



Active  
Travel  
England

Active Travel England  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York  
YO1 6GA  
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Your Ref: 70449  
Our Ref: ATE/24/00189/HYB  
Date: 27 February 2024

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: , Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

**Application Ref:** 70449

**Site Address:** Longfield Shopping Centre/Car Park, Fairfax Road Car Park and adjoining land at Bury New Road, Rectory Lane and Fairfax Road,, Prestwich

**Description of development:** Hybrid application: Full planning application for demolition of existing buildings/structures and erection of phased mixed use development including a Community Hub comprising flexible uses including library, offices, medical or health services (Use Classes F1 (a-f), F2(b), E(c), E(e), E(g)) and retail uses (Use Classes E(a), E(b) F2(a)) and Sui Generis (hot food takeaway and bar), a new Market Hall (Use Classes E(a), E(b) and Sui Generis (hot food takeaway and bar)), a Commercial Building comprising flexible uses including retail, offices, gymnasium (Use Classes E(a), E(b), E(c), E(d), E(g), F2(a), a Travel Hub comprising car parking and cycle parking (Sui Generis), a public square and public realm and associated landscaping, car parking provision, cycle storage and other associated works; Part Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) proposing a phased residential led mixed use development comprising residential (Use Class C3), flexible commercial, business, service, local community and learning uses (Use Classes E, F) and Sui Generis (hot food takeaway and bar), engineering works to Rectory Lane, new public realm, associated landscaping, car parking provision, cycle storage and other associated works

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

**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.

## 1.0 Background

Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the opportunity to comment on this planning application that seeks full planning permission for the development of a Community Hub, Retail Hub, Market Hub, new 'village square', public realm improvements and a multi-storey car park with travel hub. Outline permission is sought for a residential phase of the development site for 210 dwellings and further commercial and community spaces. This is ATE's first involvement with the development.

## 2.0 Summary

The development has potential to deliver significant enhancements to the local area through improved public realm and a more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists within the site, which is supported. Fundamental to this is the decision to remove the majority of car parking from the site to the proposed three-storey car park, which ATE wishes to highlight as a positive choice. To ensure that the site takes advantage of this decision and the opportunity it presents ATE would recommend that improvements to junctions and highways in the immediate vicinity of the site will be required to ensure safe and attractive access is delivered that gives genuine priority to pedestrians. ATE also wishes to comment on the proposed cycle parking at the site, with amendments, additional information and agreements requested.

## 3.0 National Policy and Guidance

### National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)

108. 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;
- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

109. The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable.

114. 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;

116. ...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...;

117. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

### Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20)

LTN 1/20 provides guidance to local authorities on delivering high quality, cycle infrastructure. More specifically relevant to this application are the following sections; 4, 6, 10 & 11. On cycle parking in particular the following sections are highlighted:

- Section 11.7 – Workplace Facilities for Cycle Parking. This identifies the potential for travel behaviour change in workplaces through the provision of appropriate facilities.
- Space for cycle parking should be considered at the earliest possible stage of a scheme design or building development (paragraph 11.1.4).
- Personal security within cycle parking areas may also be a concern if the parking is remote and not overlooked by adjacent buildings. Cycle parking, and routes to and from it, should be clearly marked, overlooked, well-maintained, well-lit and integrated into the built environment (paragraph 11.2.2)
- As with car parking, a proportion of the cycle parking (typically 5%) should be provided for non-standard cycles to accommodate people with mobility impairments. (11.3.2)
- Recommended dimensions for cycle parking are provided in Table 11-2

### Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking

*Gear Change* 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. A key requirement of Gear Change is to set the following expectations for new cycling infrastructure:

- Separation from volume traffic,
- Separation from pedestrians,
- Cycles treated as vehicles, not pedestrians,
- Isolated stretches of good provision are of little value,
- Routes must feel direct, logical and intuitively understandable.

### 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.

### National Design Guide

The National Design Guide outlines the Government's expectations for positive design in new developments. Section M2 relates to active travel and states the following:

- (82) "Priority is given to pedestrian and cycle movements, subject to location and the potential to create connections. Prioritising pedestrians and cyclists mean creating routes that are safe, direct, convenient and accessible for people of all abilities. These are designed as part of attractive spaces with good sightlines, and well chosen junctions and crossings, so that people want to use them. Public rights

of way are protected, enhanced and well-linked into the wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes.

- (83) In well-designed places, people should not need to rely on the car for everyday journeys, including getting to workplaces, shops, schools and other facilities, open spaces or the natural environment. Safe and direct routes with visible destinations or clear signposting encourage people to walk and cycle.”

#### **4.0 Opportunities**

The application site benefits from a range of attributes which have the potential to facilitate walking, wheeling and cycling. ATE also wishes to highlight positive choices taken by the applicant and would encourage these to be maintained should any amendments to the application be developed.

- The proposed development intends to create a more attractive public realm and remove the dominance of car parking from the site, while also introducing more attractive retail, community and leisure uses. The use of materials, landscaping and priority given to pedestrians is attractive and clear within the site. If successful the development will create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists and encourage residents to travel to the area by walking, wheeling or cycling.
- The proximity to Prestwich Tram Stop also means that visitors to the site from surrounding areas of Greater Manchester would have a genuinely attractive choice to do so without the need to use a private motor vehicle. There is also an opportunity for the development to create a more direct approach to the tram stop and encourage multi-modal trips for work or leisure.

