

Eagle Quarter II, Newbury

Response to Active Travel England Comments

Date: 07/02/2024

Client Name: Lochailort Newbury Ltd

Document Reference: WIE18916-114.R.1.2.3 ATE

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with Waterman Group's IMS (BS EN ISO 9001: 2015, BS EN ISO 14001: 2015 and BS EN ISO 45001:2018)

Issue	Prepared by	Checked & Approved by
02	Jack Wellings Transport Planner	David Whalley Associate Director

1. Introduction

This Technical Note sets out our response to the comments raised by Active Travel England, on the 22nd January 2024 in regard to the following planning application:

23/02094/FULMAJ: 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.

The layout of this Note details Active Travel England comments in **red** and is followed by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd response. A full copy of Active Travel England consultation response is provided in **Appendix A**.

2. Active Travel England Comments & Response

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.

Cyclists will not be permitted to use the centralised street through the development. This route would be for pedestrians only. The centralised street would be used for cafes, restaurants, retail, activities in the public square, markets etc. As a result, this area is not considered to be compatible with cyclists.

Allowing cyclists to use this space would potentially create a safety problem and with the mix of uses proposed for this street would be unattractive to cyclists. This approach has been discussed with Officers at West Berkshire Council who have agreed that the area would benefit from being used by pedestrians only.

Cyclists will instead use the existing road network around the site, including the proposed cycle lane on Bartholomew Street. The existing street road network and the proposed cycle lane on Bartholomew Street are considered to be more direct, avoid obstructions (seating, tables, markets, pedestrians etc) and would therefore be more attractive to cyclists.

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.

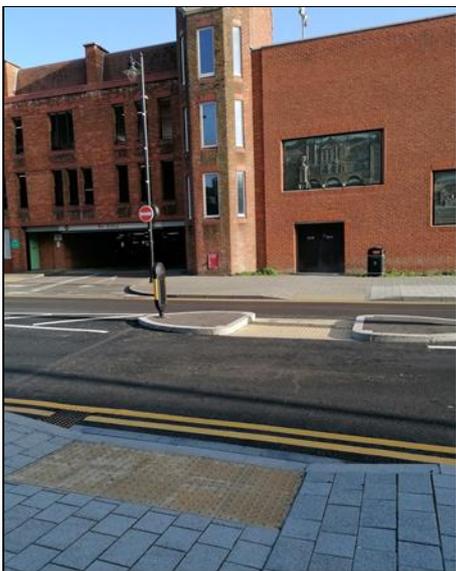
The zebra crossing has been removed from the proposals.

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.

The existing pedestrian crossing to the east of the MSCP on Market Street includes tactile paving and a central refuge, as illustrated in Photograph 1 below. This crossing was reinstated to suit the new footway alignment which formed part of the Market Street S278 works.

Photograph 1 – Market Street Pedestrian Crossing



We consider the existing crossing to be more than adequate for the speed and volume of traffic on Market Street. No amendments to this existing crossing are proposed.

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.

The cycle lane is proposed to terminate to the north of the undercroft car park. From here cyclists would route south along Bartholomew Street, via the new southbound section of carriageway, which is provided to facilitate access to/from the undercroft car park. The section of new southbound carriageway would only be used by vehicles routing to/from the new underground car park and is therefore expected to be lightly trafficked and suitable for use by both cyclists and motor vehicles (mainly cars).

As requested, consideration will be given to starting the cycle lane further north, i.e. at the Mansion House Street junction. If feasible an updated drawing will be provided for comment.

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.

Accepted. No further action required.

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.'

Accepted. No further action required.

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.

Analysis of Census Travel to Work Data has been undertaken for the area that the site is located (West Berkshire 019 Middle Super Output Layer (MSOA)). Table 1 overleaf summarises the modal split from the 2011 and 2021 Census.

Table 1 – 2011 Method of Travel to Work

Method of Travel	Proportion of Trips 2011	Proportion of Trips 2021
Work mainly at or from home	5%	44%
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0%	0%
Train	5%	2%
Bus, minibus or coach	5%	1%
Taxi	0%	0%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0%	0%
Driving a car or van	56%	36%
Passenger in a car or van	5%	4%
Bicycle	3%	2%
On foot	18%	10%
Other method of travel to work	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%

Table 1 indicates that in 2011, approximately 38% of work journeys were undertaken by sustainable modes including walking (18%), cycling (3%), bus (5%), rail (5%) and car sharing (5%). A total of 56% drove to work. In 2021, 20% of work journeys were undertaken by sustainable transport modes including walking (10%), cycling (2%), bus (1%), rail (2%) and car sharing (4%). The proportion of people driving to work had decreased by 20%, down to 36%. The decrease in the number of work journeys undertaken by sustainable modes of transport and driving is a result of an increase in home working (39% increase between 2011 and 2021). This change was brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a significant increase in home working and improvements in remote working capabilities due to technological advancements.

It is considered highly unlikely that travel to work patterns will return to former levels as lifestyle patterns are now significantly based around online activities. Due to the proximity of the site to the town centre, rail station and walking/cycling infrastructure, travel to work modes are likely to include a high proportion of sustainable travel modes. The baseline modal split for walking and cycling is as follows.

- Walking – 15%
- Cycling – 3%

The Travel Plan will aim to increase the number of residents walking and cycling from the baseline figures above.

3. Summary

I trust the above provides further clarity regarding each of your points (with the exception of the cycle lane on Bartholomew Street where further consideration/design work will be undertaken).



Appendix A – Active Travel England Consultation Response



Active
Travel
England

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

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.*'

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Offsite improvements and wider connectivity:

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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.

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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.