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Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

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Dear Sirs,

**Greater Cambridge Local Plan - Policy S/RRA/SCS: Land to the south of Cambridge Services, A14-
Additional HGV parking on land adjacent to A14 Cambridge Services, Swavesey**

As owners of the existing Services, we fully support the proposed allocation. As we have previously set out there is a significant need for Cambridge Services to provide additional HGV parking spaces in order to meet the current and future demand in this location, by extending its site to the east.

We have historically supported the proposed allocation at the Services through previous draft plans and a 'Call for Sites'. It is encouraging that the original smaller allocation has been extended to include the 'eastern field', which the current allocation now includes, with a view to providing additional HGV parking associated with the Services. This inclusion not only provides additional HGV and EHGV spaces but importantly will aid the functionality of the Services.

Currently, the Services provides modern roadside facilities with easy access to both carriageways of the A14 for the A14 / M11 route and the A1(M). Along with a food court and ancillary retail outlets, the Services also includes an 81 bed roomed Ramada Hotel with integral restaurant facilities, together with a self-service launderette primarily for the use of HGV drivers. As with all our Services there are washroom, shower and WC facilities in both the Food Court and the Fuel Filling Station, with parking facilities available for all types of vehicle, including HGVs and coaches. The MSA is also equipped with an Electric Vehicle charging hub, operated by Ionity and consisting of 6No. 350 Kw 'high powered' EV charging points, with plans in place to double capacity to match take up in EVs.

Cambridge Services is located at Junction 24A of the A14 which is approximately 4km north of the M11. Significant works were completed in 2021 by National Highways to the A14 corridor, including at Junction 24A, which provides a direct bypass to Huntingdon. In addition to general growth on the network as a result of the A14 improvements, the A14 scheme also removed a significant number of existing roadside HGV Laybys. This has resulted in a marked increase in the use of the MSA by HGVs.

The facility has recently been upgraded to include additional HGV and car parking areas. The current level of parking on site is set out below:

- 132 HGV Parking Spaces;
- 525 Car / LGV spaces (of which 20 are Disabled Driver spaces);
- 24 Coaches; and
- 12 Caravans.

Since the A14 scheme was completed, the facility has experienced significant growth in HGV parking. Whilst the most recent improvement scheme was designed to accommodate expected flows, demand already exceeds capacity at nights when the demand for lorry parking peaks. The accompanying updated Needs Assessment produced by David Tucker Associates provides an update on projected future demands at the Services.

The Lorry Parking Demand Assessment (LPDA) was published by the Department for Transport (DfT) in August 2024 and was prepared to provide National Highways with an assessment of lorry parking demand on or close to the SRN. The study shows that there is high off-site HGV parking demand on the A14 in the East of England, with

'critically utilised' lorry parks found on the M6/A14 between Birmingham and Cambridge. The Cambridge Services themselves are identified as having 93% lorry park utilisation in the study, with areas experiencing 85-100% utilisation referred to as 'Critical' in the study. The findings support our experience at Cambridge, that the site is currently operating at capacity. Indeed, recent data suggests that there are occasions where peak lorry parking demand at the Services is close to 200 spaces, well in excess of existing HGV parking provision on the site.

There is evidence of HGVs having to park on the public highway when the site is at capacity and driver time limits prevent travelling further to the next MSA. The shortage of parking provision is also beginning to cause concerns both in terms of vehicle parking within the facility in non-HGV parking areas, but also evidence of HGVs parking on the slip roads.

As set out in the accompanying Needs Assessment, the site currently caters for up to 40,000 vehicles per week, of which nearly 4,000 are HGV movements. This is significant in the context of existing flows on the A14 and accounts for nearly 10% of all movements on the A14 daily. The level of demand and usage of any MSA is directly related to the level of traffic using the network it serves. Based on the National Highways application for the A14 improvement scheme the traffic flows past the site on the A14 are forecast to increase to 106,000 by 2035. This equates to an increase of around 30% from the current flows and therefore weekday average HGVs passing the site could increase to as much as 27,000 per day based on the AAWT figure

The importance of Service Areas is clearly set out in paragraphs 74 and 79 of Circular 01/2022. The Circular sets out a minimum requirements in relation to HGV parking requirements based on the HGV flows on the SRN that it serves. Whilst this was previously set at 0.5% of the daily HGV & coaches within Circular 02/2013, the new Circular refers to a figure of 1% in areas where there is an "identified need". With regard to 'identified need', Cambridge Services was shown to be operating with 'critical' levels of utilisation when the study was undertaken in 2023. On this basis, and taking into account the first-hand experience on site, the higher figure of 1% is appropriate here.

Based on the 2024 peak month recorded AADT HGV flows on the A14 included within the Needs Assessment, there is an existing requirement for 186 HGV spaces at the services. In the future, this would increase to around 242 spaces taking into account the growth predicted by NH as part of the work undertaken for the A14 improvement scheme.

The Needs Assessment concludes, "The Draft Local Plan makes an allowance for an additional 150 lorry parking spaces which if provided would bring the total at the Services to 282 (132 existing plus 150 additional). This would be sufficient to accommodate the 242 spaces derived above in relation to forecast growth and would be equivalent to approximately 86% utilisation. Based on the LPDA, this would still correspond to a 'critical' level of utilisation and therefore further expansion of the facilities may be required in the future."

In addition to the benefits identified above, the expansion space created by the proposed allocation incorporating land to the east would also allow a redesign of the traffic flows around the Services, which would help to reduce the potential conflict between cars and HGVs, which can at times lead to traffic backing-up on the roundabout.

As owners of the existing Services we fully support the proposed allocation and Jaynic's proposal to extend it to the east. As we have previously set out there is a significant need for Cambridge Services to provide additional HGV parking spaces in order to meet the current and future demand in this location, by extending its site to the east.

A previous submission included a masterplan which incorporated the existing allocation, together with the 'eastern field', where it is proposed the current allocation is extended. The proposed additional allocation comprises approximately 6.05Ha, of which 2.25Ha is for additional HGV parking associated with the Services. The remaining 3.8Ha would accommodate additional employment land.

Extending this allocation to include the eastern field is important to improve the functionality of the Services. As we expressed previously, DfT Circular 02/2013 confirmed at Para B4, that: "Motorway service areas and other roadside facilities perform an important road safety function by providing opportunities for the travelling public to stop and take a break in the course of their journey". Since our original submission, this Circular has now been updated and has been replaced by the DfT Circular 01/2022. The updated Circular reinforces the statement that,

"The primary function of roadside facilities is to support the safety and welfare of road users." The A14 Service Area is an essential part of the strategic MSA network.

Your faithfully



Dennis Enuson

Group Development Director
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