#### **5.0 Areas of Concern**

##### Pedestrian and cycle access

###### *Bury New Road/Fairfax Road junction*

- The junction of Bury New Road (the A56) and Fairfax Road is a key junction immediately adjacent to the site. All four arms of this junction have indicative pedestrian crossing points, however these crossings do not have call buttons or pedestrian crossing phases and so priority given to pedestrians is limited. Pedestrians are required to attempt to cross these busy roads in breaks in the traffic and/or between phases. In some cases this involves crossing three lanes of carriageway.
- ATE advises that as part of this development improvements to this junction should be delivered to ensure there is safe and attractive pedestrian access to the development site.
- It is noted that the applicant acknowledges this within their Transport Assessment and highlights pre-application discussions with the local authority and potential improvements to Bury New Road and Fairfax Road. The local authority should consider what contributions might be appropriate to seek from this application to facilitate the delivery of improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

###### *Cycle access*

- Section 2.4 of the Transport Assessment summarises cycle access and notes the limited provision. “The only cycle infrastructure in the vicinity is a southbound painted cycle lane ~1m wide on A56 Bury New Road between Kingswood Road and Fairfax Road.”
- The lack of any form of provision for cyclists on the A56 and Fairfax Road, their junctions, or indeed other nearby highways that would likely be used for cycling trips to or from the site and have reasonable traffic flows (Rectory Lane, Heys Road or Heywood Road, for example) results in poor provision of access for cyclists and only the most confident cyclists are likely to travel to and from the site. The local authority should consider what improvements might result in more people feeling comfortable travelling to the site by active travel modes and there would be merit in the applicant assessing the highways and junctions in the immediate vicinity of the site to guide these improvements.

## Cycle parking

### *Full application*

- Cycle parking is proposed to be delivered in various locations and in different forms throughout the site. This has been summarised and commented on below:
  - The ground floor of the multi-storey car park includes an internal secure cycle store with 76 cycle parking spaces. This is intended to be for the use of the general public and employees of the Market Hall. It is stated within the Transport Assessment that this will be a managed facility, however no further detail is provided. It should be clarified how this space will be both secure and open to the general public. This cycle store appears to have no windows and therefore to increase its attractiveness and sense of safety it should be covered by CCTV within the room.
  - Space for 12 cycles is shown in the rear service yard of the Retail Hub development. Table 11-1 of LTN 1/20 advises that for small retail units 1 long stay space per 100m<sup>2</sup> should be provided and therefore based on the 1325m<sup>2</sup> internal floor area of the ground floor retail uses 14 spaces is recommended. At first floor level the application proposes 941m<sup>2</sup> of gym/leisure space. LTN 1/20 advises 1 long stay space per 5 staff for leisure uses and using the Governments Employment Densities Guide the above floor space is likely to result in approximately 15 staff (therefore requiring 3 additional spaces). ATE would therefore recommend that the Retail Hub should provide a minimum of 17 secure, covered spaces in the rear service yard.
  - At the Community Hub 24 cycle parking spaces are provided within the building for staff. This meets LTN 1/20 standards, and the cycle store includes space for non-standard cycles and two showers. As there is only space for two non-standard cycles, with the remaining spaces delivered through two-tier stands, it is recommended that the Sheffield stand be marked or signed as reserved for non-standard cycles.
  - 20 short stay cycle parking spaces are provided within the pedestrianised area of the development at three locations. These are in obvious and convenient locations and as an initial provision the number of spaces is acceptable. There are multiple positions to deliver additional short stay stands should demand require this.

### *Outline application*

- The Transport Assessment states that for the residential phases, for which outline approval only is sought, cycle parking will be delivered to meet or exceed Bury Council's Parking SPD standards of 1 cycle parking space per 5 apartments. This SPD was published in 2007 and is out of date with more recent national guidance. LTN 1/20 advises that 1 cycle parking space should be provided per bedroom. The homes proposed will have limited car parking and are in a location where residents' day-to-day amenities should be within a reasonable cycling distance with low car-dependency. ATE would therefore expect the residential phases to meet LTN 1/20 standards, with a condition applied at this stage agreeing this. Full details of the type and location of stands can be agreed at reserved matters stage.

## **6.0 Next Steps**

In consideration of the above, ATE recommend that the Local Planning and Highway Authority considers the following points to discuss with the applicant:

- Consideration given to the appropriate contributions from the development that will deliver improvements to pedestrian and cycle access to the site, with particular focus and importance required on improvements to Bury New Road, Fairfax Road and the junction of these roads.
- Increase in the number of secure cycle parking spaces serving the Retail Hub to a minimum of 17. Confirmation that these will be covered.
- Greater detail on the approach to cycle parking at the Travel Hub and how this will be managed so as to be secure but also available to the general public. Confirmation that CCTV will be included within the cycle store room.
- At the Community Hub the two non-standard cycle parking spaces should be marked/signed as reserved for non-standard cycles.
- Agreement to a condition to deliver 1 secure, covered cycle parking space per bedroom at each of the residential phases of the development. This condition should require full details of the cycle parking to be submitted at reserved matters stage.

ATE requests that the local planning authority shares this correspondence with the applicant and their agents. ATE would be content to review further submitted information to help address the above identified deficiencies with a view to providing a further response and recommended conditions, subject to receiving this information.