent on car travel and thereby exacerbating congestion.

2. Traffic Flow Through Alconbury Village

The anticipated increase in traffic volume through Alconbury is wholly unacceptable for a rural village already under considerable pressure from existing road use:

- The current volume of traffic is already excessive and hazardous, especially for vulnerable residents including the elderly, disabled, and children;
- Morning peak traffic will coincide with school start times, and heavy afternoon traffic is also expected at school end times and during the end-of-day working peak, compounding risks to safety in the village at both ends of the day;
- Since the opening of the new A14 junction, the village has experienced a steady rise in commuter traffic, particularly from drivers accessing the LabCorp site via Globe Lane, in preference to using the Woolley Road roundabout – placing further pressure on unsuitable rural lanes;
- The forthcoming secondary school on Alconbury Weald will further intensify vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Rusts Lane, particularly along the B1043, which is ill-equipped to handle this increase;
- We understand that the traffic projections are based on data from July 2023, which is not only outdated but likely unrepresentative, given seasonal fluctuations and ongoing regional development;
- Residents attending consultation events were informed that no traffic data had been gathered for the north-western approach to the site, suggesting a critical gap in traffic modelling and impact assessment;
- The Parish Council has not been provided with current or complete traffic survey data, despite repeated requests. This lack of transparency is concerning.

These omissions severely undermine the credibility of the development's traffic assessment and planning logic. Crucially, the Alconbury Weald development is still in its early stages, and the full scale of future traffic flow through the area – particularly around and through Alconbury – has not yet been realised. As the development expands and new infrastructure such as the secondary school becomes operational, the cumulative effect on local roads will be considerable. Introducing additional traffic from the proposed Brampton Cross development at this time, without a complete and robust understanding of long-term network capacity, would be premature and highly detrimental to the safety and character of the village.

3. Northern Gate Entrance to Site

The proposed northern entrance presents further issues:

- There is no meaningful solution offered for discouraging or mitigating private car usage at this entry point, undermining claims of sustainable site access;
- The developer's response to potential HGV traffic via this entrance remains nebulous, with no enforceable restriction. Globe Lane remains at risk of being used by unsuitable vehicles, raising safety and environmental concerns once again.

4. Site Access and Road Network Limitations

The strategic road network is already strained, and the proposed development would exacerbate existing weaknesses:

- The Woolley Road roundabout, designated as the main access point to your site, is inadequate to handle the significant increase in traffic volume expected from the development;
- The Brampton Hut roundabout currently serves as the sole access point to the A1 in both directions. This single node is already overburdened and has proven to be a traffic bottleneck. As part of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme, it was explicitly acknowledged that the previous A14 infrastructure in this area was inadequate to meet current and future traffic demands. While the upgrade improved capacity on key sections of the A14, it did not fully resolve the limitations around Brampton Hut, which remains a critical pressure point in the local and strategic road network;
- Only the A14 eastbound traffic has a direct route to the Woolley Road roundabout. Currently the A14 westbound traffic has to exit onto the A1 up to Brampton Hut roundabout, thereby converging with A1 north and south traffic before reaching Woolley Road. However, it is believed that the currently restricted access slip road on the A14 westbound may be opened for the Brampton Cross development. Whilst this

might alleviate some traffic flow through the Brampton Hut junction, the existing infrastructure is not only at capacity already but is also highly susceptible to delays, congestion and safety incidents.

- There has also been a suggestion that the existing bridleway could be converted to a road, providing vehicle access past the LabCorp site directly off the B1043 roundabout as an alternative route onto Brampton Cross. However, this would require a formal change of use of the bridleway and any proposal must include the reinstatement of the bridleway elsewhere to maintain access for non- motorised users, including equestrians, cyclists and walkers. The likely position for any reinstated bridleway would be on the opposite side of the A1, joining the Brampton Hut roundabout, which would significantly diminish its safety, accessibility and recreational value. This change also raises planning, environmental and public access issues that have not been transparently presented or consulted upon to date.

5. Flooding and Surface Water Run-off

A further significant concern relates to the flood risk posed by surface water run-off from the site. The land in question is predominantly heavy clay, which results in rapid run-off during periods of rainfall - particularly between October and April.

Approximately 60% of surface water drains towards Ellington Brook and 40% into Cock Brook. Following heavy or sustained rainfall, these flows - combined with upstream catchment contributions - accumulate approximately 1.5 km south of Alconbury, in the area of Armstrong's Gorse, Nook Farm, and the racecourse.

Drainage in this area is naturally slow due to minimal topographical fall: the brook bed south of Alconbury lies at approximately 12 metres AOD, falling to 10 metres AOD at the racecourse, and finally to 8.5 metres AOD at Nuns Bridge before joining the River Great Ouse. This shallow gradient causes water to back up, resulting in persistent flooding and delayed water clearance from the landscape. As a result, storm water from the development site is likely to exacerbate existing flood risks, increasing the burden on already stressed drainage channels and threatening both agricultural land and residential areas downstream.

