



Active  
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Your Ref: 23/02094/FULMAJ  
Our Ref: ATE/23/00625/FULL  
Date: 22 January 2024

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: West Berkshire Council

**Application Ref:** 23/02094/FULMAJ

**Site Address:** THE MALL, THE KENNET CENTRE, NEWBURY, RG14 5EN

**Description of development:** Full planning permission for the redevelopment of the Kennet Centre comprising the partial demolition of the existing building on site and the development of new residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and residents ancillary facilities; commercial, business and service floorspace including office (Class E (a, b, c, d, e, f, and g)); access, parking, and cycle parking; landscaping and open space; sustainable energy installations; associated works, and alterations to the retained Vue Cinema and multi storey car park.

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

Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the opportunity to comment on this full planning application for the redevelopment of Kennet shopping centre (the site) in Newbury Town Centre.

ATE has previously submitted a response dated 16 October 2023 Ref: ATE/23/00625/FULL to this application which focused on the following themes:

- Layout and permeability
- Offsite improvements and wider connectivity
- Cycle parking
- Travel plan

## 2.0 Summary

ATE note that since issuing the previous consultation response a series of updated plans have been submitted to address consultee comments. These plans are also accompanied by reports including a transport assessment addendum.

Following a review of the updated submission documents it had not been possible to specifically identify how the applicant has directly responded to some of ATEs comments and therefore a deferral response is maintained. For clarity, a position has been provided for each of the original themes below considering the revised submission documents.

## 3.0 Areas of Concern

Layout and permeability:

Concern was previously raised that Paragraph 10.2.3 of the Design and Access Statement (DAS) explained *'Cycles will not be permitted to use the new pedestrian street through the development, instead they will be encouraged to use the existing road network around the site.'*

It is noted that a revised DAS has been submitted however it has not been possible to access this document nor has it been possible to identify whether the applicant has sought to respond to this point. The concern therefore remains and ATE would welcome a response on this point.

Offsite improvements and wider connectivity:

It was noted that the previous application submitted on the site (21/00380/FULMAJ and 21/00379/FULMAJ) showed a zebra crossing over Market Street, however the submission documents associated with the new proposals did not include this.

Again, the applicant has not directly addressed ATEs comments regarding this point. It is however noted that Paragraph 12 of the Local Highway Authority response sought consideration on this point. The applicant has noted that there is an *'existing pedestrian crossing to the east of the MSCP on Market Street that includes tactile paving and a central refuge.'*

It is recognised that the applicant has committed to further discussions with the Highway Authority regarding the most suitable form of crossing at this point. While it is anticipated

that these discussions will result in a positive improvement to the existing situation in a way that benefits walking, wheeling and cycling, ATE seeks confirmation from the LPA that the outcome of these discussions will secure by condition / obligation an improvement to the existing situation. ATE is of course willing to provide input to these discussions as necessary.

It is also noted that a drawing has now been produced which illustrates a 2m wide cycle lane on Bartholomew Street following a request from the Highway Authority. ATE support the inclusion of this infrastructure which will support the movement of cyclists travelling south along Bartholomew Street against the flow of traffic. Clarity is however sought as to why the provision terminates well ahead of the junction with Market Street. Moreover, the cycle path would benefit from beginning at the junction with Mansion House Street to avoid conflict with vehicles travelling north along Bartholomew Street.

#### Cycle parking:

ATE was content with the approach being taken to residential parking however further clarity was sought regarding whether there was an intention to increase visitor cycle parking for the commercial uses. Again, no direct response has been identified on this point. However, it is noted that the applicant has submitted Figure 12: Existing and Proposed Visitor Cycle Parking Provision within the Transport Assessment Addendum which also explains '*The applicant also proposes to provide 25 additional visitor cycle stands.*' The revised position is therefore accepted.

It is also welcome that '*At least 5 per cent of all cycle parking spaces would be capable of accommodating non-standard bicycles such as tandems, tricycles, cargo bikes and bicycles with child trailers, in accordance with Table 11.1/Table 11.2 of LTN 1/20.*'

#### Travel plan:

A baseline split for walking and cycling modes within either the main body of the Travel Plan or Transport Assessment was previously sought. However, it has not been possible to identify this split within the updated submission documents and therefore clarity on this point is still requested.

## **4.0 Next Steps**

It is requested that these recommendations are 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 deficiencies, with a view to providing a further response and recommended wording for planning conditions and obligations.