



Active
Travel
England

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Your Ref: FUL/2024/0022
Our Ref: ATE/24/00711/FULL
Date: 19 August 2024

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England
To: , Norfolk County Council

Application Ref: FUL/2024/0022
Site Address: Land between the A1270 Broadland Northway near Ringland and the A47 near, Honningham

Description of development: Development of approximately 6km of the Norwich Western Link Road connecting the A1067 (Fakenham Road) with the new A47 North Tuddenham to Easton scheme (being developed by National Highways), including the construction of a new roundabout junction with the A1067 Fakenham Road, improvements to the A1067 Fakenham Road and the roundabout junction with the A1270 Broadland Northway. Structures include a new viaduct carrying the Norwich Western Link over the River Wensum, a new underpass at Ringland Lane, the provision of a green bridge carrying the Broadway over the Norwich Western Link, three further green bridges, wildlife crossings, and culverting of a tributary to the River Tud. Related works include the stopping up, diversion, improvement and provision of side roads, new walking cycling and horse-riding provision, the stopping up, replacement and provision of new private means of access, and ancillary landscaping, ecological mitigation, surface water drainage system, flood compensation, bunds, other environmental mitigation, diversion and protection of apparatus and temporary works to facilitate construction, and the change of use of the premises known as Low Farm as offices (class E), and other ancillary works.

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 application for the development of approximately 6km of the Norwich Western Link Road connecting the A1067 (Fakenham Road) with the new A47 North Tuddenham to Easton scheme (being developed by National Highways), including the construction of a new roundabout junction with the A1067 Fakenham Road, improvements to the A1067 Fakenham Road and the roundabout junction with the A1270 Broadland Northway.

2.0 Summary

ATE's response has reviewed the submitted proposals and associated documents – these includes e.g. parameter plans/drawings, planning statement and various components of the Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS).

These have been assessed against appropriate national government policy and design guidance via the utilisation of ATE's assessment criteria. In considering this application, ATE's position is that the proposed development requires further details as detailed below to make a definitive recommendation and looks forward to this in terms of the Western Link Road being about to facilitate highly sustainable development with extremely high active travel mode-share embedded from the outset.

2.1 Trip generation and assignment

Rating: **PASS**

ATE is satisfied with the applicant's approach trip generation, and that this could provide a basis for future phases of development to set travel plan targets/objectives that ensure that walking, wheeling and cycling are prioritised choices for short-distance journeys.

Policy / Guidance References:

- *Planning Policy Guidance on Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements – a qualitative and quantitative description of the travel characteristics of the proposed development*

2.2 Active travel route audit

Rating: **PASS**

ATE acknowledges that the applicant has undertaken a detailed analysis of the active travel routes to and from the proposed site.

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NPPF 114. In assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that ...safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

2.3 Pedestrian Access to Local Amenities & 2.4. Cycling Accessibility

Rating: **FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED**

ATE deems that the proposed scheme needs to demonstrate the incorporation of the following design principles.

1. To consider options where there is segregation between pedestrians and other users (cyclists and equestrian users). Although the expected volume of pedestrians is anticipated to be low, route usage should be monitored to assess any conflicts at peak times and to ensure provision is suitable as the wider active travel network is developed over time through adjacent schemes.

2. To provide details of any proposed barriers which may restrict some users (to ensure the proposed scheme is in alignment with Inclusive Mobility)

3. Details of suitable surfaces for *all* active travel provision and that all walking/cycling routes adhere to LTN 1-20 Chapter 8.1 (Surfaces must be hard, smooth, level, durable, permeable, and safe in all weathers. Surface materials should be easy to maintain (e.g. asphalt) and materials such as brick and stone should generally be avoided on cycle routes, although exceptions will be allowed for streets of special heritage value. Materials such as loose gravel should also be avoided.)

Policy/Guidance References:

- *NPPF 108c: identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote cycling.*
- *NPPF 114. In assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.*
- *NPPF 114a: opportunities to promote sustainable modes have been taken up*
- *NPPF 116a: giving priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas.*
- *Inclusive Mobility.*
- *Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 (2020): Section 4.2 – Core design principles, 5 – Geometric requirements, 6 – Space for cycling within highways. Chapter 8.1*
- *National Design Guide (2021): Section M2 - Active Travel.*
- *Manual for Streets (2007): Chapter 4 – Layout and connectivity.*

2.5 Access to Public Transport

Rating: **PASS>CONDITION/CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDED**

The proposed development has duly considered the off-site connections for active and sustainable travel in Chapter 7 of the STS and identified a range of Complementary Bus Improvement Measures (p.52), which can be set as conditions of planning permission.

Policy/Guidance References:

- *NPPF 108c: identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote public transport*
- *NPPF 116a: facilitating access to high quality public transport*
- *Inclusive Mobility: 9.1 – The siting of bus stops*
- *LTN1/24 Bus User Priority*

2.6 Off-site Transport Infrastructure

Rating: FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED

It is vital that the proposed development commits to the long-term strategic active travel provision. With adjacent areas of the Western Link Road appearing to form part of Norwich's strategic growth area (ref Figure 7, Greater Norwich LCWIP, 2022) there is the necessity that there is a high-degree of future proofing for any potential committed developments and network expansion.

To ensure good connectivity north-south, ATE would suggest that further details and clearly explanation of be how the scheme will reasonably link the Fakenham Road and the A47. This should also include existing infrastructure and other key trip attractors in the area, to demonstrate how connections for all modes (including walking, wheeling, and cycling) will be made along the route. Safe access and good connectivity for all modes must be considered along the new Western Link Road to provide a route/s, which is/are coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, and attractive for all active travel users.

Along with the aforementioned bus improvements in 2.5, ATE requests details from the applicants for various components of how the proposed development will contribute to off-site infrastructure and also the improved crossing facilities as in the STS Appendix 3 - Cycle-Friendly Route Plan.

Policy/Guidance References:

- *NPPF: 96c: enabling and supporting healthy lifestyles*
- *NPPF 108c: identifying / pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport*
- *NPPF 114b: achieving safe and suitable access for all users,*
- *NPPF 116a: giving priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements.*

2.7 Site Permeability

Rating: N/A

2.8 Placemaking

Rating: N/A

2.9 Cycle Parking & Trip-end facilities

Rating: N/A

2.10 Travel Planning

Rating: N/A

3.0 Next Steps

ATE requests that the local planning authority shares this correspondence with the applicant and their agents. ATE would welcome the opportunity to review further submitted information to help address the identified deficiencies as detailed above, with a view to providing a further response and recommended conditions/support of the scheme.