The development has the potential either to reduce or significantly increase flood risk in Alconbury and Ellington, depending on how it is managed. Actions that would increase flood risk include:

- Inadequate on-site storage capacity for stormwater;
- Rapid, uncontrolled release of water from the site;
- Discharge of sediment into the lower reaches of the brook, potentially reducing channel capacity;

- Failure to install flood mitigation measures before construction begins;
- Failure to restore or improve soil porosity in designated green or landscaped areas.

We are aware that you have met with Alconbury Flood Group, who have access to the same hydrological modelling tools and data used by the developer's consultants, and that the Group's model produces outcomes nearly identical to those submitted in the developer's documentation for a 1 in 100-year rainfall event.

However, the Flood Group has requested that any drainage solution should provide:

- Sufficient storage to accommodate a 1 in 200-year flood event, accounting for increasing storm intensity due to climate change;
- A controlled discharge strategy that ensures stormwater is released gradually over a 5-day period, thereby minimising the chance of flow accumulation, channel backup, and downstream flooding.

Failure to meet these criteria could place additional properties and infrastructure in Alconbury, Ellington, and surrounding areas at risk. It is essential that flood mitigation is not treated as a post-construction matter, but rather designed, consented, and implemented at the earliest possible stage, and that it aligns with both best practice and local knowledge.

In addition to concerns directly linked to the Brampton Cross site, it must also be recognised that the proposed Hinchingbrooke Logistics Park, located between the racecourse and the Spittals interchange, could contribute to a cumulative flood impact should this proceed. Both developments lie within the same local catchment area and would channel surface water towards the already constrained system south of Alconbury. Without coordinated, cross-site flood modelling and shared mitigation strategies, the risk of overwhelming local watercourses and increasing flood risk to Alconbury, Ellington and surrounding areas could be significantly heightened. It is essential that this cumulative effect is formally assessed and addressed before any planning consent is considered.

6. Building Heights

The proposal to construct buildings up to 30 metres in height is wholly inappropriate for the setting and significantly out of character with both the surrounding valley landscape and the village locality. This level of height will cause substantial visual intrusion when viewed from surrounding rural areas, including Alconbury and Alconbury Weston, and would dominate the skyline in a way that is inconsistent with the scale and form of neighbouring settlements.

For comparison, the proposed Hinchingbrooke Logistics Park – a similarly strategic development in the region – is planning maximum building heights of 18 to 24 metres, which

demonstrates a more proportionate and considered approach to siting within a sensitive landscape. The proposed 30m structures at Brampton Cross significantly exceed this and set a concerning precedent for overdevelopment in rural contexts.

We urge the developers to reassess the scale and height of buildings to ensure alignment with local character, landscape sensitivity, and regional planning precedent, particularly given the potentially inappropriate visual and character impact on the northern aspect of your site as viewed from the villages of Alconbury and Alconbury Weston.

7. Site Layout and Parking Provision

The internal site layout appears to be over-reliant on non-car travel:

- The reliance on bus and cycle routes seems to mask the likelihood that there will be insufficient on-site parking, particularly for employees and visitors arriving by car;
- Without realistic parking provision, there is a risk that designated open spaces could be informally used as overflow car parks, diminishing the site's environmental and amenity value.

8. Health and Wellbeing Impacts on the Wider Community

While the development proposal places considerable emphasis on the health and wellbeing of on-site employees, it pays little regard to the negative impacts it would have on surrounding communities – particularly Alconbury. The increase in commuting traffic through the village will inevitably bring more airborne pollutants, dirt and noise, directly affecting residents' health, tranquillity and quality of life. This is of particular concern for elderly and disabled residents living at the top of Globe Lane, several of whom suffer from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and other respiratory conditions. Increased vehicle emissions in this area would pose a direct risk to their health and wellbeing.

Of additional concern is the impact on Globe Lane, which is not only a rural lane ill-suited to heavy traffic, but also a valued and well-used route for recreational purposes. Residents of Alconbury regularly use it for dog walking, running, cycling and horse riding. In addition, employees from LabCorp frequently use the lane during their lunch breaks for walking and exercise. This shared, low-traffic route supports both physical and mental wellbeing, and its transformation into a busy bus and vehicle route would completely take this away from the community.

Moreover, despite the wide area of impact, environmental monitoring has only been proposed within Brampton Cross, with no monitoring sites planned in Alconbury or other

surrounding villages. This limited scope fails to account for the full extent of environmental disruption likely to be caused by the development.

Conclusion

In summary, the transport and infrastructure elements of the proposed developments are not only flawed but pose direct risks to community safety, environmental integrity, and rural character. These concerns, if not addressed, will undermine the sustainability and acceptability of the development.

We urge you to reconsider the current plans and to engage meaningfully with the local community, including Alconbury Parish Council. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the mitigation measures that must be taken to address these issues and to develop an approach that reflects the real constraints and sensitivities of the area.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Brown

For and on behalf of
Alconbury Parish Council

cc Ben Obese-Jecty, MP for Huntingdon
Ian Gardener, District Councillor, Huntingdonshire District Council
Charles Dalleywater, Alconbury Flood Group