



Active Travel England Planning Response Detailed Response to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England
To: Hannah Watson, East Hertfordshire District Council

Application Ref: 3/23/1447/OUT
Site Address: Land East Of The A10, Buntingford

Description of development: Outline planning for the development of 350 dwellings, with up to 4,400 sqm of commercial and services floorspace (Use Class E and B8) and up to 500 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Classes E) and other associated works including drainage, access into the site from the A10 and Luyne Rise (but not access within the site), allotments, public open space and landscaping

Notice is hereby given that Active Travel England's formal recommendation is as follows:

- a. ~~**No Objection:** ATE has undertaken a detailed assessment of this application and is content with the submission.~~
- b. **Conditional approval:** ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions and/or obligations as set out in this response.
- c. ~~**Deferral:** ATE is not currently in a position to support this application and requests further assessment, evidence, revisions and/or dialogue as set out in this response.~~
- d. ~~**Refusal:** ATE recommends that the application be refused for the reasons set out in this response.~~

1. Background

- 1.1. This recommendation is the third response provided by Active Travel England (ATE) and responds to the Technical Note 1 'Response to Active Travel England Comments' dated 14/12/2023. In preparing this recommendation ATE has taken into account the recommendation from Hertfordshire County Council as the highway authority dated 27th October 2023 which proposes a number of conditions and obligations, and the WSP response to it, dated 14th of December following a meeting between the applicant and the highway authority. We have also contacted the highway authority to clarify its position and understand some negotiations are ongoing.
- 1.2. Since the application was submitted the applicant has undertaken work, in response to ATE's recommendations, to assess key routes connecting the site to

facilities and proposed improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. The layout has been reviewed and changes have been made to extend the pedestrian and cycling facility to the employment area. It has been agreed that the layout, including the spine road, will be designed with a 20mph speed limit. The travel plan has been reviewed and remedial measures are outlined in the response.

2. Summary

2.1. ATE has no objection to the application, subject to the following recommendations and obligations being secured.

3. Recommended Planning Conditions and Obligations / Reasons for Refusal

Connections via Luynes Rise and Aspenden Road

3.1. ATE notes the Section 278 works proposed, and that a condition is suggested by the highway authority. ATE agrees with the principle of a scheme to reduce speeds on this route; however, in order to achieve the necessary priority for pedestrians and cyclists a more comprehensive scheme is required. It is understood that the highway authority is liaising with the applicant to secure a revised scheme.

3.2. It is recommended that Condition 9 (highway authority recommendation 27/10/2023) is updated to reference a finalised drawing that outlines, in principle, the revised, agreed scheme. **Reason:** To give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 116.

Active travel access on to Luynes Rise

3.3. As far as can be determined from the submitted plans no detailed drawing of the proposed active travel access from Luynes Rise has been submitted. ATE supports condition 1 (highway authority recommendation 27/10/2023) and would like the following to be added to 1 (v) Accesses to include all accesses to the site including pedestrian, cycling and bus routes. **Reason:** To ensure safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users in accordance with NPPF paragraph 114.

Wider connections

3.4. ATE notes the plan in Annex C of the Technical Note, identifying schemes to be delivered through a Section 106 contribution. ATE agrees with the principle of the improvements but strongly recommends the schemes to be delivered by the developer are secured through a Section 278 agreement with the highway authority, to ensure timely and cost-effective delivery. ATE recommends the work be secured by a condition similar to number 9 (highway authority recommendation 27/10/2023) and references a numbered drawing, with the schemes delivered prior to first occupation. **Reason:** To give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 116 from the first occupation of development.

Travel Plan

3.5. ATE supports an obligation in the Section 106 agreement to include the provision of travel plans for the residential areas and employment area. ATE would like to see included details of remedial measures as outlined in the WSP technical note 14/12/2023 in the Section 106 agreement as follows:

- Payments to the county council to cover the costs of implementing measures which were agreed but not implemented.
- Implementation of works expected to remedy the failure
- Limitations on the way the site can be used

3.6. The Section 106 should also include any key items agreed such as car clubs, cycle hire and free or subsidised bus travel tickets and incentives. **Reason:** To ensure a successful travel plan that promotes active and sustainable travel in accordance with NPPF paragraph 117

Design Code

3.7. Prior to commencement a design code should be submitted to and approved by the planning authority for the following:

Mobility hub:

3.8. The mobility hub should be an attractive recognisable place with an offer of different connected transport modes, supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to benefit residents. It should include features such as bus stops with attractive waiting areas serving local bus routes, community transport and school buses as appropriate, secure cycle parking and hire, car club parking, electric vehicle charging, parcel collection points as well as other non-transport related facilities to make it an attractive useful addition to the community. The code should include details of management and maintenance of the hub. **Reason:** To ensure high standards of design for the mobility hub and ensure the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code in accordance with NPPF paragraph 114.

Active Travel Recreational Route

3.9. The Recreational Route as shown on the Development Framework Plan (Drawing number 10537-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-A1002 Issue P07) ensuring the width and surfacing accommodate walking, wheeling and cycling in accordance with LTN 1/20, to provide links between the residential areas, community hubs, play areas and allotments as well as a leisure route around the site for all residents.

Reason: It is noted that the current intention is for the recreational route to only accommodate pedestrians. ATE considers that this is an opportunity missed to provide a safe environment that allows children to learn to cycle and encourages leisure walking, wheeling and cycling and promotes a healthy, inclusive, safe places in accordance with NPPF paragraph 96.

Cycle Parking

3.10. ATE supports the highway authority condition 6, and would like added to it that the cycle parking scheme should include provision at allotments, play areas and community facilities as well as residential and employment areas. ATE recommends that details of cycle parking standards and design to be included in a design code. **Reason:** To ensure high standards of design for cycle parking and ensure the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code in accordance with NPPF paragraph 114.

4. Next Steps

4.1. ATE recommends that the above conditions and obligations are attached to any decision of approval. ATE is happy to discuss these with the planning or highway authority if clarification is required.