



Active
Travel
England

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Your Ref: APP/23/00488
Our Ref: ATE/23/00333/FULL
Date: 14 August 2023

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Havant Borough Council

Application Ref: APP/23/00488

Site Address: LAND WEST OF, COLLEGE ROAD, PURBROOK,
WATERLOOVILLE, PO7 8SN

Description of development: Application for mixed use residential development comprising 628 dwellings, community centre, allotments, public open space including play areas, new junction to College Road, related internal access road, footways and cycleways, pumping station and drainage basins.

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.~~

1.0 Background

ATE welcomes the opportunity to comment on this application for this mixed use residential development of 628 dwellings. It is approximately 2km northwest of Bedhampton rail station

The site was previously allocated for mixed-use development for up to 650 dwellings in the Local Plan, however this document was formally withdrawn in March 2022. To date ATE has not provided pre-application advice on this proposal.

2.0 Summary

ATE is generally supportive of the proposed location in terms of its proximity to local transport and amenities, however following a review of the application it has identified several issues that require further consideration and enhancements which ATE considers are necessary in order to meet current national policy to make walking, wheeling and cycling the first natural choice for local journeys, taking into account the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, together with the attractiveness of the routes connecting the wider area. The means by which residents, employees and visitors to the development will access homes, local facilities and their place of work, together with how they undertake internal trips is of key concern. This will have a direct bearing upon the residual impacts of the development, but more importantly the health and lifestyles of future inhabitants of the development and the wider area.

ATE has considered the submitted plans and access arrangements, together with the quality of the walking, wheeling and cycling network between the site and the surrounding area alongside national policy and guidance, with specific reference to the following spatial planning policies and design requirements.

3.0 National Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

104. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals, so that:

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;

110. In assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; [and]

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users

112. ...applications for development should:

a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas...;

- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport; [and]
- c) create places that... minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles...;

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) provides guidance to local authorities on delivering high quality cycle infrastructure.

Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking is the Government's cycling and walking plan for England. This sets the Government's vision for cycling and walking to be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. Active Travel England's responsibilities for walking also extend to "wheeling", such as the use of wheelchairs (self-propelled or powered) and mobility scooters.

Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians provides guidance on designing and improving the accessibility and inclusivity of public transport and pedestrian infrastructure.

Active Design (Sport England, supported by Active Travel England and the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities) sets out how the design of our environments can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lives.

4.0 Opportunities

- It is proposed to provide a new signalised crossing point on the northern side of College Road as well as a new signalised junction; this is welcomed. It is also noted that it is proposed to widen the existing footway on College Road to create a shared cycle and footway. The applicant should confirm that this will comply with the requirements of LTN 1/20 (Table 6-3).
- The TA sets out a number of PROW footpaths that could usefully be used to access facilities such as schools, shops and public transport. However these are often neither lit nor overlooked, making them a less attractive option after dark. While alternative routes might be available, in order to prioritise active travel modes, upgrading these footpaths eg by providing lighting should be fully explored in order to provide residents with safe and direct access.
- The TA notes that several of the routes to facilities such as local schools have dropped kerbs, but no tactile paving. Tactile paving should be provided on these routes along with dropped kerbs if these are not already present.
- It is proposed to provide new cycling and walking links at the perimeter of the development and formalise existing informal links; this is welcomed as it will enable easier access to facilities such as Bedhampton rail station via an existing PROW and better serve existing desire lines. It is understood that discussions are taking place with National Highways, HCC, Dandara and relevant landowners to establish a link from the development site to the PROW link: ATE considers that this link is essential in order to promote active travel for future and surrounding residents of the proposed development.

- It is considered that there remain many more opportunities to ensure that this site presents walking, wheeling and cycling as an easy and attractive option. For example, the existing bridge over the A3 leads on to a wooded path. It is unclear whether this section is lit or has good lines of sight; this should be explored as mitigation if this is not the case. A route that is unlit and without good sightlines as well as not having any passive surveillance/overlooking will not be an attractive option after dark. It is noted that the TA sets out that the PROW was upgraded as part of a much earlier planning application APP/12/00612 'with surfacing and width improved'. It is not clear whether these improvements have resulted in a facility that complies with LTN 1/20 in terms of width and surface. Clarification around this would be appreciated.
- There is provision for a 'potential' link to the neighbouring South Downs College residential development; this should be confirmed in order to ensure maximum permeability to and from both sites.
- As acknowledged in the TA, Havant's LCWIP suggests a number of potential improvements in the area surrounding the proposed development. Given the significant size of the proposed development, ATE would suggest that contributions should be made as part of the proposed development in order to help bring these forward. For example, contributions towards a LTN 1/20-compliant segregated cycle route along Crookhorn Lane and an improved cycle crossing facility at the junction of Crookhorn Lane and College Road.
- Cycle parking is compliant with the local plan policy requirements. It is noted that cycle store details are provided. The communal cycle stores in particular should have a reliable method of securing the cycles within the store (eg, Sheffield stand) - the applicant should confirm this. It would also be desirable for the cycle stores to accommodate larger cycles such as accessible cycles/tricycles and cargo bikes. The applicant should also confirm that the community centre will benefit from short-stay cycle parking close by and in an overlooked (ie, safe) location.

