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Your Ref: 25/00381/OUT
Our Ref: ATE/25/00612/OUT
Date: 15 May 2025

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Application Ref: 25/00381/OUT

Site Address: Land North And East Of Stakehill Industrial Estate, Rochdale

Description of development: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except the means access) for the development of up to 314 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and employment uses (Use Class B2/B8 including ancillary office space (Use Class E)) comprising up to 13,047sqm Gross External Area together with associated parking, highway infrastructure, works to public rights of way, areas of public open space, landscaping, drainage, ecological enhancements and other works ancillary thereto

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

- 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.

1.0 Background

Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Outline Planning Application for the development of a total of 314no. dwellings, and employment uses (Use Class C3, Use Class B2/B8 and Use Class E). The proposed development is located on land North and East of the Stakehill Industrial Estate, Rochdale. This is ATE's first involvement with this application, which is pursuant to all relevant local (Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) , Regional, and National policies and guidance.

2.0 Summary: Active Travel Assessment

ATE has reviewed various components of the application for the proposed development including the: Transport Statement (TS); Design & Access Statement (DAS); Design Code (DC) the Framework Travel Plan (FTP), and associated drawings (e.g. Illustrative Masterplan).

ATE's response has assessed the submitted proposals against appropriate national government policy and design guidance via the utilisation of ATE's assessment criteria.

ATE has considered the application against the criteria as set out in its planning assessment toolkit, national planning policy and active travel design guidance. With regards to the aligned assessment criteria and application of ATE's assessment toolkit, there are various aspects where ATE requires further information.

Aspects that require further information are:

- The need for a more comprehensive multi-modal trip generation for peak and non-peak periods and the consequent setting of ambitious Travel Plan targets for all components of the proposed development.
- Precise details of all active travel and associated infrastructure internally and externally, including those already proposed for the site access including those to the adjacent Public Rights of Way (PRoW).
- Details of the provision of cycle parking and supporting facilities (for all components of the development).

2.1 Trip generation and assignment/Travel Plans

Rating: FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED > CONDITION/CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDED

- ATE notes that the applicant has addressed Trip Generation in Chapter 6 of the submitted TS (page 23) and the methodology has been based upon 2021 Census data and reflective of both residential and industrial components of the proposed development.

- The applicant has calculated trip rates for residential and non-residential uses with a suitably robust all-day methodology in place (Appendix D). However, there is no clear evidence of a comprehensive multi-modal trip generation process for all hours of days and considerate of all journeys purposed, including all active travel modes.
- ATE therefore advises that it is still necessary for a more holistic view of movements to be generated with the consideration of other data sources such as developments with a similar context and National Travel Survey (NTS) data. By utilising this approach, there will then be a more accurate representation of multi-modal movements of all the components of the scheme, which can then inform the intentions of a full Travel Plan.
- The current FTP only confirms that targets will be set upon completion of a travel survey (para 5.3.2, FTP, p.13). It is necessary for this process to be revised so that suitably ambitious active travel mode-share targets are set from the outset which can enable the proposed development and its' future residents/employees to benefit from a vision-led approach. This is also in consideration that the proposed development is located close to various sustainable transport facilities, a point the applicant has highlighted in the TS (para 5.2.6, TS, p.16). ATE therefore advises the applicant clearly provides an updated summary of active and sustainable travel generation for this section building upon the current TS and corresponds this with a commitment to setting active travel mode share targets as part of the development of a full Travel Plan.

2.2 Active travel route audit/ Off-site infrastructure/Pedestrian, Cycle and Public Transport Accessibility

Rating: FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED > CONDITION/CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDED

ATE acknowledges that the applicant has undertaken a considered analysis of the active travel routes to and from the proposed site in Chapter 5 of the TS. This data could have benefitted from evidence of a more experiential assessment of current conditions and support data such as Figure 5.4 – Cycling Accessibility Isochrones (TS, p.19). The undertaking of an observed analysis approach can provide an assessment of how attractive, convenient, and comfortable the active travel is, which are all principles as stated in LTN 1-20 and the National Design Guide. At the discretion of the local planning authority (LPA) ATE advises that this additional detail can be conditioned to be provided prior to development.

The above information can also be in alignment with a suitable condition regarding how the proposed development can enhance offsite infrastructure and provide the necessary details to ensure high quality active travel accessibility both internally and externally (e.g. the composition of pedestrian and cyclist access points at junctions; links to the Public Rights of Way (PRoW); access to public transport and complementary features such as wayfinding signage and seating.

2.3 Site Permeability/Placemaking

Rating: FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED > CONDITION/CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDED

Overall, the proposed development demonstrated a considered street hierarchy that is reflective of the Design Code. Permeability should be sound in terms of orientation and legibility. The applicant also has considered the movement of active travel users and in particular pedestrians as per page 18 of the DAS. To complement this, it is necessary for the applicant to provide detail of how all active travel users can benefit from 'appropriate movement network that promotes active travel and avoids a car-dominated neighbourhood' (DAS, p.18). This not only is through the confirmation of the street provision but also to demonstrate a dedicated cycle provision throughout the site to complement the shared-use provision which is suitable for the commercial component of the proposed development.

With the consideration of all complimentary details as advised, the proposed development can consequently be a place that is functional and adherent to the quality design and consideration as indicated in the DC, and also enjoyable for people to pass through.

2.4 Cycle Parking & Trip-end facilities

Rating: AREA OF CONCERN > CONDITION/CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDED

Currently there is no commitment from the applicant in terms of the amount, type, and position of cycle parking and supporting facilities, with only a broad indication of cycle stores and Sheffield stands for the employment component (DC, p.43). This provision should be committed to from the outset. With the proposed development admirably being one where active and sustainable travel modes are prioritised, with it being a car-free development, cycle provision is paramount so future residents, employees and visitors can benefit from the numerous existing and future cycle infrastructure. This should also include how the proposed development can contribute to nearby cycle parking and amenity at nearby public transport stations and stops.

For avoidance of doubt ATE advises that details of cycle parking and supporting provision should include for all components of the application, the amount of parking as per Table 11.1 of LTN 1-20 (p. 134) its location, accessibility, parking types and dimensions, security arrangements or lighting as appropriate. The applicant will also need to ensure that this provision is suitable for all users. It is vital that these details are embedded into the final designs, and ATE advises that these can be subsequently agreed upon can be set as a condition of planning permission.

3.0 Conclusion

It is requested that these recommendations are provided to the LPA case officer, the highways authority and forwarded to the applicant and its representatives. ATE welcomes the review of further submitted information, with a view to then providing a further response which then can meet the requirements of national planning policy and where appropriate the setting of suitable planning conditions and commitment to contributions.