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Your Ref: 142535/FO/2025
Our Ref: ATE/25/00633/FULL
Date: 22 August 2025

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Manchester City Council

Application Ref: 142535/FO/2025

Site Address: 140 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester, M4 6DU

Description of development: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 2no. new buildings providing up to 758 apartments (Use Class C3), Class E floorspace (comprising flexible office accommodation (Use Class Eg(i)) and Class Ea and b) and associated hard and soft landscaping (including works within the public highway), formation of vehicle accesses and servicing access together with associated 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

1.1 Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the response note submitted with regard to its initial comments on this application. Our initial response is repeated below, with relevant addenda.

2.0 Key Issues

Trip Generation Assignment & Mode shares

The multi-modal trip generation analysis which has been presented should be expanded to cover the whole day, rather than being confined to peak hours, to ensure that a holistic understanding of active travel requirements is adequately demonstrated.

The development has the potential to set ambitious targets given the urban location and lack of proposed vehicle parking. As such, ATE would request that long term targeted increases, of just 2% and 3% in pedestrian and cycle trips respectively, are revised upwards, to be supported by a suitably expanded package of appropriate off-site improvements and increased cycle storage provision.

2.1 Point retained – focus on active travel given lack of vehicle parking and sustainable location is acknowledged, but a vision-led approach requires ambitious and meaningful targets which reflect the position of the development and its capability to support very high levels of active travel uptake.

Off-site Infrastructure

Given the residential quantum involved, ATE would expect that the applicant works with the LHA/TfGM to agree appropriate contributions towards nearby and relevant active travel infrastructure improvements.

- *Great Ancoats Street is particularly unwelcoming for cyclists and is reliant on shared facilities, along with other nearby parts of the network, and it should be explored whether the development may be able to support targeted upgrades in this regard.*
- *Between the Old Mill St/Store Street junction and the crossing by the Rochdale Canal Towpath, Great Ancoats Street features a long stretch which lacks pedestrian crossing facilities. Given the location of the main access to Building B on Ducie Street in relation to the nearest crossing of Great Ancoats St, and the emphasis on connectivity with the Central Retail Park site set out in section 5 of the submitted Design & Access Statement, it should be investigated whether the development can contribute to overcoming the severance caused by this wide bisecting thoroughfare.*

2.2 The request for support for improvements to Gt. Ancoats St. is reiterated.

- *It must be ensured that signalised crossing facilities are maintained/provided in close enough proximity to the Store Street/Great Ancoats Street junction and Building A entrance so as to allow for convenient, direct and prioritised pedestrian movements in this location.*

2.3 In the proposed/existing arrangement, it is highly likely that pedestrians will choose to cross Store Street in the vicinity of the building entrance, utilising the unsuitable crossing facilities which exist there. Retention of this uncontrolled provision will serve to exclude most potential users and result in safety concerns. Excluded users should not be expected to travel to further away crossing facilities – this goes against National Design Guide

principles, namely that routes should be safe, **direct**, **convenient** and accessible for people of **all** abilities.

- *The development should provide/support the upgrading of crossing facilities on Ducie Street, so that the existing dropped kerb/tactile paving arrangement is replaced with a set-back crossing point that utilises a raised table, allowing for footway leading from the northern part of the site to remain continuous and level (figure 10.13 of LTN 1/20 provides examples of priority crossings at side roads, and Section 4.11 of Inclusive Mobility includes guidance on raised crossings).*

2.4 A Streets for All Design Check would be valuable in this location. ATE reiterates its request that a continuous and level footway be provided leading from the northern part of the site, and that this pedestrian-focused improvement could form part of any S278 agreement.

- *Similarly, it would be beneficial for the footways at either end of the service road connecting Ducie Street and Store Street to remain uninterrupted and level through the similar use of a raised table treatment at each access point.*

2.5 Improvements to the pedestrian environment at the Store Street/Ashton Canal aqueduct, which is located along a key route between the site and key city centre locations, would be strongly supported by ATE, with a focus on improving safety and making the route more attractive for all users during darker hours/time of the year.

On-site Facilities

*In the absence of local residential cycle parking standards, it is encouraged that the development provide cycle parking at a capacity in line with Table 11-1 of LTN 1/20, which suggests that 1 space should be provided **per bedroom**. The Travel Plan should at least outline stretch targets for parking provision which will allow capacity to be increased in the future, in alignment with more ambitious targets for increasing cycling mode share, and set at this stage of the application.*

2.6 Point reiterated.

Further details of cycle parking must specify that 5% of each section of provision is able to be used by adapted cycles, as per paragraph 11.3.2 of LTN 1/20.

Provision of ancillary equipment can help remove some of the barriers to cycling and give a positive message that cycling is a legitimate and valid form of transport – as well as providing puncture repair tools, pumps and other repair/maintenance tools should be made available within each storage area.

2.7 Where flexible office accommodation is to be included, it is worth noting that appropriate trip-end facilities should be incorporated, as per Section 11 of LTN 1/20, to encourage users of this workspace to cycle to/from the site.

It is not clear where short stay cycle parking would be located within the site, and at what capacity. Further detail is requested, in alignment with paragraph 11.2.3 of LTN 1/20.

2.8 Indicative locations of this parking should be shown on drawings, at capacities in line with LTN 1/20 guidance.

The potential for the development to support the expansion of nearby Bee Network cycle hire facilities at Old Mill St. and Redhill St. should be explored in dialogue with TfGM.

2.9 Has the lack of demand for the expansion of cycle hire facilities been confirmed with TfGM? The development needs to support a shift towards cycling, and easy access to cycle hire facilities can form a useful part of this.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 ATE requests that the local planning authority shares this response with the applicant's agent. We would welcome additional details and amendments in line with the above comments, with a view to providing a further response/appropriate wording for conditions as required.