5.0 Areas of Concern

- The Transport Assessment (TA) states that this site provides good opportunities to provide a shift from the private car to sustainable modes. ATE agrees that due to its location this site has excellent potential to encourage residents to use active travel modes, however it has concerns around the existing surrounding infrastructure as set out below.
- Despite the TA's intentions to 'support active travel' (12.4) it is not clear from the plans whether footways are provided throughout the development on both sides of every road, with the TA stating that the 'majority' of roads have them. There is also a shared route proposed along the former Roman road however there would appear to be ample space to widen this to include segregated provision for cycling and walking/wheeling and this should be explored in line with national standards in LTN 1/20. This route has the potential to provide a useful east-west cycle link for both new residents of the development as well as those living to the west, particularly should they wish to access Bedhampton railway station, and therefore this opportunity to provide a high quality segregated link must not be lost. In terms of a surface for this path, this should be a sealed surface such as tarmac. LTN 1/20 (15.2.1) states that surface quality affects the comfort and effort required when cycling. Loose surfaces such as gravel or mud can also present a skidding hazard,

increase the risk of punctures and make cycles and clothing dirty in bad weather. Cyclists are also affected by ruts and potholes that can throw them off balance. Smooth, sealed solid surfaces offer the best conditions for everyday cycling. Loose surfaces are also not suitable for wheelchair users.

- The TA states that surrounding roads are suitable for cycling, however in practice this would not always appear to be the case, with the majority not meeting the requirements of LTN 1/20. For example, the TA states that College Road is wide enough to accommodate both cyclists and vehicles however given that the speed limit on parts of this road is 40mph this is not an attractive option for cyclists. Paragraph 4.14 of the TA states that College Road is a signposted National Cycle Route, with Crookhorn Lane to the south featuring a 'hard surfaced off-road cycle route on both sides'. However despite signage indicating that this is a shared route, this would in fact appear to be a narrow footway that does not meet the requirements of LTN 1/20 (Table 6-3) for shared paths and would also bring cyclists into conflict with bus stops/shelters. Further mitigation as set out above should be considered in instances such as these in order to ensure that the site is well served by cycling and walking infrastructure as claimed in the TA.
- The internal access road will be 5.5m wide throughout the development. it remains unclear how on-street parking will be controlled; clarification on this would be welcomed to avoid a situation where footways become obstructed as a result of the proposed 5.5m width, which can commonly result in footway parking on both sides of the street as motorists attempt to maintain circa 3m of clearance along the centre of the road. This is neither safe for pedestrians, pushchairs and mobility scooters, nor is it conducive to a high quality street scene and can result in conflict within the carriageway.
- The Travel Plan accompanying the proposal is unambitious in its proposed targets for increasing the proportion of commuter trips made by active modes, suggesting a target of a 10% reduction in the proportion of journeys made by single occupancy cars by the end of Year 5. This is disappointing and fails to address the Government's aim for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030, while there is no justification for how the proposed 10% reduction in single-occupancy car journeys for commuting trips meets the NPPF policy requirement for developments to identify and pursue opportunities to promote active travel modes. It is unclear how this target was arrived at and it should be reviewed for all journey types in line with the above Government aim.

6.0 Next Steps

In order to create a culture of active travel from the outset, conditions and obligations will need to be secured that deliver surrounding infrastructure whilst monitoring the mode share of all journeys and establishing remedial actions where targets are not met, to support the ambitions of reduced car dependence and mitigate the impact of the additional walking, wheeling and cycling trips that this proposal should generate.

In the event that these proposals progress towards a determination, the dialogue between the LPA and the applicant must be continued in order to define the extent of off-site works required to support this development (taking account of any local highway / connectivity proposals being promoted by the highway authority) with a view to agreeing a specific package of measures (supported by appropriately detailed drawings) to be secured either through condition and/or a s106 contribution. ATE considers that this will be essential in order to ensure that future residents of this development (which could number around

1400) as well as existing and future users of the bus and rail network benefit from sufficiently safe and convenient linkage to surrounding amenities by walking, wheeling and cycling as an integral part of the wider network.

This advice should be provided to the LPA case officer and forwarded to the agent and applicant. ATE would be content to review further submitted information to help address the above identified deficits with a view to providing a further response and recommended wording for planning conditions and obligations as appropriate.