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**Lolworth Service Station
A14, Lolworth
Cambridgeshire, CB23 8DR**

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme

**Comments on Responses to ExA's
First Written Questions**

**Prepared on behalf of
MRH (GB) Ltd
(Ref: A14-AFP350)**

Deadline 4 – 07 July 2015

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**Appendix A Highways England’s Response to ExA’s First Written Questions
(Question 1.5.7)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 MDJ & Associates are retained by MRH (GB) Ltd to submit further comments on the company’s concerns in relation to the application for development consent submitted by Highways England in relation to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme.
- 1.1.2 MRH (GB) Ltd is an Interested Party for the purpose of the examination of the application for development consent, having already submitted:
- (i) a Relevant Representation dated 17th February 2015 in relation to the scheme
 - (ii) a Written Representation dated 9th June 2015 (Deadline 2 – 15 June 2015)
 - (iii) a Response to Examining Authority’s (ExA’s) First Written Questions dated 9th June 2015 (Deadline 2 – 15 June 2015)
- 1.1.3 On 17th June 2015 the Planning Inspectorate published the responses which they had received relating to the ExA’s First Written Questions.
- 1.1.4 These included Highways England’s response to Question 1.5.7:
- ‘What signage would be provided for Lolworth Service Station from the A14 in the scheme? How would this compare with existing signage from the A14?’**
- 1.1.5 For ease of reference a copy of Highways England’s response to the above question is attached to this statement at **Appendix A**.
- 1.1.6 This statement considers Highways England’s response and highlights the relevant policy and road safety matters relating to the proposed access arrangement and signing for Lolworth Service Station.
- 1.1.7 In this statement any reference to Highways England also means Highways Agency in respect of all matters and references before 1st April 2015.

2 ACCESS TO THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

2.1.1 The Department for Transport’s Circular 02/2013 – THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK AND THE DELIVERY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – sets out the way in which the Highways Agency will engage with communities and the development industry to deliver sustainable development and thus, economic growth, whilst safeguarding the primary function and purpose of the strategic road network.

2.1.2 Paragraphs 38 and 39 state:

’38.New accesses to busy high speed strategic roads lead to more weaving and turning manoeuvres, which in turn create additional risk to safety and reduce the reliability of journeys, resulting in a negative impact on overall national economic activity and performance.’

’39. Where appropriate, proposals for the creation of new junctions or direct means of accesses may be identified and developed at the Plan-making stage in circumstances where it can be established that such new infrastructure is essential for the delivery of strategic planned growth.’

2.1.3 Paragraph 40 states:

*’40. Where the strategic growth test cannot be met there will be no additional junctions with, or direct means of access to, motorways or other routes of near motorway standard¹⁰ other than for the provision of **signed roadside facilities for road users** (see Annex B), maintenance compounds and, exceptionally, major transport interchanges.’*

’¹⁰ Routes of near motorway standard will normally be grade-separated dual carriageway routes benefiting from restricted direct access.’

(highlighted and underlined by MDJ & Associates)

2.1.4 Annex B of Circular 02/2013 specifically deals with the roadside facilities for road users on motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England.

2.1.5 The A14 scheme has been designed to 3 or 4 lane all-purpose dual carriageway standards with a number of new or improved grade separated junctions. The design standards adopted for the scheme represents the highest standard of road layout for all-purpose dual carriageway rural roads.

2.1.6 The A14 scheme, subject of the DCO, incorporates a new access arrangement for Lolworth Service Station consisting of a direct entrance from the A14 westbound slip road at Bar Hill junction and a direct exit onto the A14 dual three-lane westbound carriageway.

- 2.1.7 With reference to the Department for Transport’s policy on creating new accesses onto the strategic road network, it can be concluded that the current scheme has been devised taking into account the availability of comprehensive services at Lolworth Service Station for the passing traffic on the A14. It is therefore of the utmost importance in the interest of highway safety that the service station should be provided with comprehensive advance services signs from the A14 and that the provision of the signage required should be secured through the development consent order.

3 COMMENTS ON HIGHWAYS ENGLAND’S RESPONSE ON SIGNAGE FOR LOLWORTH SERVICE STATION

3.1.1 Comments on Paragraph 30 of Highways England’s response:

- (i) The proposed service station entrance and exit arrangement will be directly from the A14 trunk road albeit that the entrance will be via the westbound slip road at Bar Hill junction.
- (ii) Although it is confirmed that the proposed A14 would be to near motorway standard, there is no explanation why new direct accesses are devised to serve Lolworth Service Station without any intention to provide advance services signs from the A14.
- (iii) The existing facilities at Lolworth Service Station which consist of Fuel, Shop, Restaurant and Motel met the minimum requirements for the provision of advance services signs from the A14 trunk road.

3.1.2 Comments on Paragraph 31 of Highways England’s response:

- (i) The provision of local services signs only from Bar Hill junction would not be satisfactory as it is likely to create confusion and lead to highway safety hazards at the service station and the adjoining A14 and Bar Hill junction.
- (ii) Paragraph 40 of Circular 02/2013 specifically sets out the Department for Transport’s policy for creation of new accesses onto motorways or other routes of near motorway standard which is limited to the provision of **signed roadside facilities for road users**, maintenance compounds and, exceptionally, major transport interchanges (para 2.13 above).

3.1.3 Comments on Paragraph 32 of Highways England’s response:

- (i) The signing scheme for the service station, including advance services signs on the A14, is a material consideration as part of examining the operational and safety aspects of the service station as well as the adjoining A14 and Bar Hill junction. The application for development consent submitted by Highways England provides an opportunity for such principles to be rigorously examined and for the measures required to ensure an acceptable level of highway legibility and safety to be secured.
- (ii) In the absence of a comprehensive advance signing scheme for Lolworth Service Station, Highways England’s proposed scheme would constitute a major departure from the current road design standards by creating direct accesses onto the A14. The design principals, the adopted standards and any departures from design standards are a material consideration as part of the current DCO procedures.

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APPENDIX A

Highways England’s Response to ExA’s First Written Questions (Question 1.5.7)

Question 1.5.7

What signage would be provided for Lolworth Service Station from the A14 in the scheme? How would this compare with existing signage from the A14?

Response

30. Highways England does not consider it practicable to provide advanced direction signage to all petrol filling stations and roadside restaurants from the trunk road network, particularly those that are not accessed directly from the trunk road. As the A14 is proposed to be improved to near motorway standard it would only be appropriate to provide advanced direction signing to facilities that are either designated or similar in nature to motorway service areas. The current facility on the westbound carriageway near Bar Hill would no longer be accessed directly from the trunk road and would not provide the facilities of a comparable standard to motorway service areas.
31. As a result of the scheme, Lolworth Service Station would only be accessible from the westbound merge slip from Bar Hill Junction. Local signage would therefore be provided for Lolworth Service Station on the Bar Hill junction roundabout only. The existing signage for Lolworth Service Station is shown in Figure 1.1, below. One sign is on the westbound carriageway of the A14, a third of a mile in advance of the services. There is also an existing sign at the end of the existing Bar Hill westbound merge slip road approximately 140m in advance of the services entrance. As part of the scheme this existing signage would be removed.



Figure 1.1: Advance signage for Lolworth Service Station, Bar Hill.

SOURCE: Google Maps (<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/>).



Figure 1.2: Advance signage for Lolworth Service Station, Bar Hill

SOURCE: Google Maps (<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/>).

32. It should be noted that as part of the DCO scheme submission only the strategic advanced direction signing has been designed, as this would affect gantry positions which would have an effect on the DCO in terms of land take and environmental assessment. The design of all minor signage would be a matter for detailed design post DCO.